



australian
pharmacy
council

Development and testing of Workplace-based Assessment tools for assessment of Australian pharmacist interns

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List of abbreviations

Term	Meaning
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
APC	Australian Pharmacy Council
CbD	Case-based Discussion
EPA	Entrustable Professional Activity
ITA-act	In-Training Assessment Activity
ITA-obs	In-Training Assessment Observation
ITP	Intern Training Program
IYB	Intern Year Assessment Blueprint
IYB WG	Intern Year Assessment Blueprint Working Group
mini-CEX	mini clinical evaluation exercises
PharmBA	Pharmacy Board of Australia
SA	South Australia
TWG	Technical Working Group
WPA	Workplace-based Assessment

Development and testing of Workplace-based Assessment tools for assessment of Australian Pharmacist interns

For a number of years, the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) and the Pharmacy Board of Australia (PharmBA) have been working closely together to improve and enhance the supervised practice period for pharmacy interns (the ‘intern year’).

Following the publication of the 2020 Accreditation Standards for degree programs and Intern Training Programs (ITP), we published a new [Performance Outcomes Framework](#), which sets out the performance outcomes that applicants for general registration need to have demonstrated before being considered suitable for unsupervised practice.

These performance outcomes have been incorporated into an [Intern Year Assessment Blueprint \(IYB\)](#). Each performance outcome listed in the IYB is mapped to a single suggested assessment type.

While some performance outcomes can be assessed by means of external point-in-time examinations (the Written Examination and the Oral Examination), the majority are more appropriately assessed in the workplace, using relevant workplace-based assessment (WPA) processes and tools.

The major types of WPA recommended in the IYB are In-training assessments (including both observation (ITA-obs) and activity (ITA-act) based); Assessment of Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs); case-based discussions (CbD); and mini clinical evaluation exercises (mini-CEX).

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the recommended assessment types across the 51 performance outcomes relevant for pharmacist interns.

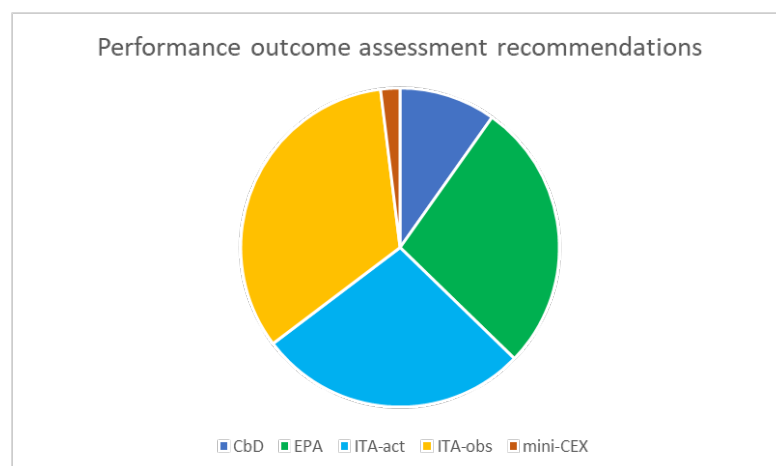


Figure 1: Distribution of IYB assessments across performance outcomes

CbD – Case-based discussion; EPA – Entrustable Professional Activity; ITA-act – In-training assessment activity; ITAObs – In-training activity observation; mini-CEX – mini clinical evaluation exercise

In July 2020, we received funding from the PharmBA to develop workplace-based assessment tools for use in the period of supervised practice.

The objectives of the project were to:

- a. identify and develop an initial list of WPA tools
- b. develop accompanying guidance and supporting documentation for interns and preceptors¹
- c. seek feedback from interns, preceptors, and Intern Training Program (ITP) providers
- d. pilot the WPA tools and supporting documentation in diverse geographical and practice settings where feasible.

We appointed a Technical Working Group (TWG) to help us identify and develop a priority list of WPA tools and draft the initial elements of the WPA toolkit. This comprised pharmacy and medical education experts from Australia and New Zealand. The Intern Year Assessment Working Group (IYB WG), drawn from the PharmBA and APC, served as the project governance group.

A consultant produced the initial suite of tools and presented them to the group of experts for review and consensus. The governance group then considered the expert group recommendations before the tools were progressed to consultation and pilot testing.

Project Phases

We held 3 in-person consultation workshops in May 2021. One of the workshops was dedicated solely to ITP providers. The other two were open to interns, preceptors, and pharmacists who were invited through expression of interest published on our website and circulated through pharmacy professional organisations.

The face-to-face consultative meetings for pharmacist and interns were held in Melbourne and Canberra and were full day sessions. This allowed participants time to work in small groups. Table 1 shows the number of pharmacist and interns attending the consultative meetings.

		Pharmacists	Interns
Melbourne	Community	3	1
	Hospital	8	4
Canberra	Community	3	1
	Hospital	1	4
TOTAL		15	10

Table 1: Participants at consultative meetings

¹ In this document, the term preceptor is inclusive of supervising pharmacists as defined by the Pharmacy Board of Australia except where specifically indicated otherwise.

Following the consultative workshops, we published a [consultation paper](#) to seek broader feedback from the pharmacy profession and any interested stakeholders. We received feedback via an anonymous online survey and written submissions. Pharmacist responders were evenly distributed between community and hospital practice sites. Further revisions to the tools were made before proceeding to a pilot of the tools in community and hospital pharmacies.

The pilot took place between August and October 2021. Participants were recruited into the pilot study by an expression of interest process. Only sites in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), South Australia (SA) and Victoria were eligible to participate, as a consequence of the restrictions imposed under COVID-19 Public Health Orders in other jurisdictions. Twelve sites participated in the pilot program, and all provided feedback on at least one tool.

Distribution of participating sites is shown in Figure 2.

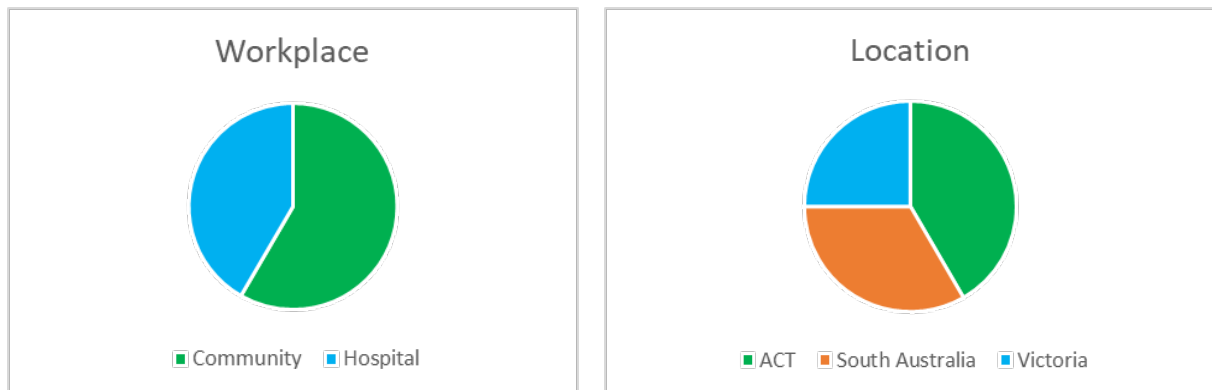


Figure 2: Distribution of participating sites

Results

Feedback received and results from the small-scale pilot indicated that the implementation of the proposed intern assessment tools was feasible and was likely to fill some practice gaps which are currently apparent.

An [initial suite of WPA tools](#) is now available on our website for any preceptor and intern to use.

The tools comprise:

- 3 x Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs)
- 1 x Case-based Discussion (CbD)
- 2 x In-Training Assessment activities (ITA-act).

These tools have been designed to address a total of 15 performance outcomes. Multiple outcomes can be demonstrated simultaneously in one assessment. Following endorsement by the project governance group, we are working closely with ITPs to roll out the WPA tools in 2022. We will continue to gather feedback from users over the next 12 months to inform improvements to the tools and considerations for future expansion of WPA.

Acknowledgements

We thank the Pharmacy Board of Australia for funding this project and for working with us throughout the project period as part of the governance group. We would also like to thank the members of the Technical Working Group, who assisted the project team in the development of the tools, and all the interns and preceptors who participated in the pilot.

Finally, we acknowledge the significant and extraordinary contribution of the late Dr Erica Sainsbury, APC consultant, who led the development and drafting of the tools and supplementary material. We are indebted to her for the success of this project and thank her for the legacy she leaves in advancing the pharmacy profession in Australia.

Technical Working Group Members

- Emeritus Professor LLoyd Sansom AO, University of South Australia (Chair of the TWG)
- Professor Kichu Nair AM, University of Newcastle (Medical)
- Associate Professor Kirsten Galbraith, Monash University (Pharmacy)
- Dr. Curtis Lee, University of Newcastle (APC consultant psychometrician)
- Associate Professor Kyle Wilby, Dalhousie University (Pharmacy), Canada formerly of University of Otago, New Zealand
- Mrs Sally Marotti, Lead Pharmacist, experiential learning, training and research, SA Pharmacy, SA Health.
- Dr. Hayley Croft, University of Newcastle (Pharmacy)
- APC Staff:
 - Bronwyn Clark
 - Glenys Wilkinson
 - Peter Halstead
 - Josephine Maundu

Pharmacies participating in the pilot

The Pharmacy Department, Canberra Public Hospital, Garran Australian Capital Territory (ACT)

The Pharmacy Department, Calvary Public Hospital, Bruce ACT

Cincotta Discount Chemist Dickson, ACT

Coleman Court Pharmacy Weston Creek, ACT

Amcal+Pharmacy, Belconnen, ACT

The Pharmacy Department, Monash Health, Clayton Victoria

The Pharmacy Department, Ballarat Health Services, Ballarat Victoria

Chemist Warehouse Chadstone DC, Oakleigh Victoria

The Southern Adelaide Local Health Network (SALHN), Pharmacy Department, South Australia (SA)

Christies Guild Pharmacy, Christies Beach SA

National Pharmacies, Findon SA

Star Discount Chemist, Welland SA