

March 1st, 2024

Assessment guidance for the Level 3 Pharmacy Technician qualification and Apprenticeship from Open Awards and Pearson.

Open Awards Level 3 Diploma in the Principles and Practice for Pharmacy Technicians (RQF) **603/5153/6**

Open Awards Level 3 Diploma in the Principles and Practice for Pharmacy Technicians (Integrated Apprenticeship) (RQF) **603/6988/7**

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in the Principles and Practice for Pharmacy Technicians **603/5160/3**

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in the Principles and Practice for Pharmacy Technicians (Apprenticeship) **603/6304/6**

As Awarding Organisations, we have, in collaboration with Skills for Health, reviewed the assessment of competence-based units, specifically in relation to the **Pharmacy Technician Level 3 Diploma** and the risk of the reliance on Expert Witness Testimony against the Observation of practice generated over a period of time to demonstrate consistent performance.

To uphold the integrity of the licence to practice qualification, we have collectively agreed on the continued application of the **Skills for Health Assessment Principles**, in particular the direct observation in the workplace.

We advise centres to ensure that the Skills for Health Assessment Principles (**Version 5 September 2022**) are being applied to the delivery of the qualification. Our quality assurance processes will review that the principles are being applied rigorously.

2. Assessment Principles

2.4 Competence based units **must** include direct observation¹ in the workplace as the primary source of evidence.

¹ Direct observation will typically involve the assessor being in the workplace with the learner.

*Awarding Organisations with Skills for Health have collectively agreed that remote observation for this qualification (**Pharmacy Technician**) is **not appropriate** due to patient privacy, dignity, and confidentiality.*

2.5 Simulation may only be utilised as an assessment method for learning outcomes that start with 'be able to' where this is specified in the assessment requirements of the unit. The use of simulation should be restricted to obtaining evidence where the evidence cannot be generated through normal work activity. Where this may be the case, the use of simulation in the unit assessment strategy will be agreed with Skills for Health.

Please refer to your Awarding Organisations Specification for guidance on when simulation may be permitted for assessment.

2.6 Expert witnesses can be used for direct observation where they have occupational expertise for specialist areas, or where the observation is of a particularly sensitive nature. The use of expert witnesses should be determined and agreed by the assessor.

*Awarding Organisations and Skills for Health collectively agree that Expert witness testimony is **NOT** a substitute for the requirement of three observations by the assessor across the **Pharmacy Technician qualification**. Except in the case of exceptional circumstances by agreement with the Awarding Body.*

Please refer to your Awarding Organisation Specification for assessment guidance.

2.7 Assessment decisions for knowledge only units must be made by an assessor qualified to make the assessment decisions as defined in the unit assessment strategy.