

Clinical tariff for undergraduate pharmacy placements: FAQs

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Introduction

This document provides information on Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) clinical tariff for undergraduate pharmacy students.

For detailed information relating to education and training tariffs and clinical tariff, please refer to the [DHSC health and social care website](#) which includes annually updated guidance.

Clinical Tariff Essentials

What is clinical tariff?

Clinical tariff is one of the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) 'education and training tariffs' details of which can be found [here](#).

Clinical tariff is a nationally mandated price for providers of **practice based placements**, for actual activity delivered. Prices are set by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). Funding is administered by NHS England.

The clinical tariff payment is intended to provide a contribution to the funding of placement co-ordination and practice-based learning for all eligible clinical professions to ensure that:

- Providers are reimbursed consistently for training placements provided and
- Placements are high quality and ensure that learners develop the required skills and knowledge to meet their respective professional competencies.

Is pharmacy, as a profession, eligible for clinical tariff?

Yes. From 1st September 2022, undergraduate pharmacy (MPharm) is eligible for clinical tariff.

Who is eligible for clinical tariff?

Clinical tariff is paid to providers of a clinical placement for eligible MPharm students where arranged through the university at which the student is enrolled.

Pharmacy students eligible for clinical tariff funding are those students completing clinical placements during their General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) accredited Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree programme. Clinical placements in years to 1 to 4 (or equivalent stages in non-standard delivery models) are eligible.

Placements in the following settings are eligible for the clinical tariff placement fee:

- NHS managed sector (for example, secondary care, mental health trusts, etc)
- General practice or primary care networks
- Community pharmacies
- Other healthcare providers delivering NHS contracted services

At present, placements within the pharmaceutical industry sector are not eligible for the tariff.

For detailed eligibility criteria and information, please refer to the annually updated DHSC Education and training tariffs guidance available on the [DHSC health and social care training website](#)

What is the rate of tariff payment?

The clinical tariff price is published [here](#) each year by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

- The price published is for the equivalent of 40.8 weeks of full-time placement, reflective of 37.5 hours per week.
- Clinical placements delivered are therefore paid (retrospectively) pro-rata based on this FTE annual price.
- Tariff is adjusted by the Market Force Factor (MFF) to compensate for the unavoidable cost differences of providing training placements in different parts of the country.
- NHS England publish MFF rates on an annual basis.

How is tariff administered / How does the funding flow?

In all instances, the MPharm-providing university must report the placement activity related to the programme to NHS England via the [Student Data Collection Tool \(SDCT\)](#) at the required data collection time points each year (currently in June, October and February).

Based on this reported data:

1. Direct placement activity (face to face activity) is paid to a placement provider through regional NHS England funding routes.
2. Permitted simulation placement activity delivered by a university as part of their placement provision is paid to the university. This is funded at the tariff rate for activity that constitutes placement learning hours: where the number of hours is compliant with the regulatory or professional body's expectations. NHSE will not pay the tariff rate for simulation activity delivered as part of the education provider's teaching requirements.
3. In-house clinics provided as part of a university's placement provision are paid directly to the university.

I am interested in providing an undergraduate clinical placement. Who do I speak to / How do I get started?

Please speak to your local School of Pharmacy and your regional NHS England Pharmacy lead. A list of NHS England regional pharmacy teams and contact details is available at the end of this document.

What happens if the placement provider is in Wales or Scotland? Do they qualify for tariff?

Clinical tariff is only applicable for training placements that take place in England.

Where an MPharm providing university wishes to arrange a training placement outside of England and use clinical tariff to fund this, they must contact NHS England, as the rate of payment for a placement outside of England must be determined through local negotiation between NHSE and the placement providers in the devolved administrations.

Are foundation trainee pharmacists (previously pre-registration pharmacists) eligible for tariff?

No. Foundation trainee pharmacists (those undertaking their foundation trainee pharmacist programme after completing the MPharm) are **not** eligible for clinical tariff. [Separate funding arrangements](#) are in place for foundation training in England.

Can tariff be claimed for training courses delivered at the university prior to a student's placement to prepare them for their placement?

No. Clinical tariff funding only covers direct costs involved in delivering a placement. Further details of the costs that clinical tariff covers can be found in the DHSC Education and training tariffs guidance available on the [DHSC health and social care training website](#)

Do simulation-based learning / online placements qualify for tariff?

Yes. Simulation-based learning / online placements are tariff eligible, as long as they meet the criteria detailed in the DHSC Education and training tariffs guidance available on the [DHSC health and social care training website](#).

NHS England will not pay the clinical tariff rate for simulation activity delivered as part of the education providers teaching requirements.

Do HEIs need to have the simulation hours approved by NHS England?

There is no requirement for NHS England to approve the simulation hours, but they must meet the requirements detailed in the DHSC Education and training tariffs guidance available on the [DHSC health and social care training website](#), and may be subject to audit.

Are pharmacy students eligible to access the Learner Support fund?

From the 2025 to 2026 academic year, new and continuing undergraduate pharmacy students are able to access the **Travel and Dual Accommodation Expenses (TDAE)** provision of the Learning Support Fund scheme, details of which can be found [here](#). Pharmacy students are not eligible to access other provisions within the Learning Support Fund.

Further information on the Learning Support Fund can be found here:

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-learning-support-fund-lsf

If a student is 'booked' in for a placement and does not attend, will the placement provider still receive payment?

The payment of placement tariff is a retrospective payment based on activity that has been undertaken. If activity has not been undertaken, then no payment can be provided.

Placement essentials

Is the provision of placements mandated?

No. NHS England do not mandate the provision of placements.

How can MPharm-providing universities support placement providers to develop clinical placements that are more than shadowing?

NHS England are working in collaboration with the Pharmacy Schools Council to develop resources and approaches that support placement activities that are participative. This includes the exploration of 'Entrustable Professional Activities' or 'EPAs'. EPAs can help placement providers and universities describe activities that students can participate in while on placement that are participative rather than shadowing. They also describe the appropriate level of supervision for these activities. More information can be found on the NHS England Workforce Training and Education pharmacy [website](#).

Can placement providers work with more than one School of Pharmacy to provide placements?

Yes, placement providers can receive students from more than one school of pharmacy. Consideration should be given to the activities that each group of students are asked to complete while on placement, and how the placement provider will manage this effectively. Additionally, schools of pharmacy can work with more than one placement provider; this will enable placement capacity expansion and a varied placement experience for the learner.

What is the quality framework for placements?

The [NHS Education Funding Agreement](#) replaces the 2021/24 NHS Education Contract, covering both education and placement providers from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2027.

The Education Funding Agreement sets out the quality requirements relating to clinical placement provision, with reference to the NHS England Education Quality Strategy and Framework.

The NHS Education Funding Agreement is the mechanism for the relationship between NHS England and placement providers. It provides the framework for quality responsibilities, which the [NHS England Education Quality Strategy and Framework](#) underpins.

What are the quality standards for placements?

The [NHS England Education Quality Strategy and Framework](#) describe the quality standards for placements.

Can training hubs help to provide pharmacy placements?

Yes, training hubs can help to provide placements in Primary Care Networks and General Practice. Learn more about training hubs here: www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/primary-care/training-hubs/training-hubs-how-they-work

Are students undertaking summer placement eligible for tariff?

No. Students undertaking summer placements are not eligible for tariff, as this does not form part of the education provider's curriculum.

If a student repeats a year of study, can tariff be used to fund placements within their requested year?

Yes. All activity aligned to tariff criteria attracts tariff payment, including students repeating stages of study.

Placement activity and funding mechanisms

How is placement activity recorded and submitted?

Schools of Pharmacy will submit their placement activity to NHS England at specified time points each year, via the Student Data Collection Tool (SDCT). The SDCT is an eCollection portal. Find out more at

<https://ecollection.hee.nhs.uk/SDCT>

Are there set time points to report placement activity?

Yes, there are 3 points in the year for Schools of Pharmacy to submit data to NHS England. These points are currently in June, October and February. Please see for the latest information: <https://ecollection.hee.nhs.uk/SDCT>

Are there set time points when NHS providers receive tariff funding?

NHS Providers receive monthly payments, which are reconciled against placement activity.

Is placement data validated?

Yes. Placement data is validated through the Student Data Collection Tool (SDCT). The data submitted by education providers is then shared with NHS placement providers to validate the data, upon which NHS England will make payment.

How does tariff funding flow to placement providers? Is a contract needed?

Tariff funding will flow from NHS England to NHS placement providers through the NHS Education Funding Agreement. Regional processes are in place to flow funding to non-NHS organisations. Please contact your Regional Pharmacy Lead for further information. A list of NHS England regional pharmacy teams is available at the end of this document.

What happens if a placement is delivered in a different region to where the School of Pharmacy is located?

Where placements occur in an NHS Organisation, the funding will flow directly through the NHS Education Funding Agreement. For non-NHS organisations, regional processes are in place. Please contact your Regional Pharmacy Lead for further information. A list of NHS England regional pharmacy teams is available at the end of this document.

Are Schools of Pharmacy able to 'top up' tariff funding to incentivise placement providers?

No. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) are responsible for setting the tariff price, and this is to ensure consistency of funding. Incentivising via 'top up tariff' is not permitted.

What is MFF? How do I know which MFF applies?

MFF short for Market Forces Factor. This is used to compensate the unavoidable cost differences of providing training placements in different parts of the country. MFF rates are published annually. More information can be found in DHSC Education and training tariffs guidance available on the [DHSC health and social care training website](#).

NHS England regional pharmacy teams

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Version history

Please contact england.traineepharmacist@nhs.net with any editorial suggestions.

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2.0	June 2025	<p>This replaces and updates the previous version published under Health Education England in 2022.</p> <p>Updates are provided to branding, document references, contact details and URLs.</p> <p>FAQs that are no longer current have been removed</p>