

Intern policy

Relevance to Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003

1. Part 2 s12 and s13

Policy Statement

2. Registration in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice, completion of the approved intern training programme and passing Council assessments are required for New Zealand and Australian pharmacy graduates and certain other pharmacists to progress to registration in the Pharmacist scope. Council has regulatory oversight of pharmacists registered in the Intern Pharmacist scope to ensure public safety. The Intern policy provides an outline of Council intent and expectations during the period leading to registration in the Pharmacist scope of practice.

Rationale and principles

3. Council has responsibility for assuring public safety from the practice of pharmacists, including those registered in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice.
4. Principles governing this policy reflect Council's legislative responsibilities, operating principles and values, including:
 - 4.1 Assurance of public safety through mitigation of risk,
 - 4.2 Regulation that is appropriate and proportionate to identified risks,
 - 4.3 Fairness and transparency
5. This policy outlines how Council fulfils its public safety remit to ensure that intern pharmacists are prepared for practice as registered Pharmacists by assuring competence to practise as outlined in the Competence Standards for the Pharmacy Profession 2015¹.
6. The premise of this policy is that pharmacists are well-prepared for registration in the Pharmacist scope of practice when they have the requisite knowledge and skills, and demonstrate the behaviours embodied in the *Competence Standards for the Pharmacy Profession*. Council recognises that pharmacist competence is dependent on high-quality learning and supervision in the workplace, and opportunities for intern pharmacists to develop and consolidate new skills and knowledge.

¹ Or later version

7. The most significant risk to public safety that is addressed by this policy is insufficient clinical skills and knowledge. The accredited intern training programme and Council's registration assessment provide assurance of acquisition of knowledge and skills. This policy supports development and consolidation of those skills in the period leading to Pharmacist registration by mitigating effects of a longer-than-usual period to achieve Pharmacist registration, for example, due to:
 - 7.1 Extended period between graduating (or last practising in the instance of a non-comparable applicant) and registration as an intern pharmacist
 - 7.2 Multiple attempts at the Council assessment
 - 7.3 Absence from practice

Application and definitions

8. A pharmacy graduate is a graduate of Bachelor of Pharmacy who has not yet attained registration and is actively seeking² registration as an Intern Pharmacist. A pharmacy graduate may not use the titles Intern or Intern Pharmacist.
9. An intern pharmacist is a person registered in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice. Intern registration is granted for two years.
10. The Intern Policy applies to all those who are registered, or who have applied to be registered, in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice. They may be
 - 10.1.1 Graduates of an accredited Bachelor of Pharmacy programme

An accredited programme may be a New Zealand Bachelor of Pharmacy programme accredited by the Pharmacy Council or an Australian Bachelor of Pharmacy programme accredited by the Australian Pharmacy Council, or
 - 10.1.2 Non-comparable³ applicants

Applicants with pharmacy qualifications from a country other than Australia, Canada, Ireland, the UK or the USA who wish to register in the Pharmacist scope in New Zealand.
11. The policy is supported by process and explanatory appendices which may be amended from time to time without necessitating changes to the policy.
 - 11.1 **Appendix A: Practice under supervision** provides information relating to practice under supervision while enrolled in the ITP.

² A graduate may be deemed "actively seeking" only if he or she is eligible to be considered for registration or reinstatement into the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice. ³ Non-comparable Pathway for registration for qualified pharmacists from certain countries

³ Non-comparable Pathway for registration for qualified pharmacists from certain countries

11.2 **Appendix B: Intern assessment** contains information about the Assessment Centre.

Registration in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice

12. Graduates of an accredited Bachelor of Pharmacy programme must register in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice within two years of completing their degree⁴.
13. Overseas pharmacists following the non-comparable application pathway to registration must register in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice within two years of passing the KAPS⁵ examination.
14. Applicants for registration in the Intern Pharmacist scope must have sufficient command of the English language to protect the health and safety of the public, in accordance with the [HPCA Act 2003 Part 2 s16\(b\)](#).
15. Intern pharmacists must practise under the supervision of a pharmacist who has a current annual practising certificate. The Intern Pharmacist scope of practice is described in the New Zealand Gazette notice [Pharmacy Council Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Amendment Notice 2014](#) or later amendment.
16. The intern training programme, Council assessment and any other requirements for Pharmacist registration must be completed while registered in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice.
17. Registration in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice expires after a maximum of two years (24 months). The expiry date is a condition on scope of practice and is published on the [public register](#).
18. Reinstatement into the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice for an additional 12 months (third year) is at the sole discretion of Council.

The intern training programme (ITP)

19. Successful completion of an accredited ITP is a prescribed qualification for Pharmacist registration.
20. The ITP is a structured programme of acquiring and practising clinical knowledge and skills. It is undertaken over a minimum of 37 weeks (approximately nine months) full-time equivalent while working in an approved pharmacy training site (training site) under the supervision of a registered pharmacist who has been approved to take responsibility for, and oversee the training of, an intern pharmacist (preceptor).
21. Intern pharmacists enrolled in the ITP must work a minimum of 35 hours per week⁶ in their training site.

⁴ Deemed successfully completed by the relevant university

⁵ Knowledge Assessment of Pharmaceutical Sciences

⁶ A minimum of 35 hours per week is deemed full-time equivalent. Variations in hours for non-comparable pathway intern pharmacists may be permitted by the Society.

22. The Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand (Society) provides the Council-accredited ITP, EVOLVE. Policies and processes for entry⁷ into, and progress through, the programme are the responsibility of the Society.
23. Accreditation of the EVOLVE programme is a decision of Council based on periodic evaluation against accreditation standards. Through the process of accreditation, Council is assured of the quality of the programme and its fitness for purpose.
24. Intern pharmacists are expected to enrol in EVOLVE at the first opportunity following registration in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice to ensure they apply the knowledge and skills that were attained in the undergraduate pharmacy degree programme.
25. The Society has sole responsibility and accountability for determining that an intern has successfully completed the EVOLVE programme.

Council assessments

26. The Assessment Centre is a qualification prescribed by Council for registration in the Pharmacist scope of practice.

Eligibility to register in the Pharmacist scope of practice

27. An intern pharmacist who has a current annual practising certificate and has met the following requirements may apply for registration in the Pharmacist scope of practice.

27.1 Successful completion of the ITP

27.2 Passed the Assessment Centre, and

27.3 Is not the subject of unresolved notifications to Council relating to: health, conduct or competence

28. It is expected that all intern pharmacists remain working in a supportive pharmacy environment until they are granted Pharmacist registration. An intern pharmacist who has met the requirements must register in the Pharmacist scope within four months of being notified of passing Assessment Centre⁸.

Exceptional circumstances

29. Exceptions to requirements outlined in this policy and its attachments will be considered by Council upon receipt of an application in writing which includes a rationale for variation from the policy and/or its appendices

⁷ Including start date

⁸ and completion of additional registration requirements that have been applied on a case-by-case basis by Council

Intern policy

Appendix A: Practice under supervision

To be read in conjunction with the Intern policy

1. Pharmacists registered in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice and who are not enrolled in the intern training programme must be supervised by a pharmacist who has a current annual practising certificate.
2. Intern pharmacists who are enrolled in the accredited intern training programme (ITP) must complete a period of practice in an approved pharmacy training site under supervision of an approved preceptor.

Practice under supervision and enrolment in the ITP

3. All practising intern pharmacists must be supervised by a qualified pharmacist who has a current practising certificate.
4. An intern pharmacist may apply to the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand (Society) to enrol in the EVOLVE intern training programme.
5. Delivery of the EVOLVE programme, including approval of training sites and preceptors, is undertaken by the Society.
6. Start date for the EVOLVE programme is set by the Society.
7. The EVOLVE programme includes a minimum period of practice under direct supervision of an approved preceptor in an approved training site. The minimum period is set by the Society after agreement by Council.
8. It is expected that all intern pharmacists remain working in a supportive pharmacy environment until they are granted Pharmacist registration.

Approval of intern training sites

9. Training sites must be suitable environments for development and consolidation of knowledge and skills for safe pharmacy practice. Council supports the Society's *Quality Standards for Intern Training – preceptors and pharmacy sites* which contains expectations of a training site and preceptors.
10. An approved training site is expected to be one (or more) physical premises that may be:
 - a. Single site: one site only involving direct patient care (hospital or community)
 - b. Shared site: two sites involving direct patient care (hospital or community)
 - c. Split site: two sites, combination of direct patient care (hospital or community) and indirect patient care

11. Approval of training sites is the responsibility of the Society as provider of the EVOLVE programme. Approval must be reviewed every three years, or more frequently at the discretion of the Society, or if concerns are raised about the site.
12. The Society must ensure a training site is a suitable learning environment. Information provided to the Society by owners¹ of training sites, or prospective training sites, must demonstrate or attest to:
 - a. Compliance with licensing or other regulatory requirements, including audits.
 - b. For split training sites:
 - i. Intern pharmacist will be supervised by an approved preceptor in each site;
 - ii. Intern pharmacist will practise for
 1. A minimum of 35 hours per fortnight in practice involving direct patient care in a community or hospital pharmacy, and
 2. A maximum of 35 hours per fortnight in a practice that does not involve direct patient care, but which has a focus on clinical skills and knowledge.
13. Council may rescind approval of an intern training site if it breaches this policy. The Society may also rescind approval if it believes the site to be unsuitable as a training environment. Application for re-approval after resolution of the issues that led to rescindment must be made to the Society.

Approval of training sites after change of ownership and approval of new pharmacies as training sites

14. As soon as practicable after a pharmacy changes ownership, or a new pharmacy applies to become a training site, the Society must assess the pharmacy for approval as a training site.

Approval of preceptors

15. A preceptor is a registered pharmacist who has been approved by the Society to take responsibility for, and oversee the training of, an intern pharmacist. Approval of pharmacists as preceptors is the responsibility of the Society as provider of the EVOLVE programme.
16. The Society must ensure a prospective preceptor meets, at a minimum, the following Council requirements prior to approving. Where the Society does not have sufficient information, it must seek advice from Council.
 - a. At least three years' experience in practice after registration as a Pharmacist. For pharmacists from overseas, at least one year of the required experience must be subsequent to Pharmacist registration in New Zealand,
 - b. A current annual practising certificate without conditions,

¹ A pharmacist owner or a responsible pharmacist nominated by the owner

- c. Council does not have concerns relating to health, conduct or competence that may affect a pharmacist's ability to undertake the preceptor role.
 - d. Undertake Society preceptor training within two months of becoming a preceptor².
17. Council reserves the right to rescind approval of a preceptor if it has reason to believe that rescindment is in the interest of public safety. The Society may also rescind approval if Council's, or the Society's own, requirements are not met. Application for re-approval after resolution of the issues that led to rescindment must be made to the Society.

Limits to supervision within a training site

18. Council recognises that quality of supervision and opportunities for teaching and learning may be reduced when a pharmacist supervises too many pharmacy learners. Constraints on supervision apply if the pharmacist is an approved preceptor for intern pharmacists enrolled in the EVOLVE programme.
19. An approved preceptor may supervise a maximum of two intern pharmacists who are enrolled in the EVOLVE programme.
20. A preceptor who is supervising two intern pharmacists who are enrolled in the EVOLVE programme may not supervise other pharmacy learners³.
21. Council expects careful management within a pharmacy to ensure all pharmacy learners have suitable access to high-quality learning experiences.

² Variations when training schedules do not align with the two-month requirement may be permitted at the discretion of the Society.

³ Other pharmacy learners may include, but are not limited to, interns not enrolled in the ITP, trainee pharmacy technicians, trainee pharmacy accuracy checking technicians, undergraduate pharmacy students and pharmacy graduates.

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Appendix B: Intern assessment

To be read in conjunction with the Intern policy

1. Council must be assured of competency to practise before it registers a pharmacist in the Pharmacist scope of practice.
2. Council's qualifications for registration of New Zealand or Australian graduates in the Pharmacist scope of practice are:
 - a. Graduation from an accredited New Zealand Bachelor of Pharmacy degree or from an approved Australian pharmacy degree; and
 - b. Successful completion of the accredited New Zealand intern training programme; and
 - c. Pass in the Council assessment: Assessment Centre.

Council intern assessment

3. An intern pharmacist must have a current practising certificate (APC) at the time of applying for, and undertaking, each attempt at the Assessment Centre.
4. Prescribed qualifications will be **successfully completed** in the following order:
 - a. Intern training programme, then
 - b. Assessment Centre

Assessment Centre must not be attended until formal notification that the intern training programme has been successfully completed.

Assessment Centre

5. The Assessment Centre is a 10-station objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) which tests clinical skills.
6. Intern pharmacists are eligible to attend the Assessment Centre after they have successfully completed the EVOLVE intern training programme.
7. The earliest opportunity to sit the Assessment Centre for first-time candidates is in November of their first intern year.
8. The Assessment Centre is offered twice a year, usually November and May.
9. The November Assessment Centre is held in Auckland and Wellington, and the May Assessment Centre is held in Wellington. Dates and relevant information are published on the Council website.
10. The number of attempts permitted for Assessment Centre is limited to the number of Assessment Centre opportunities that occur during the period an intern pharmacist is registered in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice.

11. To increase likelihood of successfully demonstrating competence at Assessment Centre after one or more attempts, Council strongly encourages an intern pharmacist to seek employment in a supportive pharmacy environment while preparing for the assessment.