REGISTERING AS A PHARMACIST IN SOUTH AFRICA
GUIDELINES FOR PERSONS WHO HOLD QUALIFICATIONS IN PHARMACY OBTAINED OUTSIDE THE REPUBLIC

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INTRODUCTION

The South African Pharmacy Council has prepared this brochure for the information and guidance of overseas-trained pharmacists who wish to obtain recognition of their qualifications in South Africa. The brochure is intended as a guide only, and is not legally binding on any of the bodies listed. Although the information contained in this brochure is believed to have been accurate at the time of printing, registration requirements may vary from time to time.

The South African Pharmacy Council may be contacted as follows:

Physical Address
591 Belvedere Street
Arcadia
Pretoria
0083

Postal Address
Private Bag X 40040
Arcadia
Pretoria
0001

Tel: 0861 SAPC 00/0861 7272 00
Fax: 27 12 321 1479/92
Email: customercare@sapc.za.org
Web: www.sapc.za.org

EVALUATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

If you live outside the Republic of South Africa and are a pharmacist with a qualification gained outside South Africa and you intend to migrate and work in this profession in South Africa, you should contact the nearest South African Embassy, High Commission or Consulate for information regarding immigration requirements. All qualifications obtained must first be evaluated by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). They may be contacted at:

South African Qualifications Authority

Physical Address
SAQA House
1067 Arcadia Street, Hatfield
Pretoria

Postal Address
Postnet Suite 248
Private Bag X06
Waterkloof
0145

Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications call centre: 012 431-5070
Helpdesk: 086 010 3188
PHARMACY IN SOUTH AFRICA

As in most countries, the practice of a profession in South Africa requires evidence of an appropriate level of education and practical experience. The recognition of qualifications in most health-related professions is the responsibility of a registration authority established by government statute. To be able to work as a pharmacist in South Africa, registration with the South African Pharmacy Council is needed. The practice of pharmacy by unregistered persons is punishable by law. The procedure to be followed to obtain registration as a pharmacist in South Africa is explained in this brochure.

Pharmacists in South Africa are expected to:

- organise the manufacturing, compounding and packaging of pharmaceutical products;
- organise the procurement, storage and distribution of pharmaceutical products;
- dispense and ensure the optimum use of medicine prescribed to the patient;
- provide pharmacist initiated care to the patient and ensure the optimum use of medicine;
- provide education and information on health care and medicine;
- promote community health and provide related information and advice;
- participate in research to ensure the optimal use of medicine.

Most pharmacists practise in community pharmacies and in hospital pharmacies in the public and private sector. A smaller number of pharmacists work in manufacturing pharmacies, wholesale pharmacies, academic and government institutions or the armed services.

Community and hospital pharmacists have a wide range of responsibilities. These include:

1. the provision of pharmaceutical care by taking responsibility for the patient's medicine related needs and being accountable for meeting these needs, which include the following functions:
   
   a. evaluation of a patient's medicine related needs by determining the indication, safety and effectiveness of the therapy;
   b. dispensing of any medicine or scheduled substance on the prescription of an authorised prescriber;
   c. furnishing information and advice to any person with regard to medicine;
   d. determining patient compliance with the therapy and follow up to ensure that the patient's needs are being met; and
   e. provision of pharmacist initiated therapy;

2. compounding, manipulation or preparation of medicines and scheduled substances;

3. purchasing, acquiring, keeping, possessing, using, supplying or selling of medicine or scheduled substance;

4. applications for the registration of medicines or medical devices;

5. re-packaging of medicine;

6. promotion of public health in accordance with guidelines and standards including:
   
   a. the provision of information and education regarding the promotion of human health;
   b. the provision of immunisation, mother and childcare, blood pressure monitoring; health education; blood-glucose monitoring; screening tests for pregnancy; family planning; cholesterol screening tests; HIV screening tests; urine analysis; and visiometric and audiometric screening tests;
   c. the provision of animal health care services including:
      
      i. the compounding and dispensing of prescriptions written by veterinarians and ensuring the optimal use of veterinary medicines;
      ii. the immunisation of animals;
      iii. the handling of minor and/or self-limiting ailments in animals; and
      iv. the provision of information and education regarding the promotion of animal health.

7. conducting of pharmaceutical research and development;

8. provision of primary care drug therapy with prior authorisation from council; and

9. any other health service as may be approved by council from time to time.

Pharmacists in manufacturing pharmacies are involved in:

1. manufacturing of medicine and scheduled substances;
2. purchasing, acquiring, keeping, possessing, using, supplying or selling of any medicine or scheduled substance;
(3) furnishing of information and advice to any person with regard to medicine manufactured;
(4) applications for the registration of medicines or medical devices;
(5) formulation of medicine for the purposes of registration as a medicine;
(6) distribution of medicine or scheduled substances;
(7) repackaging of medicine in accordance with the Medicines Act;
(8) initiation and conducting of pharmaceutical research and development; and
(9) any other health service as may be approved by council from time to time.

APPLICATION FORMS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE OFFICES OF COUNCIL
(CONTACT DETAILS) -

- Telephone, using the following number: 0861 72 72 00 and asking for the customer care; or
- Fax, using the following number: (012) 321-1479/92
- Requesting the appropriate forms in writing from: The Registrar, P O Box 40040, Arcadia, 0007; or
- Downloading the appropriate forms from the Council’s website at www.sapc.za.org

DOCUMENTATION TO BE SUBMITTED BY THE APPLICANT IN SUPPORT OF THE
APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A PHARMACIST:

In terms of the Regulations relating to the registration of persons and the maintenance of registers, any person who has a qualification in pharmacy obtained outside the Republic and who applies for registration as a pharmacist must –

(1) submit to the registrar:
   (a) a duly completed application on a form as approved and provided by council;
   (b) a certified copy of his or her identity document or passport;
   (c) acceptable documentary evidence of
      (i) the qualification in pharmacy obtained outside the Republic which entitles him or her to practise as a pharmacist in the country in which the institution or examining body that awarded such qualification is situated;
      (ii) the fact that he or she is registered as a pharmacist in the country in which the institution or examining body that awarded such qualification is situated;
      (iii) the fact that he or she is a fit and proper person and in good standing as a pharmacist with the relevant registration authority;
      (iv) the practical training which he or she has undertaken and completed, if any; and
      (v) the fact that he or she has passed an examination(s) or other evaluation as approved by council, if applicable;
      (vi) documentary evidence of proficiency in the English language where applicable;

(2) pay the registration fee as determined by the council.

All applications are considered by the Education Committee of Council. Each application is considered on merit. After an application has been evaluated, Council may decide, that if the applicant complies with all the requirements and has passed the necessary examinations he/she may be registered either as a pharmacists’ assistant, pharmacist intern for purposes of undergoing practical training or register the applicant as a pharmacist for purpose of performing pharmaceutical community service. If the applicant is eligible for registration as a pharmacist he/she must provide evidence of the public health facility or complex of health facilities where he/she will perform community service in South Africa.

All persons who wish to register as pharmacists in South Africa must pass the full professional examinations. In order to qualify to enter the Professional examinations candidates must be in possession of:

- a Bachelor’s degree, or its equivalent, in pharmacy (evaluated by the South African Qualifications Authority as being equivalent to a South African Bachelor of Pharmacy Degree), which is prescribed in terms of the Pharmacy Act, 1974 for purposes of registration as a pharmacist.
- proof of having completed at least twelve months of practical training;
- a working knowledge of the English language which is essential for the practice of pharmacy in South Africa;
for applicants who obtained their qualification in any other language except English, a certificate from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) demonstrating their English proficiency at overall Band Score 6.

The IELTS contact details are:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Address</th>
<th>Postal Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Council</td>
<td>P O Box 655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunkeld Corner</td>
<td>Parklands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>275 Jan Smuts Avenue</td>
<td>2121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunkeld West</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Johannesburg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2196</td>
<td></td>
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Tel: 011 5609300
Fax: 011 5609301
Email: ssa.enquiries@britishcouncil.org
Web: britishcouncil.org/africa

Applicants must also have permanent residence in South Africa or have permission to work in South Africa.

**DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR SUBMISSION TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

The following documents must be submitted to the Office of Council for consideration by the Education Committee of Council:

(a) a **certified** letter of confirmation from the institution or examining body where the above qualification was obtained stating that the above applicant was enrolled as a student and qualified at that institution (submitted directly to Council by the institution);

(b) an **original** Letter of Good Standing issued by the registering authority of the country in which the above qualification was awarded (submitted directly to Council by the institution);

(c) a **certified** copy of your identity document or passport;

(d) a recent colour photograph of yourself;

(e) a **certified** copy of your qualification in pharmacy (degree/diploma);

(f) an **original** certificate of an evaluation of the qualification from the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) in Pretoria

(g) information regarding the syllabus and curriculum of the qualification obtained from the institution where training was undertaken;

(h) documentary proof of having completed at least 12 months of practical training prior to registration as a pharmacist;

(i) a **certified** copy of proof of current registration as a pharmacist in the country in which the above qualification was awarded;

(j) an **original** letter of support from the Foreign Workforce Management Program, obtained from the Department of Health (SA)

It is also important to note that you need endorsement by the Foreign Workforce Management Programme prior to registration with the SAPC. For further information regarding the endorsement letter, please contact the Department of Health at Tel: 0027 12 312 0722; or at the following address:

The Director-General
Department of Health
Private Bag X828
PRETORIA
0001

(k) a **certified** copy from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Band 6

A fee to the amount of **R972.04 (including VAT)** is required for the evaluation of credentials upon submission of all required documents. The fee is reviewed annually. A **certified** copy of permission to reside and take up employment in South Africa issued by the Department of Home Affairs is also required.
INFORMATION REGARDING THE REGISTRATION PROCESSES

There are two processes that could be followed by candidates who wish to register for the first time with the SAPC:

1. **Option 1**

Submit all documents mentioned above to the Office of the Registrar for evaluation by the Education Committee of Council. The Committee will then make a recommendation to Council. The recommendation will first be approved by Council or the Executive Committee of Council.

2. **Option: 2**

Submit all documents mentioned above to the Office of the Registrar. Candidates may opt to be interviewed by the subject matter specialist at a cost that will be determined by Council. After being successful in the interviews the candidate will then be allowed to register as an intern whilst he/she undertakes the professional examinations and the pre-registration evaluation. The purpose of the interview is to enable the candidate to enter the workforce as an intern whilst awaiting to successfully completing Council's examinations.

Once the application is approved, the candidate will be allowed to write the applicable examination and will be informed accordingly.

*The Professional Examination* takes place in June and October each year.

Venues are determined by the South African Pharmacy Council.

Dates and examination centres for examinations/evaluations are announced at least two months prior to the holding of an examination/evaluation. Council reserves the right to cancel any examination/evaluation at an announced venue in the event of an insufficient number of candidates applying to write the examination/evaluation. Any such cancellation will be announced at least one month before the examination/evaluation is to be written.

All applications for admission to the professional examinations must be submitted to the Registrar of the South African Pharmacy Council at least two months in advance of the examination date. The examination fee payable for each examination must be paid to Council in full at least one month prior to the examination. All fees are subject to annual revision and therefore subject to change without prior notice.

**Format of the Examination**

The examination papers are in the form of “open book” examinations with the exception of the Test in the Laws pertaining to Pharmacy Practice.

The *Test in the Laws pertaining to Pharmacy Practice* is a written “closed book” examination, consisting of one three-hour paper.

The full *Professional Examination* consists of the following four examination papers:

**Pharmaceutical Sciences**

The examination in this study area consists of two three-hour papers and is based on the broad field of pharmaceutical sciences. Two examination papers are written -

- Paper 1: Pharmaceutics and Pharmaceutical Chemistry; and
- Paper 2: Pharmacology and Toxicology

**Professional Pharmacy Practice**

The examination in this field of study consists of two three-hour papers. Emphasis is placed on assessing the candidate’s ability to apply knowledge and to exercise judgment in specific situations, problems and patient medication regiments. Two examination papers are written -

- Paper 3: Test in the Laws pertaining to Pharmacy Practice; and
- Paper 4: Professional Pharmacy Practice and Pharmacy Administration

After examination papers have been marked by Council's examiner(s), they are forwarded to the moderator(s) for moderation. The Education Committee of Council has to approve the results before they can be made public. Letters are sent to candidates...
with the results of the examination. Council endeavours to have the results available within 2 months of the date of the examination.

The following rules apply to examination results:

- in order to pass, a candidate must obtain **NOT less than 50%** in each paper;
- candidates who fail to obtain a pass mark, may repeat the examination as many times as necessary after having paid the applicable examination fee;
- any application for special consideration on account of illness or other special circumstance(s) which occur immediately preceding or during the examination session, must be filed with the Registrar, or invigilator as applicable before the examination has been completed.

Appeals by a candidate against the results or any other matter relating to an examination/evaluation conducted by Council must be in writing and addressed to the Registrar. Such an appeal must be received within one month of the release of the results of an examination/evaluation.

**Examination Fees**

The prescribed examination fee should be forwarded to Council after approval to sit for the examination has been granted by the Education Committee. The fees must be paid in full at least one month prior to the examination date. The prescribed fee may be paid in cash, by cheque or money order.

The applicable fee is:

- **R1193.43** per paper (excluding VAT)

All fees are subject to annual revision and therefore, subject to change without prior notice. Examination fees for applicants residing in the Republic of South Africa should include an additional 14% Value Added Tax (VAT).

All examination/evaluation fees include a non-refundable portion of R50-00 per paper. Refund of the balance will be made only when a candidate gives notice of the intention to cancel his/her entry to the examination/evaluation at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination/evaluation, or if he/she is unable to write the examination/evaluation because of illness or for compassionate reasons. Applications for refunds must be accompanied by appropriate documentary proof of the reason(s) why the scheduled examination/evaluation was not written.

Previous examination papers can be obtained at the Office of Council at a cost of **R50.45** (including VAT) per paper.

**OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION**

The South African Pharmacy Council is the statutory body which regulates pharmacy in South Africa. It is thus advisable to contact the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa at the address below for further information regarding the working conditions (salary) benefits etc. of the pharmacy profession in the country.

In preparation for the examination in the legislation relating to pharmacy in South Africa, the Compendium of Laws and Regulations relating to Pharmacy may also be purchased from the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa at the following address:

**The Executive Director**  
Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa  
P O Box 26039  
ARCADIA  
0007

Tel: 0027 12 301 0352/4/5

The following pharmacy organisations can be contacted for further information regarding pharmacy as a career, membership or services offered.
PHARMACEUTICAL ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

A list of pharmaceutical organisations has been compiled to acquaint candidates with the various professional bodies serving the pharmacy profession in South Africa. The information has been provided by the various organisations and is by no means an exhaustive list. The following organisations may be contacted for further information regarding membership or services offered:

NAPM - National Association of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers
PO Box 32361, Kyalami, 1684
Tel: (011) 312-6966 Fax: (011) 312-6966
E-mail: raseela@napm.co.za
Web: www.napm.co.za

NAPW - National Association of Pharmaceutical Wholesalers
PO Box 3069, Houghton, 2041
Tel: (011) 442 0331
E-mail: napw@mweb.co.za

PIASA - Pharmaceutical Industry Association of South Africa
P O Box 12123, Vorna Valley, 1686
Tel: (011) 805-5100 Fax: (011) 805-5105/9
E-mail: info@piasa.co.za
Web: www.piasa.co.za

PSSA - Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa
P O Box 26039, Arcadia, 0007
Tel: (012) 301-0820 Fax: (012) 301-0828
E-mail: pssa@pharmail.co.za
Website: www.pssa.org.za

SAAHIP - South African Association of Hospital & Institutional Pharmacists
P O Box 26039, Arcadia, 0007
Tel: (012) 301-0820 Fax: (012) 301-0836
Email SAAHIP Executive: exec@saahip.org.za

SAAPI - South African Association of Pharmacists in Industry
P O Box 26039, Arcadia, 0007
Tel: (012) 301-0820 Fax: (012) 301-0828

SAPSF - South African Pharmacy Students’ Federation
Email: saps.pres@gmail.com

SACP - Community Pharmacists’ Sector of the PSSA
P O Box 26039, Arcadia, 0007
Tel: (012) 301-0820 Fax: (012) 301-0828
E-mail: pssa@pharmail.co.za
Website: www.pssa.org.za

SMASA - Self Medication Association of South Africa
P O Box 71351, The Willows, 0041, South Africa
Tel: +27 (0)12 803-5955 Fax: +27 (0)12 803-3575
E-mail: smasa@telkomsa.net
Web: www.smasa.cc

Department of Health
Private Bag X828, Pretoria, 0001
Tel: (012) 312-0285 Fax: (012) 325-5706/326-4382
Website: www.health.gov.za