

F1 trainees and Prescribing Safety Assessment (PSA)

Briefing note for trainees, trainers and pharmacists

The Prescribing Safety Assessment (PSA) is an exam that allows candidates to demonstrate their competencies in relation to the safe and effective use of medicines. It is a requirement for the COMPLETION of Foundation Year 1.

Most UK Medical Schools offer their students the opportunity to sit this exam before completion of undergraduate training; the majority of F1 doctors starting in post will have passed the assessment. A small minority will not have passed, and some overseas graduates will not have had the opportunity to complete, before starting in post as F1.

All F1 doctors require supervision in their prescribing, as well as other aspects of their clinical practice, irrespective of whether they have passed the PSA or are still to complete. As pre-registration doctors they are neither 'independent practitioners' nor 'independent prescribers'. For practical purposes, therefore, there is no difference between an F1 doctor who has passed and an F1 doctor who is still to pass. F1 doctors can work out of hours provided there is suitable supervision.

How supervision in prescribing is applied logistically may vary from Trust to Trust, and will depend upon whether the prescriptions are paper based or electronic, and the systems used.

Supervision of F1 prescribing by a more senior trainee in conjunction with a consultant will allow an additional educational experience for the senior trainee which can be recorded in a mini-CEX for this trainee, as well as the F1.

Trainees who are yet to pass the PSA will need additional support in their F1 year to help them through the assessment:

1. At the beginning of F1 they must have a documented (ePortfolio) meeting with their educational /clinical supervisor and an action plan agreed to allow the trainee to successfully complete the PSA. Those trainees who have taken the PSA previously and been unsuccessful will share their detailed domain feedback to their supervisor(s). Trainees must document on their e-portfolio that they have read the PSA Guide for Foundation Doctors 2016 (and any subsequent versions).
2. All trainees will make contact with the lead trust pharmacist or deputy to arrange appropriate ward based training.
3. All trainees will complete the SCRIPT modules relevant to PSA including those modules that are relevant to the Domain feedback for those that have previously failed PSA.
4. Trainees will sit the assessment at the earliest opportunity.

Further details are available on HEE's website:

<https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/foundation/assessments-and-arcp/foundation-prescribing-safety-assessment-psa>

FAQs

My trainee has not passed their PSA. Do they need their prescriptions countersigned?

If Trusts require counter-signatures on F1 prescriptions, this should be applied to all F1 doctors, irrespective of PSA status. This is not a GMC or Foundation School requirement.

My trainee has not passed their PSA. Can they work out of hours?

Provided that adequate on-site supervision from a registered medical practitioner is available for a Foundation 1 doctor at all times, they can work out of hours, irrespective of PSA status.

What can I do to support my F1 trainee to pass their PSA?

- Read the guidance on HEE's website:

<https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/foundation/assessments-and-arcp/foundation-prescribing-safety-assessment-psa>

This contains details information for trainees and trainers about what is required to pass the PSA during foundation training. The following website has details about the assessment itself: <https://prescribingsafetyassessment.ac.uk/>

- Create an action plan with your trainee and document this on Horus
- Direct the trainee to appropriate SCRIPT modules to support their preparation
- Encourage and support discussion and feedback on prescribing during working time; supplement the discussion with mini-CEX or CBD assessments
- Liaise with the pharmacy department so that the ward pharmacists can also offer support, monitoring, and training for your trainee on their prescribing
- Check in regularly with your trainee to ensure they are progressing and are well-supported by the team
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Authorship - Dr Helen Cattermole
Director of Medical Education
Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
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