

Preparing for your placement



The PDA has heard from fourth years that they would like guidance when preparing for their placements. As the PDA wants to support you, it has listened and developed a quick guide to help you when stepping into the workplace.

Professional behaviour and attitude

- Introduce yourself to your supervisor and team. Confirm your working hours, dress code, lunch break arrangements, and where to store personal items.
- Plan ahead and arrive on time. Research travel routes, parking, transport delays, and local places to eat.
- Pack essential items e.g. notepad, pen, water, calculator, lanyard, BNF access.
- Be open to feedback and demonstrate willingness to reflect, learn, and improve.
- Be adaptable and open to changing tasks, clinical priorities, and workflow needs.
- Avoid unauthorised mobile phone use, especially in professional and patient facing areas.
- Take time to read and understand local standard operating procedures, policies, and safety protocols before undertaking tasks.

Teamwork and collaboration

- Ask how you can help. Show initiative and a proactive attitude.
- Show appreciation for colleagues' time, support, and supervision.
- Observe how different team members interact, communicate, and manage workflow, especially during busy periods.
- Understand the skill mix, taking time to learn about different roles and functions.



Confidentiality

- Never discuss patient information in public or non clinical areas.
- Only access clinical systems and patient records when authorised or instructed by a supervisor.
- Keep computer screens and documents secure at all times.

Work safely

- Ask for timely help or advice if unsure and never guess.
- Only perform tasks you are trained/authorised to undertake.
- Understand how to raise concerns and who to escalate issues to.
- Take scheduled breaks to maintain concentration, accuracy, and wellbeing.

Learning and reflection

- Listen actively and ask thoughtful questions to deepen your understanding.
- Set aside protected time each day to complete reflections and learning logs.
- Link your learning to GPhC professional standards and learning outcomes.
- Arrange regular meetings with your supervisor to review progress, ask questions, and seek guidance.
- Record examples of clinical cases, problem solving, communication challenges, and good practice.

Placements are a valuable chance to grow your skills, confidence, and understanding of your future role as a pharmacist. Approach each experience with professionalism and curiosity and remember, the PDA is here to support you every step of the way.



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