
**Report on applications for NHS pre-registration trainee pharmacist places in
England & Wales for the 2011 intake (1st round of recruitment)**

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Introduction

The National Recruitment Scheme is the system through which pharmacy undergraduates and OSPAP students apply for pre-registration trainee pharmacist posts in NHS hospitals in England and Wales. The application stage of recruitment is handled by Pharmalife (Webstar Health) with all other stages of recruitment handled by the hospitals or regional panels. Recruitment for the 2011 intake of trainees took place in 2010. This report provides a summary of the application stage of recruitment for the first round of recruitment for the 2011 intake of trainees.

Number of places advertised

696 pre-registration training positions were advertised for the 2011 intake (compared with 676 places for the 2010 intake and 633 places for the 2009 intake).

Number of applications

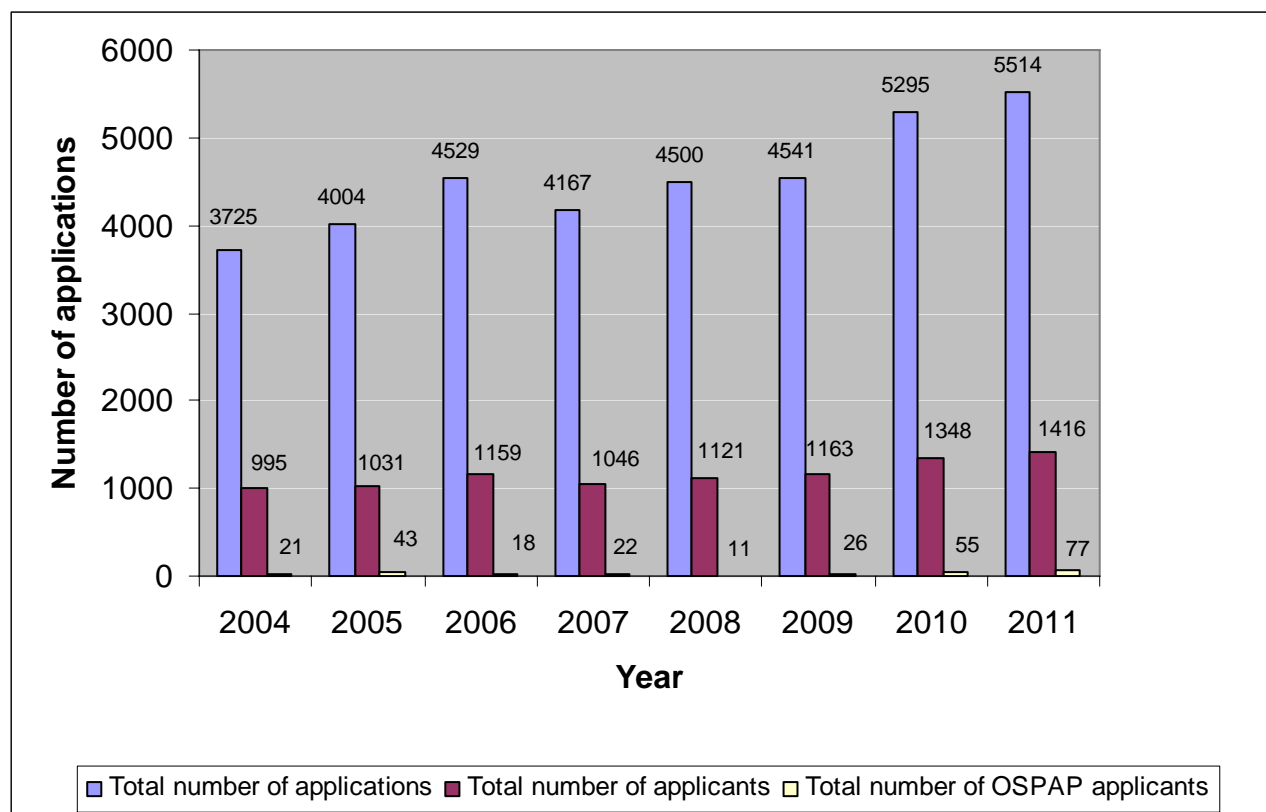
There were a total of 5514 applications for posts, from 1416 students for the 2011 intake of NHS pre-registration trainee pharmacists. This is a 4.1% increase in applications compared with the 2010 intake (5295 applications and 1348 students).

77 students were from the Overseas Pharmacist Assessment Programme (OSPAP course) compared with 56 for the 2010 intake and 29 for the 2009 intake. This increase may be a result of improved marketing of the National Recruitment Scheme to OSPAP students via collaboration with the RPSGB overseas division which has enabled us to provide information to the OSPAP students at an earlier stage. Another explanation may be that more OSPAP students applied to hospital pharmacy because of the removal of community pre-registration trainee pharmacists from the Shortage Occupation List in 2009.

The predicated number of pharmacy graduates in 2011 is 3310 making the proportion of potential graduates applying remains lower than desired with only 42.78% of students applying to hospital pharmacy. This proportion is similar to the 2010 intake $n = 43.29\%$ and 2009 intake $n = 41.5\%$.

The application statistics are shown in the figure 1.0 on page 2.

Figure 1.0: Applications and applicants



Applications per hospital

There was an average of 31.7 applications per hospital (range 3 – 169) compared with 30.1 applications per hospital last year.

On average there were 7.92 applications per advertised post (compared with 7.83 applications per advertised post last year). There were a total of 1416 students applying for 696 advertised posts (2.03 students per advertised post for the 2011 intake compared with 1.99 students per advertised post last year).

University College London, Royal Free, Whittington and St Pancras Hospitals (D27) received the highest number of applications $n = 169$, but were advertising 25 places so actually received a below average number of applications per post ($n = 6.76$). One non-London hospital was in the top 10 (compared with two last year), and six were in the top 20. All hospitals had at least two applications.

Timing of applications

4% of applications (222) had been made by the end of June. 65.9% (3636) of applications were made in the last three days. The numbers of “last minute” applications were similar to the last 2 years when the figure was 64% (2010 intake) and 58.7% (2009 intake).

7 late applications were accepted from students who reported technical problems to Webstar Health on 31.08.2010 prior to midnight. These applications were submitted manually by Webstar Health the next morning. Late applications for any other reason were not accepted despite some students pleading for a late submission.

Applicants from Schools of Pharmacy

Applications were made from the following Schools of Pharmacy. Central Lancashire University will produce their first MPharm graduates in 2011. 2 new OSPAP courses will produce their first graduates in 2011 (Kingston OSPAP PgDip and Aberdeen MSc OSPAP).

Intake	Number of MPharm applicants								
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
University not specified*									30
Aberdeen	36	36	31	43	45	43	45	39	53
Aston	65	82	66	92	90	62	68	65	61
Bath	63	83	70	87	70	52	67	64	77
Belfast	6	2	3	7	9	8	6	5	2
Bradford	8	8	25	41	33	48	42	58	31
Brighton	55	57	70	69	80	75	85	65	74
Cardiff	62	68	58	66	61	67	44	66	72
Central Lancashire									18
Hertfordshire							22	49	60
Keele								23	27
Kingston						30	47	52	59
Leicester	41	45	48	59	54	65	47	44	40
Liverpool	40	68	56	66	48	42	77	45	54
London Kings	59	83	62	71	52	72	50	69	55
London School of Pharmacy	93	103	155	112	126	116	99	98	99
Manchester	75	64	73	98	99	107	89	94	82
Medway						47	42	88	84
Norwich (UEA)					28	53	43	56	55
Nottingham	84	89	94	98	85	82	79	111	108
Portsmouth	50	70	82	91	58	46	67	64	47
Reading							20	54	60
Strathclyde	18	11	14	22	18	8	10	17	24
Sunderland	71	65	81	94	90	87	77	49	57
Wolverhampton								17	11

* Due to a technical glitch 120 applications were made from 30 students without specifying their university

Intake	Number of OSPAP applicants								
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
International **	15	21	43	21	22	11			
Aberdeen OSPAP PgDip							0	2	6
Aberdeen MSc OSPAP									3
Aston OSPAP PgDip							9	35	30
Brighton OSPAP PgDip							11	11	20
Kingston OSPAP PgDip***									0
Sunderland OSPAP PgDip							6	8	17
Total number of applicants (MPharm + OSPAP)	841	955	1031	1137	1068	1121	1163	1348	1416

** The 2009 intake was the first time that we had a breakdown of the Schools of Pharmacy for the OSPAP course.

*** The Kingston course was only approved in late August and at the time of Pharmalife applications Kingston OSPAP applicants had not received notification of whether they had a place on this course.

Academic references

References were not requested for a total of 60 MPharm students. In addition, 14 references were requested but not received by the deadline, making a total of 74 students with missing references. This is an improvement on previous year's figures of 93 last year and 139 the year before.

Students were told they needed to register by 30th June in order for their referee to be contacted. In practice, references were requested for any student who registered on the system up until 1st August (over a month after the stated deadline). A number of referees were not contactable, either because the students had given an incorrect e-mail address, or in a number of cases the referee had left the institution. Referees and, students were contacted between 6th and 16th August to chase outstanding references. In addition a list of outstanding referees was sent to the pre-registration co-ordinator at each school of pharmacy to ask them to follow up the referees or find a replacement referee if necessary.

Validity of applications

Webstar Health confirmed the validity of all applications and academic referees.

Conclusions

Pharmalife has performed well with hospitals receiving their application details 1 working day earlier than the agreed date and with no major problems being reported. Communication and referral of queries by Pharmalife to the National Recruitment Scheme Lead has been timely and all queries are answered within 2 working days despite a substantial increase in the number of queries received. Pharmalife has been efficient and responsive and has agreed to all planned and unplanned service improvements requested. These included:

- Development of an interactive section on the website which enabled hospitals and regional co-ordinators to generate equality monitoring reports for the short-listing and appointment stages of recruitment to meet NHS requirements for equality monitoring at all stages of the recruitment process

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- Enhancement of equality monitoring to include religion/belief, sexual orientation in addition to age, gender, disability status and ethnicity to meet NHS requirements to collect this data
 - Development of an online data entry system for submitting the hospital profile which will be piloted for the 2012 intake
 - Changes to the application form for the 2nd round of recruitment as a result of the new Equality bill