

Third Country Qualification Recognition process Information Guide

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What is the PSI?

The PSI is the body responsible for registering pharmacists and for ensuring that the qualifications of pharmacists seeking to practise in Ireland meet the minimum standards required by Irish and EU law.

1. Who is this Guide for?

This guide is for applicants who hold a pharmacist qualification, obtained in a Third Country, and who wish to seek recognition of that qualification in Ireland.

The Third Country Qualification Recognition (TCQR) process is the mechanism by which a non-EU-qualified pharmacist must apply to have their qualification as a pharmacist recognised.

The recognition process will involve the assessment of an applicant's qualification, education and training to ensure their equivalence with the standard required to practice as a pharmacist in Ireland, whilst also respecting the provisions of EU Directive 2005/36/EC.

"Third Country" means all countries other than Ireland and countries which are members of the European Union or part of the European Economic Area. Since January 1st, 2021, following Brexit, "Third Country" also includes the applicants who qualified from the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

Once a qualification has been recognised as appropriate for practice an applicant becomes eligible to apply for registration with the PSI.

In summary, to practise as a pharmacist in Ireland an applicant needs to go through a two-step process:

1. Qualification Recognition – this assesses the qualification an applicant holds and assesses its' equivalence with the standard required to practice as a pharmacist in Ireland
2. Registration – anyone wishing to practice as a pharmacist in Ireland must apply for registration to be entered onto the pharmacist register

3. Eligibility

What criteria do I need to meet to check that I am eligible to apply for recognition of my qualification as a pharmacist in Ireland?

Each application must fulfil the following eligibility criteria:

1. The applicant must have obtained a pharmacist qualification from a non-EU/EEA country and have successfully completed the **full education and training requirements in the qualifying state/jurisdiction** entitling them to practice pharmacy and be recognised there as a pharmacist.
2. The applicant **must be eligible to practice pharmacy in the country/jurisdiction where they obtained their qualification**. This must be confirmed in writing by the qualifying state's competent authority or equivalent (i.e. a certificate or letter of confirmation of qualification/professional status certificate). The applicant does not have to be currently registered and practising in that state, but they must be **eligible** to do so.

4 . How do I make an application?

- a) You are advised to read this GUIDE in **full** prior to submitting your application.
- b) Download the required forms from our [website](#), which include an Application Form, Certificate of Identity Form and Statutory Declaration Form.
- c) Complete the application form fully (If any sections do not apply to you, please write "Not Applicable" across that section on the form), have the Certificate of Identity Form witnessed by a Health or Legal Professional and have the Statutory Declaration Form witnessed by a Solicitor, or Peace Commissioner, or Commissioner for Oaths. The Statutory Declaration must be completed in Ireland, or by a consular official in an Irish Embassy or Consulate. This form will not be accepted and deemed invalid if not witnessed correctly.
- d) Gather all copies of documents outlined in the below Glossary of application documents on page 8 & 9 of this Guide.
- e) Request third party documents to be issued from your university and competent authority directly to PSI
- f) Pay the €500 application fee by electronic transfer, ensuring your name is referenced on the payment

Once you have gathered all your application documents, you should scan and email to noneuroute@psi.ie stating your name and TCQR application in the subject line. E.g. Joe Bloggs – TCQR applicaiton

Third-Party documents in support of your application

When PSI receives third-party documents in support of your application, these will be uploaded to your application file. If third-party documents are received prior to receipt of your application, PSI will hold these on file for a period of six months, awaiting receipt of your application submission. If no application has been received within six months, the third-party documents will be destroyed, and you will have to request the documents to be issued again if you apply beyond that timeframe.

Please note that PSI does not have to be in receipt of your third-party documents from your university /competent authority in advance of receiving your application. Please, therefore, do not email us to request confirmation of receipt of these documents in advance of submitting your application.

5. What happens once I submit my application?

The diagram below illustrates the stages outlined in the TCQR process following receipt of your application. The number of stages that you will be required to progress through will depend on the outcome of a holistic assessment at Stage 2

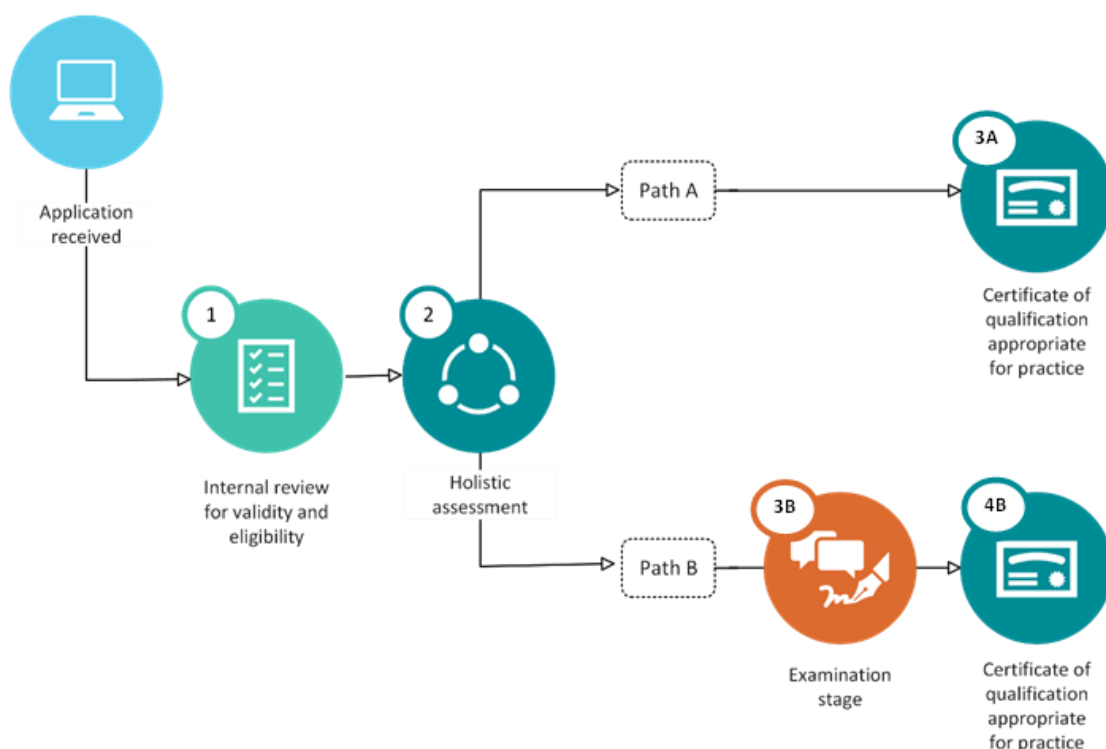
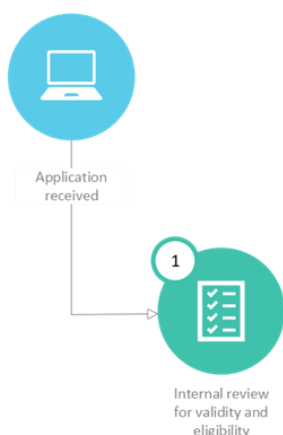


Figure 1: The 4 Stages of the TCQR process

Stage 1: Internal review for validity and eligibility



Once an application is received, the PSI will:

- conduct an initial overview of the application to verify the eligibility of the applicant (see Section 1 Eligibility)
- ensure that the application is complete*.

File Valid & Complete: When the PSI has determined that your application meets the eligibility criteria and has received all your documentation, including third-party verifications, your application will be deemed 'File Complete' and will be prepared for an Assessment (Stage 2).

File incomplete: If, upon internal review, an application appears to meet the eligibility criteria, however, is still incomplete, the PSI will notify the applicant that the file is incomplete. The onus lies with the applicant to subsequently submit all

required outstanding documentation to enable the assessment of the equivalency of their qualifications (and experience where relevant) to the Irish qualification.

File invalid: If the application does not meet the eligibility criteria, it will be deemed invalid, and the applicant will be notified of same.

Applicants will have a period of 6 months to provide the PSI with a complete application. Should an applicant be unable to provide all required documentation during this timeframe, the application will be deemed incomplete, the applicant will be notified of this, and the file will be closed. If an application is closed for this reason, the applicant may choose to submit a new application at a later date.

Stage 2: Holistic Assessment

Holistic assessment



To assess whether an applicant possesses a qualification appropriate for practice, independent external assessors will carry out **holistic paper-based assessments** of the application and supporting documentation.

The assessment will consider:

1. The applicant's qualification as a pharmacist and in-service/practical training (**Input** components).
2. The quality assurance components of the regulatory system in place in the country where the applicant's qualification was obtained, for example, whether the applicant's primary qualification was accredited (**Quality** components**).
3. The applicant's relevant post-graduate education, work experience and continuing professional development (**Output** components).

The external assessor(s) will first examine the **Input and Quality** components of the application. If, following assessment of both the **Input and Quality** components, an application is considered to be equivalent to the **Irish standard**, the applicant will be exempt from demonstrating equivalence through examination and will proceed directly to the certification stage. This is called (**Path A**)

If any deficiencies are identified in the **Input and Quality** components, the external assessor(s) will then assess the **Output** components. Further to this assessment those applications that do not meet the national standards of education and pharmacy regulation will be required to complete an examination (**Path B**).

**Your application cannot be assessed or deemed valid if you do not provide all mandatory documents. Non mandatory supporting documentation (Section 5 CPD/CE and Section 6 post qualification work experience) will be assessed as part of the holistic assessment. Where you have provided information on the TCQR1 application form in sections 5 & 6 but do not submit supporting documentation and evidence with your application, PSI will assume that you are not providing any material. Your application may progress to stage 2 (holistic assessment) without supporting evidence,*

but please note that this may have an impact on the outcome of the holistic assessment. The recommendation is determined solely on the material and evidence presented. Furthermore, the intent to provide additional material subsequent to the outcome of stage 2 assessment will not be deemed grounds for an appeal.

***The Regulatory Data Form (TCQR4) should be issued to your relevant competent authority in the country where you obtained your qualification as a pharmacist for completion by the authority. The authority should then issue the completed form directly to PSI via email to noneuroute@psi.ie. The form must be issued from an official email address of the relevant authority.*

Outcome of Holistic Assessment

The outcome of the Holistic Assessment at Stage 2, will determine which of the following paths you follow:

Path A – A certificate of qualification appropriate for practice is issued (**3A**), and you will be able to proceed directly to the registration process.

OR

Path B – If deficits in your application have been identified at stage 2, you will be required to address these via a compensation measure (examination at stage **3B**).

Stage 3B: Examination Stage

Examination stage



If the holistic assessment finds that an applicant's qualification is not demonstrably equivalent to the standard necessary for practice in Ireland, the applicant will be required to undergo an aptitude test to determine if the qualification they hold is of a standard not lower than the standard necessary for practice in Ireland.

The aptitude test is in the format of a Multiple-Choice Questionnaire (MCQ) and an Objective Structural Clinical Examination (OSCE) and covers specific subject areas that a competent and appropriately qualified pharmacist would be expected to display in a practice setting in Ireland. The indicative syllabus for the examination will correlate with the minimum competencies to be acquired in the national MPharm programme, as outlined in the PSI (Education and Training) (Integrated Course) Rules 2014 (as may be updated from time to time). The reference framework will be against Level 9 of the National Qualifications Framework in Ireland – this is the level of the current MPharm national qualification.

1. MCQ Examination

The MCQ Examination assesses three main subject areas, pharmacology and pharmacy practice, basic science and properties of medicines and pharmaceutical calculations

2. OSCE Examination

The OSCE addresses and assesses in an interactive manner the knowledge, skills and competence necessary to practice as a pharmacist in Ireland. It allows applicants to practically display the application of the knowledge held.

Path B applicants will be required to complete either the MCQ component, the OSCE component, or both, depending on the deficits identified in the holistic assessment at stage 2. The holistic assessment will determine the components of the aptitude test that any applicant will be required to complete or any exemptions that can be provided.

Once the Holistic Assessment process is completed, applicants will be advised whether they must proceed via Path A or Path B. If required to proceed via Path B, the applicant will be advised if they are required to undertake both the MCQ and OSCE components or whether the MCQ or the OSCE component applies in their case.

Stage 3A & 4B: Certificate of qualification appropriate for practice

Certificate of qualification
appropriate for practice



Applicants who have successfully completed all required stages within the TCQR process will be issued with a certificate by the PSI recognising their qualification as being a 'qualification appropriate for practice'. This certificate will enable the applicant to apply for registration as a pharmacist in Ireland.

6. Glossary of application documents

The table below lists all documents that you are required to provide for qualification recognition.

Documents to be submitted by the applicant:

Document Name	What is it?	Submission details and validity
Completed TCQR application form	Application Form TCQR 1	Application will expire if not complete within 6 months
Certificate of Identity Form	Cert of ID Form TCQR 2	Application will expire if not complete within 6 months
TCQR Statutory Declaration Form	Statutory Declaration Form TCQR 3	This form will be considered invalid if it has not been completed in the presence of a Peace Commissioner or Solicitor or Commissioner for Oaths in the Republic of Ireland or by a consular official in an Irish Embassy or Consulate.
Copy of birth certificate		N/A
Copy of marriage certificate (where applicable)	You will, in general, be registered in the name that appears on your Birth Certificate or Passport. If you wish to be registered under your married name, you must submit a marriage certificate.	N/A
Copy of passport	ALL pages of your current valid in date passport	Invalid if passport has expired
Curriculum Vitae	A resume providing details of your formal education, qualifications, and work experience including current and previous employments to date, relevant accomplishments and awards	N/A
Evidence of formal qualification as a pharmacist	Copy of Degree or Parchment or Registration certificate as proof you successfully completed your qualification education and training	N/A

Documents to be issued directly from a third party in support of the applicant (Note - It is the applicant's responsibility to contact the relevant authorities to request them to issue these documents directly to PSI on their behalf):

Document Name	What is it?	Submission details and validity
Certificates of Professional Status	A certificate issued directly to PSI by the relevant competent authority in any jurisdiction where you are qualified and have practised as a pharmacist.	Validity is for three months from the date of issue.

	The certificate states qualification as a pharmacist, registration status and standing within the profession.	
Regulatory Data Form TCQR4	Form to be completed by your relevant competent authority to fulfil the Quality Component part of the Holistic Assessment	Form must be completed by relevant competent authority in the country where you obtained your qualification as a pharmacist and submitted directly from the competent authority to the PSI.
Qualification documents as a pharmacist	The university/education institute where you obtained your undergraduate pharmacist qualification is required to provide two documents: 1) Academic transcript of the programme 2) Programme syllabus. The official programme syllabus provided by the university or institute you trained in at the time of your qualification	The syllabus/ curriculum must be relevant to the programme you completed and must be clearly marked as such. These documents must be issued directly from the university/education institute to PSI. We will not accept these documents if submitted by you the applicant or any other third party.
Internship certification/letter	Document in the form of a certificate/letter outlining details of all practical internship training placements undertaken by you as part of your undergraduate qualification prior to your entitlement to practice as a pharmacist.	This document must be issued directly from your university/education institute or relevant competent authority to PSI. We will not accept these documents if submitted by you the applicant or any other third party.
Supporting documents relating to post-qualification education, training, CPD, work experience	<p>This documentation relates to the information provided in Sections 4-7 of the TCQR application form.</p> <p>This documentation concerns education and training completed after you have been awarded the qualification for which you are seeking recognition.</p> <p>You must include copies of certificates/transcripts and sufficient detail on course content for any additional post-qualification education and training that you wish to use in support of your application.</p> <p>The documentation that you provide will be considered as part of</p>	N/A

	the holistic assessment in the event of deficits being identified between your qualification for recognition and the minimum standards required for an Irish graduate and used to determine whether you follow Path A or Path B.	
Translations of any documents not in English	We will need a certified English translation of any document which is not in the English language.	The translation must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carried out by a qualified translator • Signed, stamped and dated by the translator

7. Appeals processes

Please contact the PSI for details of our Appeals Process.

8. Fraud and fraudulent behaviours in relation to applications

If any information contained in the application is found to be fraudulent, knowingly false and/or recklessly false, the application will be considered invalid and immediately returned to the applicant. The applicant will be disqualified from applying for qualification recognition in future and any further applications will be refused.

You should also be aware that the making of a statutory declaration that contains information that to your knowledge is false or misleading in any material respect is an offence under section 26(6) of the Statutory Declarations Act 1938 (as amended) and that this is punishable by a fine not exceeding €3000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or both.

9. Language Competence Requirements

English language competence requirements apply to all pharmacists who are seeking first time registration with the PSI.

Language competence is not assessed at the qualification recognition stage but only when an individual presents for registration.

You will find information regarding PSI's language competence requirements for first time registration [here](#).

10. Data Protection

The PSI takes its data protection obligations seriously. All personal information submitted by you will be treated in accordance with Data Protection legislation. Please review [the Data Protection Statement](#) on our website for details of our use of your information and your rights in relation to this.