

## Information for employers of European Economic Area (EEA) pharmacists

This document is intended to provide some basic information and advice for those involved in employing and recruiting EEA qualified pharmacists as registered pharmacists in Great Britain.

### Overview

For information on the different routes to the Register for non-UK qualified pharmacists, please visit [here](#). To see this information in the form of a flowchart, please [visit here](#). This information gives general information on the different application routes, however there can be no guarantee of an individual's eligibility to register until an application has been completed.

### Competence of Applicants

All EEA qualified pharmacists who hold EEA nationality make an application through [this](#) process. The vast majority of EEA pharmacists applying this route are not subject to an assessment of competence by the RPSGB. This is because they are granted registration with the RPSGB on the basis of either their qualification meeting the minimum training requirements of Article 44 of European Directive 2005/36/EC or their work experience meeting the requirements of Article 23.

For a qualification to meet the training requirements of Article 44 it must be of 5 years duration (including at least 4 years of academic study and at least 6 months of full time in-service training). The qualification must also cover the following [subjects](#) (listed in Annex V, section 5.6.2 of Directive 2005/36/EC on page 105).

A whole range of qualifications can meet these minimum requirements, including those awarded many years ago. As the qualification provides EEA rights, there is no requirement that an applicant has worked as a pharmacist post qualification, or has kept their knowledge and skills up-to-date via continuing professional development. That is not to say that an EEA pharmacist does not necessarily have the knowledge, skills and experience to work effectively and productively as a pharmacist in Great Britain, however it is important to stress that it is incumbent on any employer of a pharmacist qualified in the EEA to ensure that they hold the required competence to undertake the role.

### English Language

Current legislation prevents the Society from requiring EEA nationals to provide proof of their English language ability. The responsibility of ensuring that an applicant's English language ability is adequate for the role falls upon the employer and the applicant themselves (once they are on the Register), as stated by the [Code of Ethics](#). For more information please visit [here](#).

The Society cannot recommend any particular English language testing systems, however when we are able to require an English test we use the International English Language Testing System ([IELTS](#)) and require a score of academic level 7 in every category of the test in one sitting.

## **Providing an induction period**

It is highly advisable that, when employing an EEA pharmacist who is newly on the RPSGB Register, employers offer an induction period. The ways of working, subjects covered in the qualification and legal and ethical requirements may be very different in an EEA pharmacist's Member State to those in Great Britain. An induction period should be used to identify any differences and to provide training to bridge such gaps. Placing a newly registered EEA pharmacist in sole charge of a busy pharmacy without any prior assessment of their competence or any training and support would not be acceptable practice.

## **Offers of employment**

The Society receives around 700 applications from EEA pharmacists per year. Of these, around 500 per year register with the Society. Making an [initial application](#) to the Society does not, therefore, guarantee that the applicant will complete their registration.

There are several reasons why an application will not be completed. Some applicants simply decide not to register. Others may turn out to not have the right to register in accordance with Directive 2005/36/EC. There may also be fitness to practise issues that prevent an applicant from registering.

Until an EEA pharmacist is on the Register of Pharmacists therefore, it should not be assumed that their registration will be completed. Any job offers that you make should take this into account. You should also take into account the time it can take to process an application and complete a registration. We generally respond to initial applications within 1 week and to any additional documentation within 1 week. It is possible for some applications to be completed in a matter of a few weeks therefore. However, some applications can take much longer than this. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the required documentation is correct and submitted in a timely manner – not doing so will cause delays to applications. Other delays can be due a complicated application that requires clarification from another EEA member state's [competent authority](#).

For any clarification on the information provided above or for any further information, please contact the International Registration Division either by phone (0207 572 2317) or by email ([overseas@rpsgb.org](mailto:overseas@rpsgb.org)).