

PHARMACY AND THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

To qualify as a pharmacist, you will need to complete a four-year General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) - accredited Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) course, followed by a year of pre-registration experience in the community or a hospital. Application deadlines for MPharm courses vary from year to year, so use some of the links below when planning your applications. Opportunities for community pharmacy are more competitive in the South East, but less so in the East of England. Gaining work experience is always important to maximise your chances.

Areas of employment within the pharmaceutical industry include clinical trials, manufacturing and supply, marketing, medical sales and research and development (R&D). Many employers will look for a graduate with a science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) background. Some roles (especially R&D) will demand a particular qualification e.g. those working in drug development will need a degree in biochemistry, chemistry or pharmacology. Postgraduate qualifications such as an MSc or PhD are highly regarded in the sector and may be a prerequisite for certain roles, especially in research and development.

You could work in a scientific setting but undertake jobs drawing on other skills, such as supply chain management and logistics, sales and marketing, HR and finance. These broader business roles may be open to graduates of non-STEM disciplines.

Whichever role you are drawn to employers in the sector value a broad range of skills in addition to your technical academic background. The main ones include commercial awareness, communication and interpersonal skills, creativity, teamwork, presentation skills and an open-minded approach to new ideas and concepts plus strong IT and numeracy skills. You will need to provide evidence that you have started to gain these skills on your application forms and at interview. Think broadly about any extracurricular activities, clubs and societies, part-time jobs, placements and internships you have undertaken, especially where you've gained experience of budgeting, marketing, how a business runs or society fundraising. All these activities will help you provide evidence that you have gained some commercial awareness.

The large employers such as AstraZeneca, GSK, Reckitt Benckiser (RB), Novartis, Pfizer, the NHS and the STFC offer graduate schemes and sometimes internships and work placements. You can find out about vacancies on the company websites or through Careers. You can also search for graduate science and pharmaceutical jobs in the specialist press or through sector-specific recruitment agencies. Professional bodies e.g. the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industries (APBI) advertise vacancies as well as provide careers advice.

Key Resources

Pharmacy

- [British Pharmaceutical Students' Society \(bpsa.co.uk\)](http://bpsa.co.uk) (insights into the profession, training, pre-registration year and opportunities – national and international)
- [General Pharmaceutical Council \(GPhC\) \(pharmacyregulation.org\)](http://pharmacyregulation.org) (training and registration for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians)
- [Royal Pharmaceutical Society \(rpharms.com/development\)](http://rpharms.com/development) (career, education and professional development for pharmacists and allied roles)
- Boots.jobs/pharmacy
- [Mckessonjobs.uk/careers-at-mckesson \(LloydsPharmacy\)](http://Mckessonjobs.uk/careers-at-mckesson)
- Daylewis.co.uk/careersatdaylewis
- Well.co.uk/jobs/working-in-pharmacy

Pharmaceutical industry

- [The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry \(apbi.org.uk\)](http://apbi.org.uk) (careers advice and members directory from the professional body)
- [Prospects.ac.uk overview of the science and pharmaceutical sector](http://Prospects.ac.uk) - Key roles, skills required and employers
- Targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/science-and-research (overview which includes the pharmaceutical industry)
- jobs.newscientist.com (science and technology jobs, course and careers advice)
- nature.com/naturecareers (live vacancies and careers advice)
- [AstraZeneca and MedImmune careers \(careers.astrazeneca.com\)](http://careers.astrazeneca.com)
- gsk.com
- [Reckitt Benckiser \(rb.com/careers\)](http://rb.com/careers)
- Novartis.co.uk/careers
- Pfizer.co.uk/careers
- healthcareers.nhs.uk (graduate training programmes including Scientist Training Programme (STP))
- Stfccareers.co.uk/careers/graduates (science & Technology Facilities Council Graduate Scheme)
- Rssl.com (Reading Scientific Services Ltd. is on the WhiteKnights campus)

You may also be interested in...

- Charity and development work
- Chemistry and chemical engineering
- Education and research
- Food technology and marketing
- Health
- Science - meteorology

Access this page and more industries at reading.ac.uk/careers/resources

