

City and Guilds Pharmacy Service Skills/ Pharmaceutical Science

Frequently asked questions.

Q. With regards to Certificate/Diploma in Pharmacy Service Skills at level 2 and 3, how do I assess range?

A. All learning outcomes within the units in the Pharmacy qualifications have a number of corresponding assessment criteria; some of these assessment criteria also specify a range, to give context to evidence opportunities. The range is printed in **bold** type and, as this is part of the assessment criterion, there is the need to have some evidence demonstrating competence against each one. Guidance is given in standard type and it begins with the wording “this could be...”

These are examples of the sort of activity that could be used. Not all have to be covered and there may be others that crop up that are not included in the guidance, but it is essential that a broad range is covered. This will depend on where the trainee works and could vary from candidate to candidate.

The assessor should use his/her professional judgement and experience to gauge what range examples are required by the candidate to demonstrate competence which will ensure safe practice.

Robust quality assurance by the IQA and the Awarding Organisation are an essential requirement, to monitor the assessment process and to ensure standardisation across all assessors and assessment sites.

Assessors should discuss the requirements with the candidate at the planning stage and this should be documented through the assessment records. Centre policies should show how the variety of range is recorded sufficiently.

Q How do I assess the NVQ level 3 Diploma in Pharmacy Service Skills- Unit 009 – Prepare extemporaneous medicines for individual use if the workplace does not normally make extemporaneous products in the workplace?

A. It is acknowledged that trainees may not have the opportunity to make extemporaneous products in the workplace. It is therefore acceptable to assess this unit by simulation. However any simulation must be as realistic as possible and must allow the trainee the opportunity to produce a worksheet, source a formula, calculate quantities as if they had received a prescription for a patient. The products must also be sufficiently complex and varied to enable the trainee to demonstrate the depth of skill using a variety of techniques. Simulations must be planned and approved by the IQA and the Portfolio Consultant (External Verifier).

Here are some examples of acceptable activities:

1. Prepare a topical product such as a cream or ointment which may involve incorporating a solid powder into a semi-solid base.

2. Prepare a suspension which requires tablets to be ground down and mixed with a suspending agent
3. Dilute an oral medicine referring to the correct reference source for information on the diluent, stability and labelling requirements.

There must be a variety of products and the assessor must use his/her professional judgement to ensure that the candidate has sufficient experience to be able to practice safely. Some trainees will be attending training providers, such as colleges, for their Diploma in Pharmaceutical Science level 3 qualification and may therefore be involved in practical sessions. The training provider can act as a witness or expert witness provided they meet assessment strategy requirements. If the corresponding unit has been achieved then the assessor could perform a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment.

New Framework Training, Assessing and Quality Assurance qualifications (TAQA) and simulation.

Assessors who hold D32/33 or A1 qualifications are competent to assess using simulation. The new TAQA suite of qualifications comprises a number of units which come together under the rules of combination to produce a number of options. It is expected that assessors in a pharmacy workplace will hold: **Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment**. The skill of assessing by simulation is not included in this qualification. Therefore an assessor who holds this award should not assess by simulation. It is therefore suggested that when a simulation is required that a third party is involved so the assessor can observe the activity or assess it as an expert witness testimony.