



Job Description – National Officer

OVERVIEW	
Company	Pharmacists' Defence Association
Location of Job	Primarily home-based
Department	PDA Union/Membership & Communities
Job Title	National Officer

ISSUE & REVISION	
Original Issue Date	10 February 2020
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ABOUT THE PHARMACISTS' DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

Founded in 2003 by pharmacists for pharmacists, the Pharmacists' Defence Association is a not-for-profit membership organisation that has been growing consistently. It is now the largest pharmacist membership organisation with more than 40,000 members across all areas of practice in the UK and Crown Dependencies.

The Pharmacists' Defence Association is the largest client of the Pharmacy Insurance Agency (PIA), which is responsible for arranging and administering the insurance of members as an automatic benefit of membership. Since 2008, Pharmacists' Defence Association membership has also included trade union membership through the PDA Union.

The PDA and PDA Union are separate organisations but supporting the same individuals. They share the same offices and facilities. To most pharmacists and to most other stakeholders the organisations are collectively just known as "the PDA".

On behalf of its members, the PDA is active in matters relating to pharmacy practice and patient safety in the UK and internationally. It provides education and guidance to help pharmacists complete their university education, trainee period and ongoing career.

It helps members to understand and exercise their rights at work. As a result, members can defend themselves against such challenges as clinical negligence claims, disciplinaries, and fitness to practise referral to their regulator, they can also whistle blow unsafe practice and challenge matters through grievances and campaigns.

As well as dealing with individual concerns, members collaborate as networks to proactively improve conditions in their workplace, at their employer, across the profession or in wider society, by promoting issues such as equality, fair work and health and safety.

This includes negotiating for better pay, terms and conditions and dealing with events such as redundancies or transfers of employment.

There is a democratic structure through which members can be elected to regional committees and the National Executive Committee or form a network, such as at their employer or university or based on a protected characteristic like the National Association of Women Pharmacists, BAME pharmacists network, LGBT+ pharmacists network and the Ability network for pharmacists with a disability. Members who are elected into such roles are known as representatives, or “reps” for short.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

Membership & Communities



JOB DETAILS

Employment Status	Permanent
Reporting To	PDA Union Director/Director of Membership & Communities
Responsible For	-
Overall Purpose/Scope of Position	<p>National Officers are allocated lead responsibility for a portfolio of geographies, sectors and employers where the PDA has members. This may change over time based on the workload and priorities of the organisation and the capacity of individual. The largest of these is the PDA's role within the NHS Staff Council and associated structures.</p> <p>The role holder's job is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To undertake trade union negotiation, policy development and representation activities. b. To contribute to and help deliver the PDA organising and recognition strategies. c. To make the most of every opportunity to recruit, engage, develop, mentor, support and retain members and reps, so that they may increasingly do #1 above for themselves.

<p>Key Accountabilities</p>	<p>Existing Commitments</p> <p><i>As at June 2026 PDA Union recognition agreements include Boots, all GP Federations in Northern Ireland, Superdrug, some primary care networks and other primary care organisations. In October 2024, the PDA Union became part of the Staff Side Council that represents employees of NHS Employer organisations, and that recognition requires activity at national, regional and local level.</i></p> <p>The role holder at national and local level will help amplify the voice of pharmacists and ensure the PDA is a key part of their employment world.</p> <p>They will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service and maintain existing recognition agreements, optimising their benefit for pharmacists. • Prepare and lead pay negotiations, and respond to consultations and other matters raised by employers. • Proactively highlight and address health and safety and other collective issues raised by members. • In collaboration with the Defence Services department, represent and support groups of PDA members affected by TUPE transfers, redundancies and other similar events. • Represent individuals with their workplace disputes. • Build and maintain productive, supportive relationships with peers in other trade unions, particularly those representing other health professionals. <p>Contribution to policy and strategy</p> <p><i>Engaging with groups of members the National Officer will inevitably become aware of emerging issues and trends impacting pharmacists in workplaces. In collaboration with the Policy & Communications directorate the role holder will help develop policy and public affairs responses to those issues.</i></p> <p>The role holder will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide reports and information to the PDA Union National Executive and Director of Membership and Communities about issues which might impact upon the achievement of union-wide organising and recruitment objectives and/or upon national policy making and terms and conditions of negotiations. • Contribute to PDA policy positions in relation to employment terms, pensions and employment rights in general. • Draft articles for the PDA website, INSIGHT magazine and through other communications channels. Contribute to the content of guidance, reports and other written materials, videos, podcasts and other resources, to assist pharmacists with best practice. <p><i>The above is not an exhaustive list of duties and you will be expected to perform different tasks as necessitated by your changing role within the organisation and the overall business objectives of the organisation.</i></p>
<p>Hours/Working Pattern</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 30 – 37.5 hours per week on average (0.8 – 1 FTE), annualised to reflect the need for some evening or weekend activity required by members. • Though most activity will be home-based, travel will be required which may involve overnight stays, potentially including international events.
<p>Compensation & Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to £55,000 (FTE) • Starting holiday entitlement of 25 days plus Bank Holidays (pro-rata) • Nest pension scheme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDA Plus benefits package • BHSF health insurance plan (once passed probation) • Occupational sick pay scheme (once passed probation).
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JOB REQUIREMENTS & COMPETENCIES (E = ESSENTIAL, D = DESIRABLE)	
Qualifications/ Educational Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of being a registered health professional would be an advantage; experience of being a pharmacist would be ideal.
Job Skills & Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication in person and writing (E) • Understanding of employment rights (E) • Relationship management (E) • Representation skills (E) • Presentation skills (E) • Negotiation skills (E) • Dispute resolution (D) • Ability to use IT effectively (E) • Appreciation of the roles pharmacists perform across the UK (D) • Understanding of the role of Trade Unions (D) • Understanding of the NHS and wider health system governance from local decision making to government policy setting processes. (D) • Understanding of the NHS Employers Terms and Conditions (D)
Personal Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed to the interests of individual pharmacists and prepared to challenge any individual or organisation to pursue those interests (E) • Ability to work well under pressure, prioritise activity and meet deadlines (E) • Able to communicate complex issues in ways that they can be understood by the appropriate audience (E) • Attention to detail (E) • Ability to exercise judgement and make decisions in dynamic situations (E) • Innovative and creative in finding achievable outcomes while maintaining the organisation's principles. (E) • Able to successfully manage multiple workstreams simultaneously (E) • Ability to work independently and flexible while also being part of a mutually supportive remote team and maintaining a consistent style and position across the organisation (E) • Team worker, supporting the organisation's policies and objectives (E)

APPROVALS	
Document Prepared By	Name: Kate Rowbottom Job Title: HR Manager Date: 01/03/2025
Document Approved By	Name: Paul Day Job Title: PDA Union Director Date: 09/05/2025

Employee Name

Employee Signature

Date