

PHARMACY

What it takes to become a Pharmacist

Pharmacy is effectively the profession of compounding and dispensing medication. More recently, the term has come to include other services related to patient care including clinical practice, medication review, drug information, etc. Some of these new roles are now mandated by law in various legislatures. Pharmacists, therefore, are the primary health professionals who optimise medication management to produce positive health-outcomes

Course Profile

It's important to start to think early about the choices to make if pharmacy seems like an interesting option. At A-level, the compulsory subject to be taken is Chemistry as this forms the basis for understanding, developing and dispensing medication. Other A-levels such as Biology and Mathematics also provide relevant skills and knowledge for a head start in the career. There are some excellent courses offered at university that allow a seamless transition into the pharmaceutical industry. The MPharm is the actual course required to be completed to qualify as a pharmacist and these are run at many universities nationwide. Other related courses such as; Pharmacology, Pharmaceutical, Biological Chemistry and Pharmaceutics also lead towards working in similar fields, most commonly research.

Job Profile

Being a Pharmacist does not necessary entail working at a corner shop dispensing cough medicine and Paracetamol. There are mammoth multinational firms operating across the globe that take on pharmacy students and train them on very impressive programmes. Innovation and hard work, like in so many industries, is the key for success in this field. Firms like the ones just described include GlaxoSmithKline Beecham and Pfizer.

Of course, another career option is to work in a pharmacy, being either privately or government funded. These now provide the opportunity to work closely with patients, advising them based on common symptoms and working to remedy illnesses in a more hands on way.

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