

Feedback from the July 2021 registration assessment sittings

About this document

This document contains feedback drawn from candidate performance in the General Pharmaceutical Council's (GPhC's) July 2021 registration assessments. It is from the board of assessors, the body that sets and moderates the registration assessment.

The registration assessment framework

All questions in the registration assessment are derived from the assessment framework. The different outcomes have different weighting and candidates should use the framework as the basis for preparation. Many questions in the assessment concern patients who have co-morbidities and these questions are mapped across multiple parts of the framework.

The application of underpinning knowledge is tested in both part 1 and part 2 of the assessment.

Part 1

All the questions in part 1 of the registration assessment reflect scenarios that could be encountered when practising as a pharmacist. When reviewing their answers, candidates should check that each answer is practical and realistic as this will help identify incorrect answers. Examples of answers given in July that are not practical or realistic include:

- one tube of oromucosal gel lasting for almost two years of treatment
- preparing a footbath using 40 L of water
- recommending doses 10 and 100 times above or below the recommended doses

When necessary, instructions are provided in the question about rounding for the final inputted answer. Examples of instructions include:

- round your answer up to the nearest pound
- give your answer to one decimal place
- give your answer to the nearest 0.05 mL
- give your answer to the nearest multiple of 5 mL

Candidates are expected to apply their underpinning knowledge and round at appropriate stages in a pharmacy calculation. In some questions, the rounding should occur at the end of the calculation, but in other questions rounding should occur earlier in the calculation. For example, when calculating the total amount of a medicine that should be supplied, rounding should occur for an individual dose before calculating a final amount.

Examples of part 1 questions are available via the GPhC website.

Part 2

The majority of candidates performed well in the topics tested in part 2.

The following list highlights topics answered less well and outlines expectations:

- Candidates are expected to be able to differentiate between red flag symptoms and those that are most likely associated with illness that can be managed appropriately with advice from a pharmacist. For example, a child with symptoms that might indicate sepsis should be referred urgently whereas a pharmacist can offer advice on symptomatic relief for most children with chickenpox.
- Candidates are expected to be aware of the evidence and be able to apply this knowledge when recommending non-prescription medicines for individual patients. Non-prescription medicines should not be recommended unless there is evidence to support their use.
- Candidates are expected to know which types of contraception are most effective. This includes:
 - being able to advise on the most effective emergency contraception
 - knowing which methods of contraception are highly effective and can be recommended for women taking any medicine with teratogenic potential
- Candidates are expected to understand the differences between an adverse drug reaction and an allergy, particularly in relation to antibiotic prescribing and choosing the most appropriate antibiotic for a patient. The use of broad spectrum, non-penicillin antibiotics in people who could be optimally treated with a penicillin-based antibiotic may lead to antibiotic resistance and/or suboptimal therapy.
- Candidates are expected to know that breastfeeding is an important public health issue and be able to advise on the use of medicines in breastfeeding and on the treatment of common conditions such as mastitis.
- Candidates should know about and understand the safety considerations associated with the use of valproate in women and girls of childbearing age and be able to advise those taking valproate on the most appropriate actions in different situations.

Examples of part 2 questions are available via the GPhC website.