



THE ASSOCIATION OF
PHARMACY TECHNICIANS UK

APTUK UK-Wide Post-registration Career Pathway Consultation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Version 2

1. About the Career Pathway:

Why is the pharmacy technician resource called a career pathway?

The Association of Pharmacy Technician (APTUK) UK-wide Pharmacy Technician Career Pathway describes progression through recognised levels of practice and provide a structure to support career development, workforce planning and professional growth throughout a pharmacy technician's career.

In simple terms, the career pathway describes progression through multiprofessional levels of practice.

What is the purpose of the Career Pathway?

The Pharmacy Technician Career Pathway has been developed to:

- Describe increasing levels of professional practice.
- Support career development conversations.
- Provide a common language across all sectors and UK nations.
- Support workforce planning and service design.
- Enable greater transferability and mobility between settings.
- Align pharmacy technician practice with wider multiprofessional workforce models.

The pathway is intended to support professional development and workforce capability. It is not currently a credentialing, accreditation or assessment process

How should pharmacy technicians use the Career Pathway?

The pathway can be used to:

- Reflect on current levels of practice.
- Identify development needs.
- Support appraisal and career development conversations.
- Inform personal development plans.
- Build portfolios of evidence.
- Explore future career opportunities.
- Support progression across sectors and settings.

It is intended to support development throughout a pharmacy technician's career rather than act as an assessment tool.

2. Frameworks and levels of Practice

Why does the Pharmacy Technician Career Pathway use levels of practice?

The pathway uses Levels 4-6 aligned to the Skills for Health Career Framework.

This approach is widely recognised across health and care professions and supports workforce planning, career progression and role development.

The levels describe increasing autonomy, responsibility, expertise, leadership and influence, regardless of sector or specific role.

This helps position pharmacy technicians within wider multiprofessional workforce models and supports consistency.

Why has the Skills for Health Career Framework been used?

The Skills for Health Career Framework was recommended through the Phase 1 project and provides a recognised multiprofessional framework that supports workforce planning, career progression and role development across healthcare professions.

Using an established framework creates a common language around levels of practice and supports alignment of pharmacy technicians with the wider healthcare workforce. It was a reference source for the project team to use.

Did the project team consider other framework and pathways?

Yes.

The project team reviewed a range of workforce, career development and professional practice frameworks during pathway development, including:

- ACCEND Career Pathway and Core Cancer Capabilities in Practice Framework
- NHS Scotland Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions Development Framework
- Transforming Roles Pharmacy Technician and Pharmacy Support Workforce Frameworks (Scotland) (in development)
- HEIW Professional Framework for Enhanced, Advanced and Consultant Clinical Practice (Wales)
- FIP Global Roadmap 2030: Sustainable Advancement for Pharmacy Worldwide
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society (now Royal College of Pharmacy) professional development frameworks
- Other workforce and development frameworks used across healthcare professions

These frameworks informed the structure, language, presentation and usability of the pathway.

However, the Skills for Health Career Framework was selected as the primary framework because it was recommended through the Phase 1 project and provides recognised multiprofessional alignment.

Why is multiprofessional alignment important for pharmacy technicians?

Multiprofessional alignment helps:

- Position pharmacy technicians consistently within the wider healthcare workforce.
- Support workforce transformation.
- Improve workforce mobility.
- Support integrated care models.
- Create a common understanding of levels of practice across professions.

This was a key objective of the career pathway.

3. Enhanced, Advanced and Consultant Practice

Does 'Enhanced Practice' mean the same thing for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians?

No.

For pharmacy technicians, Enhanced Practice (Level 6) is a level within the UK-wide Pharmacy Technician Career Pathway. It describes practice characterised by increased autonomy, expertise, leadership and influence.

For pharmacists, Enhanced Practice is a defined stage of professional development supported by the RCPHarm Enhanced Pharmacist Curriculum and associated credentialing process as defined by RCPHarm.

Although the same term is used, it serves different purposes within the two resources and should not be considered directly equivalent.

Why does the proposed pathway currently stop at Enhanced Practice (Level 6)?

The Phase 1 project identified that further work was required to establish the evidence base for Advanced Practice (Level 7) and Consultant Practice (Level 8), particularly within the clinical pillar.

As part of the Phase 2 project, over 60 pharmacy technician case studies were mapped against the Skills for Health Career Framework level descriptors. This work confirmed the findings of the Phase 1 project. Whilst evidence was identified to support Enhanced Practice, there remained limited evidence to support robust development of Advanced and Consultant levels, particularly within the clinical pillar.

The project team therefore chose to proceed with development of a pathway to Enhanced Practice rather than delay publication whilst further evidence for higher levels was gathered.

This allows the profession to benefit from a structured career pathway now whilst future work explores Advanced and Consultant levels.

Does this mean pharmacy technicians cannot work at advanced or consultant levels?

No.

The consultation does not suggest that pharmacy technicians are unable to work at higher levels of practice.

Rather, there is currently insufficient evidence available to define a UK-wide pathway for Advanced and Consultant practice consistently across all pillar of practice, at the moment.

Could advanced and consultant levels be developed in the future?

Yes.

The current consultation proposes a pathway to Enhanced Practice as the first phase of implementation. Future phases of work may explore development of Advanced and Consultant pathways as the evidence base develops and consultation feedback is considered.

4. Capability Statements

What are the capability statements?

The capability statements describe the types of practice that may typically be demonstrated by pharmacy technicians working at different levels of practice.

They are organised across the four pillars of multiprofessional practice:

- Clinical Practice
- Leadership and Management
- Education
- Research

They are intended to support professional development, career conversations, reflection and workforce development.

Are the capability statements competency statements?

No.

The capability statements are not competency standards, assessment criteria, accreditation requirements or professional standards.

They are descriptions of capability that may typically be demonstrated by pharmacy technicians at different levels of practice.

Are the capability statements intended to be used as a checklist?

No.

The capability statements are not intended to be used as a tick-box exercise and individuals are not expected to complete every statement.

They are intended to support discussion, reflection and development.

Why are the capability statements so broad?

The pathway has been developed for pharmacy technicians working across all sectors, settings, specialties and UK nations.

Highly specific statements would be difficult to apply consistently across the profession and would result in a very large and complex framework.

The statements are therefore intentionally broad so that they can be interpreted within different professional contexts whilst still supporting career development discussions.

Do I need to demonstrate every capability statement?

No.

No individual is expected to demonstrate every capability statement across every pillar and domain. Different roles will naturally emphasise different capabilities.

How should the capability statements be used?

The capability statements may support:

- Career conversations
- Self-assessment and reflection
- Personal development planning
- Appraisal discussions
- Revalidation
- Identification of learning and development needs

They are intended to support professional development and progression rather than assess competence.

5. Credentialing, Assessment and Competence

Does completing the Pharmacy Technician Career Pathway lead to credentialing?

No.

The Career Pathway supports professional development and progression through recognised levels of practice. It is not currently intended to:

- Credential individuals.
- Assess competence.
- Provide a pass/fail outcome.
- Act as a professional accreditation process.

Its primary purpose is to support career development, workforce planning and professional growth

Is the career pathway a competency framework?

No.

The Career Pathway is designed to support career development and professional progression. It is not a competency framework and should not be used as a competency assessment tool.

Is the career pathway an assessment process?

No.

The pathway is designed as a developmental resource and not an assessment framework.

6. Employment, Banding and Job Titles

Does the career pathway determine Agenda for Change banding or job titles?

No.

The Pharmacy Technician Career Pathway describes levels of professional practice and supports career development. It is not intended to determine Agenda for Change banding, job titles or grading. Decisions about pay banding and job evaluation remain the responsibility of employers and should continue to follow established national job evaluation processes and local organisational procedures. There is not a direct link between a specific pathway level and a particular Agenda for Change band or job title.

7. Benefits for Patients, the Public and the Workforce

Why does a career pathway matter to patients and the public?

The pathway has been developed to support better patient care.

It is developed to help ensure pharmacy technicians develop the knowledge, skills, judgement, leadership behaviours and experience needed to contribute safely and effectively within modern healthcare systems.

For patients and the public, this means:

- Greater confidence in the development of pharmacy professionals.
- Improved quality and safety of medicines-related care.
- More effective multidisciplinary and integrated care.
- Greater consistency in professional standards across sectors and settings.
- Better workforce capability to meet current and future service needs.
- Improved patient outcomes through continuous professional development, service improvement and innovation.