

Pharmacist

Pharmacists work either in a community or retail pharmacy or in a hospital or clinical pharmacy.

The Work

Community or Retail Pharmacist

You could be:

- supplying over the counter and prescribed medicines to the general public
- making sure that medicines are stored securely and correctly labelled
- checking that dosages and instructions on prescriptions are accurate and clear
- referring back to a doctor if there is a problem, for example a conflict with other medication the person is taking
- preparing prescriptions and advising people how to use medicines properly
- managing and training other pharmacy support staff
- advising customers on a range of health matters and referring them to their doctor or dentist if needed
- carrying out cholesterol and blood pressure checks and diabetes screening
- keeping records and business accounts up to date and handling cash.

Hospital or Clinical Pharmacist

You could be:

- making sure that drugs and medicines are stored securely and correctly labelled
- checking the quality of medical products
- preparing drugs and medical products and arranging for them to be delivered to various hospital departments
- maintaining and ordering supplies
- advising and informing staff and patients on the best drugs to use
- making rounds of the wards with other medical staff to see patients and discuss medication
- training and supervising pharmacy support staff
- keeping records and completing forms.

Pay

Pay rates can vary depending on whether the pharmacist works with the National Health Service (NHS), with a private practice, or is self-employed.

Pharmacists working within the NHS are on Agenda for Change scales. The current pay scales are from April 2021. Pre-registration pharmacists are normally on Band 5, £26,104 to £32,915 a year. After registration pharmacists are on Band 6, £33,072 to £40,736 a year. Clinical and specialist pharmacists are on Band 7, £40,872 to £47,846 a year. Senior pharmacists and team leaders are on Band 8a, £50,470 to £54,482 a year and Band 8b, £60,730 to

£65,377 a year.

Salaries for community pharmacists range from £23,000 to £50,000 a year depending on experience and size of pharmacy.

Conditions

- Community or retail pharmacists work in shops including chain stores and supermarkets – they may visit people at home.
- Hospital or clinical pharmacists work in laboratories or dispensaries and may visit patients in the wards or in residential homes – they may sometimes work in health centres.
- All types of pharmacists usually work regular hours although retail pharmacists may have to work at weekends or in the evening, and hospital pharmacists sometimes have to work shifts.
- Flexible or part time hours are possible.
- Pharmacists usually have to wear a white lab coat or other protective clothing.

Getting In

- You need a degree in pharmacy. In Scotland, the University of Strathclyde and Robert Gordon University offer a Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree course.
- Entry to Robert Gordon is 4 Highers at ABBB (but typically AABB) including English and Chemistry, plus two further science subjects or Maths.
- Entry to Strathclyde is 4 Highers at AAAB (English at B, Maths, Biology and Chemistry at A), plus Advanced Higher Biology and Chemistry at BB.
- Check with institutions for full details and for widening access entry.
- To work as a pharmacist you need to register with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). You can do this on completion of the necessary qualifications and one year pre-registration training (see 'Training' below).

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- methodical and pay close attention to detail
- accurate and precise – mistakes could be fatal
- a good organiser
- willing to take responsibility
- able to get on well with people, both colleagues and customers
- able to explain detailed and sensitive information to the public
- patient and understanding when dealing with the public.

You should have:

- IT skills
- a professional manner
- a good memory

- business skills if working as a retail or community pharmacist.

Training

- After completing your MPharm degree, you would complete a one year pre-registration training course and pass a registration assessment to gain GPhC registration.
- Most hospital pharmacists go on to take a postgraduate certificate or diploma in clinical pharmacy.
- You need to keep up to date with research and development of new drugs.

Getting On

- You will be required to keep your skills and knowledge up to date by undertaking continuous professional development (CPD) courses throughout your career.
- You could be self-employed, either as a locum or running a high street pharmacy.
- You can train as a supplementary prescriber, to work in a Primary Health Care Trust.
- There are opportunities to teach or do research.
- There are also opportunities in general management and advisory or consultancy work.
- You can take specialist postgraduate courses.

Contacts

Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI)

Tel: 0207 9303477

Website: www.abpi.org.uk

Twitter: @ABPI_UK

General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)

Tel: 0203 713 8000

Email: info@pharmacyregulation.org

Website: www.pharmacyregulation.org

Twitter: @TheGPhC

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheGPhC

National Pharmacy Association (NPA)

Tel: 01727 858687

Email: npa@npa.co.uk

Website: www.npa.co.uk

Twitter: @NPA1921

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Supportyourlocalpharmacy

NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Twitter: @NHSScotCareers

Royal Pharmaceutical Society Scotland

Tel: 0845 257 2570

Email: scotinfo@rpharms.com

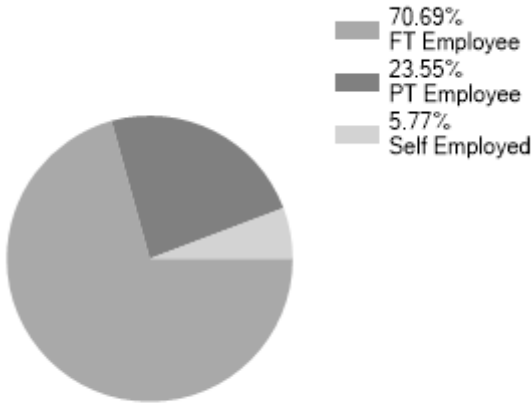
Website: www.rpharms.com

Twitter: @rpharms

Facebook: www.facebook.com/royalpharmsoc

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

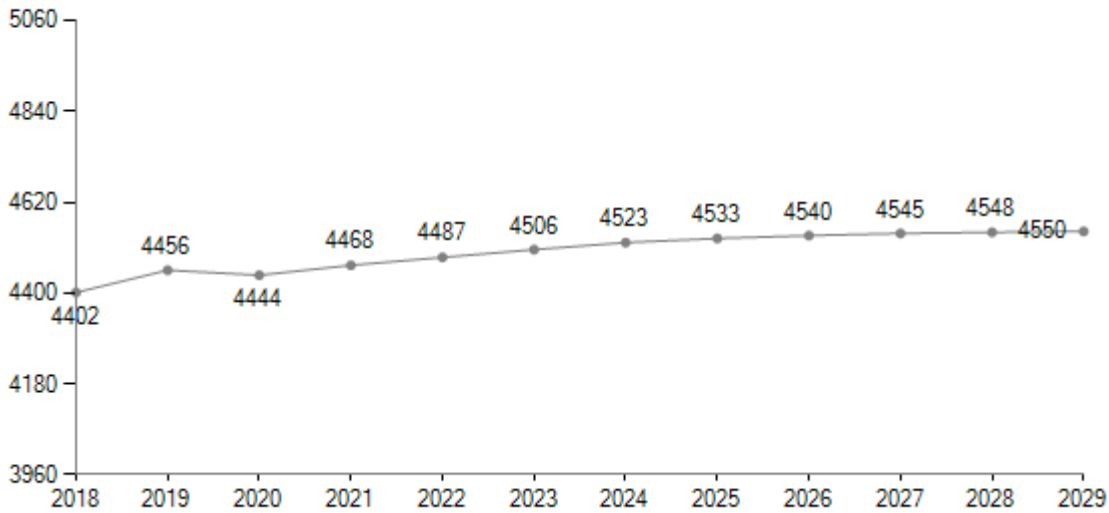


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)