

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Background:

What is the CPPE ACPT programme?

The *Accuracy checking pharmacy technician (ACPT)* programme offered by CPPE is a comprehensive learning package designed to develop the skills and knowledge of pharmacy technicians who work in a dispensary environment. It takes account of national standards and includes tasks that enable pharmacy technicians to demonstrate leadership. Successful completion of assessment leads to certification as an ACPT, qualifying the individual to undertake the final accuracy check of clinically screened, dispensed items autonomously.

Why has this programme been developed?

Health Education England (HEE) London and South East (LaSE) invited tenders for provision of ACPT training and assessment across London, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. This was subject to open competition and CPPE was selected as the preferred bidder. The programme has been developed in response to this contract.

What are the benefits of the ACPT programme to trainees?

During the programme you will develop a range of skills including communication, leadership and accuracy checking. Qualification as an ACPT forms the foundation for other roles that require rigorous attention to detail. It creates a career structure for pharmacy technicians in community and secondary care settings.

What are the benefits of the ACPT programme to organisations?

The ACPT programme aids development of the whole pharmacy team by equipping pharmacy technicians with the knowledge to help them optimise skill mix and support the learning of others, ie, the leadership element of our programme explains how ACPTs can delegate and ensure that all team members are performing tasks best suited to their unique skill set.

Pharmacists whose responsibilities include undertaking the final accuracy check will have increased capacity to deliver other aspects of their roles.

Application process:

I want to become an ACPT. Is there any CPPE learning you would recommend in preparation?

CPPE will provide the learning required during the ACPT programme, however, in advance of enrolment you may also wish to:

- familiarise yourself with dispensary SOPs
- complete *Consultation skills for pharmacy practice* learning
- complete the **Consultation skills for pharmacy practice e-assessment**
- complete **Professionalism distance learning**
- arrange an opportunity to shadow/practise accuracy checking.

Who can apply for the CPPE ACPT programme?

At present only pharmacy technicians working in London, Kent, Surrey or Sussex are eligible.

Eligible pharmacy technicians interested in applying for the programme are required to meet the following entry criteria:

- be registered as a pharmacy technician with the General Pharmaceutical Council
- successfully complete CPPE's ACPT introductory e-learning and assessment
- have a minimum of six months dispensing experience in current dispensary within the last 12 months
- demonstrate recent ability to dispense accurately in current workplace, signed off by educational supervisor
(NB: If dispensing logs are used, there should be no more than three attempts at any one time in completing the dispensing accuracy logs. If unsuccessful on the third attempt then a period of reflection and dispensing re-training should be completed (according to local SOPs and risk management strategies) before undertaking the dispensing accuracy assessment again)
- work in a dispensary that dispenses NHS prescriptions that have been clinically screened/approved by a pharmacist
- be familiar with the organisation's dispensary standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- have completed the organisation's induction and in-house mandatory training relevant to role and job description
- have an educational supervisor appointed who meets CPPE's ACPT educational supervisor requirements
- have support from their senior pharmacy manager*

*the senior pharmacy manager is the person who makes decisions about service needs and holds responsibility for training budget, eg, chief pharmacist, superintendents pharmacist or their nominated deputy.

How will places be allocated?

Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis (subject to verification processes) and the cohorts will be split between community pharmacy and hospital pharmacy places. You will be able to check via the website if places are available on your preferred cohort.

Do I need to be a member of the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK)?

The APTUK is the recognised professional leadership body for pharmacy technicians and further information on how to become a member can be found on their website:

www.aptuk.org/about-us/join-aptuk

By applying for a place on the programme you have demonstrated that you want to be a leader in the pharmacy profession. We expect all leaders in the profession to be members of their professional leadership body, although this is not a mandatory requirement for entry to the programme.

How do I apply for the CPPE ACPT programme?

Application forms can be found on the ACPT page of the CPPE website: **www.cppe.ac.uk/ACPT**
These must be completed by the educational supervisor *and* the ACPT trainee.

When can I apply for the CPPE ACPT programme?

Applications are taken on a rolling basis and the course runs on a monthly basis. Once CPPE verify application information, you can enroll on your preferred cohort. A new cohort of 25 pharmacy technicians is taken on each month.

Further information can be found at www.cppe.ac.uk/acpt

How much does it cost?

For eligible candidates in the Health Education England (HEE) London and South East area the programme is funded by HEE. Each eligible pharmacy technician will receive funding for one place. Subsequent attempts will be subject to availability and at a cost to the employer.

Can pharmacy technicians outside HEE London and South East area apply and pay a fee?

No. At present, we are not able to offer training or assessment to pharmacy technicians who work outside of the commissioned area.

How long will it take to complete the ACPT programme?

This will depend on the individual pharmacy technician. The minimum completion period is three months (twelve weeks) as individuals need to develop their leadership skills and demonstrate accuracy checking competence consistently over time. The programme must be completed within a twelve month timeframe.

Who can be an educational supervisor?

To become an ACPT educational supervisor, an individual must meet the following criteria:

- be registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)
- be a qualified accuracy checking pharmacy technician or pharmacist
- have experience of facilitating staff training
- be able to meet with the ACPT trainee regularly, approximately every month
- commit to supporting the ACPT trainee, working in the same dispensary when possible.
- follow **GPhC guidance for tutors**
- successfully complete the CPPE *Accuracy checking pharmacy technician programme e-assessment* for ACPT trainees and educational supervisors
- read, understand and agree to undertake the role and responsibilities of an ACPT educational supervisor as set out in the CPPE ACPT handbook.

Can an educational supervisor be responsible for more than one ACPT trainee at a time?

Yes, provided they meet the criteria of an educational supervisor.

Is there a list I can be added to as an educational supervisor so I receive communication and updates from CPPE about ACPT?

No. All information will be provided via website and usual communication methods such as pharmacy technician newsletter, CPPE e-newsletter or an emailed update.

What training and support will there be for educational supervisors?

CPPE will provide training and support for educational supervisors for the duration of the training period. Resources include the ACPT handbook, FAQs, e-learning, telephone, email and instant messaging support.

I completed my ACPT qualification years ago and do not currently check. Am I able to be an educational supervisor?

Yes, providing you meet the educational supervisor criteria.

Do we have to use CPPE logs to demonstrate dispensing accuracy?

Educational supervisors will be registered pharmacy professionals and it will be their responsibility to provide a declaration of dispensing accuracy for their ACPT trainee. How dispensing accuracy is determined differs from organisation to organisation so details will be required as part of the declaration of dispensing accuracy.

Traditionally, secondary care have used a 200 item dispensing log to demonstrate competence in dispensing and this would be an accepted method to support the declaration of dispensing accuracy. CPPE will provide paperwork to support organisations who wish to use this method; however, it is not mandatory for this to be used.

Learning and activities

What does the ACPT programme entail?

The ACPT programme consists of a number of elements:

- pre-course learning and assessment
- six e-learning modules
- practice activities –1000 item checking log, minimum of three reviews, leadership activities
- mid-point professional discussion with CPPE
- checking assessments – practice-based and online
- final review and sign off with education supervisor.
- certification.

How do I complete the pre-course work?

After completion of the application form, the trainee and educational supervisor will both need to access and complete the e-learning and assessment. This learning takes approximately 45 minutes and there is an associated e-assessment which we anticipate will take about 20 minutes.

How long do the six e-learning modules take?

We anticipate that the e-learning modules will take a minimum of eight hours. You may choose to do this in one day or in small chunks over a period of time.

Can I access the e-learning on apple and android remote devices?

Yes, however we recommend that the screen size of the device is no smaller than a tablet device, in order to gain meaningful engagement.

Can I get a paper version of the learning material?

No. There are no paper versions of the materials other than the prescription pack for the final practice based assessment.

If a paper copy is preferred, documentation may be downloaded and printed.

What is a practice activity?

Each pharmacy technician undertaking the ACPT programme must complete a range of practice activities, including a log of 1000 items which they have checked and which have then been final checked by a qualified ACPT or pharmacist.

For full details relating to the practice activities please see the programme handbook.

What if I fail the 1000 item checking log?

You will be permitted to continue checking up to 1250 items with no errors. You will have a maximum of two attempts to pass the checking log.

What is a mid-point professional discussion and how do I apply for it?

This is a discussion between you (the ACPT trainee) and a pharmacy professional from CPPE. It will be an opportunity for you to reflect on your ACPT training experience and consider the impact of your ACPT role on patients.

After the 500 item review with your educational supervisor (mid-point of the programme), you will contact CPPE to arrange a suitable date and time to have the discussion.

Assessment:

What does the final assessment consist of?

The final assessment is a three-fold process:

- the practice-based checking test – you must check a total of 10 dispensed items in 30 minutes and identify all errors. This will be completed in the workplace under the supervision of the educational supervisor
- the online checking test – you must check a total of 10 dispensed items in 30 minutes and identify all errors
- declaration and final sign off – your portfolio is reviewed by your educational supervisor, and if all the required criteria are met, a declaration is submitted to CPPE.

What happens if I miss an error during the ACPT final assessment?

You must identify all errors in both the practice-based and online checking assessments. If you miss an error in either part, you must complete a further log of 100 items and an error reflection form. You then need to re-apply for your second and final attempt of the checking assessments.

NB: You have a maximum of two attempts at the checking assessments.

Who makes a judgment on the type of error?

There is guidance in the ACPT handbook, national framework and e-learning on types of error and their classification. It is the educational supervisor's responsibility to determine the classification of an error, as per local clinical governance policies. You must follow your organisational procedures for errors and near misses and can seek advice from experts within your organisation.

Errors will be caused by a number of factors and therefore CPPE will not make a determination on individual errors.

Other:

What happens if I am not able to work as an ACPT for a period of time, for example when a colleague is on holiday or you have been required to work in a different section or job role?

You must ensure that you remain competent to provide a final accuracy check of dispensed items. Suggestions of how you could demonstrate safe and effective practice are detailed in the ACPT e-learning. Your employer may have specific requirements for pharmacy professionals who have not checked for a prolonged period.

What if I am off work due to long-term sickness or take parental leave?

CPPE will be able to suspend your learning for legitimate reasons. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

What if I am not working in a dispensary and therefore can't complete the logs in time?

The criteria and employer commitments are clearly specified in the ACPT handbook therefore we cannot suspend the learning on these grounds. Notify CPPE at the earliest opportunity if you think you will be unable to complete any aspect of the programme.

What if I get a new job in the middle of the programme?

You may transfer your programme if your new employer is within the commissioned area and a suitable educational supervisor is sourced and communicated to CPPE.

What if my educational supervisor gets a new job?

Contact CPPE as soon as possible because a new educational supervisor will need to be sourced by your employer.

What if I feel that I am being treated unfairly?

In the first instance, you should discuss this with your line manager and educational supervisor. If this cannot be resolved locally, you should contact CPPE.

If the matter relates to assessment, appeals can be made on points of process. The appeals process is detailed in the CPPE ACPT handbook.

How will CPPE quality assure the process?

The quality of the CPPE ACPT programme is assured through the usual **CPPE quality assurance processes** and by additional checks at each stage of programme delivery.

Full details of quality assurance processes can be found in the ACPT handbook

Do I need personal indemnity insurance?

One of the conditions of registration with the GPhC is that all your work, or work for which you are responsible, is covered by appropriate professional indemnity cover. Full details can be found on the GPhC website: www.pharmacyregulation.org/professional-indemnity-requirements

How do I get my certificate?

Your educational supervisor will submit the final sign off declaration to CPPE. On receipt of the completed declaration, CPPE will issue a certificate to you. An email will be sent to you, your educational supervisor and your senior pharmacy manager/chief pharmacist to confirm successful qualification as an ACPT.

How long does it take to be accepted on to the programme?

The process requires scrutiny of details in the application form and can take up to 14 days to be verified.

Who checks that entry criteria are met?

The criteria are checked by CPPE head office personnel.

How do I get the practice-based assessment pack?

The educational supervisor will apply to CPPE for an assessment pack to be sent to them once they have declared that their trainee is ready to undertake the checking assessments.

What is the pass mark for the pre-course assessment?

The pass mark is 80 percent for the introductory e-assessment.

How many times can I take the pre-course assessment?

There is no limit to the number of times that the pre-course assessment can be taken, however, multiple failures indicate that those taking the assessment may not be ready or appropriate to undertake the roles and responsibilities involved in the ACPT programme.

Can someone other than my educational supervisor supervise my practice-based assessment, ie, ACPT trainees in a locality come together in a cluster for assessment?

It is the educational supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised. The trainee's allocated educational supervisor must be satisfied that the trainee has completed the assessment, as per CPPE instruction and they must be the person to sign and submit the assessment paperwork.

Where can I find dispensing logs?

Suitable dispensing logs are provided on the ACPT page of the CPPE website.

Can I use the mid-point professional discussion as part of the GPhC revalidation process?

Yes. According to the proposed assurance framework from GPhC, the peer discussion element of revalidation is a formative learning and development activity. The professional discussion with a pharmacy professional from CPPE will provide you with the opportunity to reflect on your learning. You will consider how you can improve your practice in order to provide beneficial outcomes for patients.