

GUIDELINES for INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED PHARMACIST

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1. Evaluation of your Degree:

Evaluation of your degree is the most important step before you apply for any exams. This should ideally be done at the Comparative Education Service (CES) at the University of Toronto.

<https://learn.utoronto.ca/international-professionals/comparative-education-service-ces>

Contact CES by:

A. PHONE:

+1(416)-978-0393

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday:

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (EST)

B. IN PERSON:

158 St. George Street

Toronto, ON, M5S 2V8, Canada

Closest TTC subway station: St. George

Wednesday and Friday:

11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. (EST)

C. ONLINE:

<https://learn.utoronto.ca/international-professionals/comparative-education-service-ces/contact-us>

Note: Keep in mind this evaluation of degree is only useful as proof of B. Pharmacy Degree equivalent to Canadian degree not for registration as Pharmacist. Registration as a Pharmacist will be later

2. Registration as a Pharmacist in Canada:

- Document evaluation from PEBC (Pharmacy examination Board of Canada)
- Each province in Canada is responsible for issuing a license to practise pharmacy in that province
- All provinces, except Quebec, require applicants educated outside of Canada to have The Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC) Certificate of Qualification
- In addition to the PEBC Certificate of Qualification, each province has additional licensing requirements. These may include practical experience, English or French language skills, and jurisprudence examinations
- You must contact the regulatory authority of the province in which you choose to practice, to receive full information about their requirements. The contact information for the provincial and territorial regulatory authorities is available on the PEBC website
<http://www.pebc.ca>

The addresses of the Provincial and Territorial Regulatory Authorities are:

i. College of Pharmacists of British Columbia

200-1765 West 8th Avenue
Vancouver, British Columbia V6J 5C6
Tel: 604-733-2440/1-800-663-1940
Fax: 604-733-2493/1-800-377-8129
www.bcpharmacists.org

ii. Alberta College of Pharmacists

1100-8215 112 St. NW
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2C8
Tel: 780-990-0321/1-877-227-3838
Fax: 780-990-0328
www.pharmacists.ab.ca

iii. Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals

Suite 221A - 1900 Albert Street
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 4K8
Tel: 306-584-2292
Fax: 306-584-9695

www.saskpharm.ca

iv. College of Pharmacists of Manitoba

200 Tache Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2H 1A7
Tel: 204-233-1411
Fax: 204-237-3468
www.cphm.ca

v. Ontario College of Pharmacists

483 Huron Street
Toronto, Ontario M5R 2R4
Tel: 416-962-4861 / 1-800-220-1921
Fax: 416-847-8200
www.ocpinfo.com

vi. Ordre des Pharmaciens du Québec

266, rue Notre-Dame Ouest
Bureau 301
Montréal, Québec H2Y 1T6
Tel: 514-284-9588 / 1-800-363-0324
Fax: 514-284-3420
www.opq.org

vii. New Brunswick College of Pharmacists

1224 Mountain Rd, Unit 8
Moncton, NB E1C 2T6
Tel: 506-857-8957/1-800-463-4434
Fax: 506-857-8838
www.nbpharmacists.ca

viii. Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists

1559 Brunswick Street, Suite 200
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2G1
Tel: 902-422-8528
Fax: 902-422-0885
www.nspharmacists.ca

ix. Prince Edward Island College of Pharmacists

375 Trans-Canada Highway, P.O. Box 208
Cornwall, Prince Edward Island C0A 1H0
Tel: 902-658-3561
Fax: 902-628-6946
www.pepharmacists.ca

x. Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board

Apothecary Hall, 488 Water Street
St. John's, Newfoundland A1E 1B3
Tel: 709-753-5877 / 1-877-453-5877
Fax: 709-753-8615
www.nlpb.ca

xi. For licensing in the Northwest Territories, Yukon Territory and Nunavut Territory, contact:

Registrar, Professional Licensing
Health and Social Services
Gov't of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories X1A 2L9
Tel: 867-920-8058
Fax: 867-873-0484
www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca

Yukon Consumer Services, Dept. of Community Services

Gov't. of the Yukon Territory
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6
Tel: 867-667-5811
www.gov.yk.ca

Registrar - Health Professions
Professional Practice Unit,
Health and Social Services,
Government of Nunavut
Tel: 867-982-7655

3. How to receive your PEBC Certificate of Qualification:

As an international pharmacy graduate, you must follow the 2-step Evaluation Procedure before you can write the Pharmacist Qualifying Examination. Once you have favorably completed the two steps, you will then be eligible to take the Pharmacist Qualifying Examination.

i. Language Proficiency Requirements:

- Language Proficiency Tests are not required by the PEBC. However, Provincial Regulatory Authorities do require these tests
- Pharmacists seeking licensure must meet the respective provincial requirements in order to become licensed within an individual province
- Therefore, candidates for licensure are advised to contact the regulatory authority for the province in which they are seeking licensure to receive full information regarding language fluency requirements

ii. Pharmacist's Gateway Canada:

- Beginning August 20, 2014, all international pharmacy graduates (IPGs) who wish to obtain a licence to practise pharmacy in Canada will follow a new procedure*
- The term IPGs refers to pharmacists who have obtained their pharmacy education outside of Canada
- Canada's pharmacy regulatory authorities (PRAs) have entrusted their national association, the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA), to develop a new, streamlined national approach to facilitate the licensure process for IPGs

4. Steps to Achieve PEBC Certification:

Step 1: Document Evaluation:

The PEBC must evaluate certain documents to ensure that you have a degree in Pharmacy that is acceptable to the PEBC.

- The minimum requirement is a four-year undergraduate degree in pharmacy
- If your documents are favourably evaluated, you must then write the Pharmacist Evaluating Examination
- To have your documents evaluated to determine if you are eligible for the Evaluating Examination, please see the section entitled Document Evaluation Application Procedures

Applying for the Examination:

<http://www.pebc.ca>

- It is very important to follow dates and deadline properly, there are very strict rules and no exception at all
- You have to pass the exam within 5 years of registering, otherwise you will have to re-register
- You are given maximum 3 attempts to pass this examination

Step 2: The Evaluating Examination

- This written examination is to determine whether or not you have completed a program of study comparable to that taught in Canada
- If you wish to be considered for the next sitting of the Evaluating Examination, please send in your examination application form and fee together with the documents, etc. required for Document Evaluation by the deadline date indicated in the Document Evaluation Application Procedures section
- Please note: if using the online application process,
 - You must first apply for Document Evaluation and wait for PEBC to assign you an **PEBC Identification Number**. You cannot apply online

for the Evaluating Examination until you have been assigned a PEBC identification number

- Do not wait to hear if your documents have been evaluated as you may miss the deadline for submission of your examination application
- **Note:** Once your documents have been favourably evaluated, you have up to five years to pass the Evaluating Examination

Step 3: The Pharmacist Qualifying Examination, Part I (MCQ) and Part II (OSCE)

- After your documents have been favourably evaluated and you have passed the Evaluating Examination, you can then take the Pharmacist Qualifying Examination, Part I (MCQ) and Part II (OSCE)
- You will receive information from the PEBC about the Qualifying Examination after you pass the Evaluating Examination
- The Qualifying Examination is designed to assess the competencies required for safe and effective practices
- The examination is held twice a year and candidates may elect to take both parts of the Qualifying Examination at the same time, or each part at separate times

The Qualifying Examination:

- Part I is a written examination in a multiple-choice question (MCQ) format. It is divided into two sittings, taken on two consecutive half-days
- Part II of the Qualifying Examination is a practice-based examination designed in the format known as an “objective structured clinical examination” (OSCE), and is taken on a different day. The OSCE consists of a series of 7-minute tasks or simulations which are based on common and critical practical situations
- For more information on this examination, see The Qualifying Examination section of the home page for pharmacist on the PEBC website

<http://www.pebc.ca>

Note: You have only three attempts to pass the examination, you can get one extra attempt under supervision of a qualified pharmacist.

5. Registration of Foreign Trained Pharmacists in the United States:

A foreign pharmacy graduate is a pharmacist whose undergraduate pharmacy degree was conferred by a recognized school of pharmacy outside of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. This definition is regardless of whether you are a US citizen, permanent resident (green card holder) or an illegal immigrant. However, if you are a foreign national and attended a pharmacy school in the US, you are not considered a foreign pharmacy graduates.

6. Traditional Foreign Graduate Pharmacist Licensure Pathway:

The Major steps are:

STEP 1 - FPGEE

Apply and take the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Exams (FPGEE).

To qualify for the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Examination (FPGEE) one must satisfy 1 of 2 options.

OPTION 1:

- For graduates before January 1st, 2003
- Complete at least a four-year pharmacy curriculum in their home country

OPTION 2:

- For graduates on or after January 1, 2003
- Complete at least a five-year pharmacy curriculum in their home country

Note: Coursework and internships completed after pharmacy school graduation will not be considered in determining the minimum required curriculum length.

The FPGEE Exam:

- The FPGEE is a 250-question multiple-choice computerized examination administered over a five and half hour testing period
- Effective January 1, 2012, an FPGEE score report will be valid for five years from the test date
- FPGEE is administered twice in a year and they are only offered in the USA. One in spring and the other in Fall
- The examination is a comprehensive measure of knowledge in four major pharmacy content areas:
 - 16% – Basic Biomedical Sciences
 - 30% – Pharmaceutical Sciences
 - 22% – Social/Behavioral/Administrative Pharmacy Sciences
 - 32% – Clinical Sciences

STEP 2:

Take test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

- There are many TOEFL exams. The TOEFL iBT is the only one that is considered for Pharmacy Graduate Examination Committee (FPGEC) certification
- The minimum score for the various sections on the test are:
 - Reading (21)
 - Listening (18)
 - Speaking (26)
 - Writing (24)
- It is important to note that these minimum scores should all be attained in **ONE** testing. This means that all scores must be reported in one official score report

STEP 3:

Obtain Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Examination Committee (FPGEC) Certification.

- After passing both the FPGEE and the TOEFL iBT, and submitting all the necessary documents to the FPGEE, you will receive the FPGEC certification
- Almost all the states accept FPGEC certification for obtaining a pharmacist license. Each state may require pharmacy internship hours

STEP 4:

Take the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX)

- Before you can be a licensed pharmacist in the US, one needs to pass the NAPLEX. This is the same pharmacy licensure exam that US graduates take
- Visit the local pharmacy board for more directions on the state law test. It is important to note that pharmacists can apply and be licensed in multiple states

STEP 5:

Take the pharmacy law test.

7. Alternate Foreign Graduate Pharmacist Licensure Pathway:

The change from a four-year to a five-year educational curriculum requirement has enabled the FPGEC Certification Program to be consistent with the revised standards of US pharmacy school curriculums. However, since many foreign pharmacy schools are 4-year programs, it has made it more difficult for foreign educated graduates to become licensed in the US. This is the main reason why most foreign educated pharmacists cannot take the traditional foreign educated pharmacist pathway.

There are **TWO** major alternative pathways:

i. Apply directly to a Pharmacy program:

There are 2 pharmacy school programs for the recently graduated foreign educated pharmacist that did not complete a 5-year program. These schools offer 3-year top-up programs for foreign pharmacists to obtain a PharmD degree and take the NAPLEX exam after graduation.

- a. PharmD for International Pharmacist offered by Nova South Eastern University (NSU) in Florida.
- b. International Post-Baccalaureate PharmD (IPBBP) offered by Western University in California.

Other pharmacy schools, for example, California Northstate University in California, may consider a foreign applicant if they meet the prerequisites for admission or if they take required courses that may be missing from their transcript.

- For all those years that some people wait in line and keep applying for a foreign graduate program, you can broaden your choices by applying to a pre-pharmacy school and take pre-requisites classes
- This will allow you to compete with all other applicants to both traditional and foreign graduate PharmD programs

8. Challenges for Foreign Graduate Pharmacists:

If You Cannot Pass FPGEE:

Every step comes with its challenges. There are foreign pharmacists who just cannot pass the FPGEE and so are considering starting all over. Some foreign pharmacists have been stuck on this step for years. If you cannot pass the FPGEE for whatever reason consider:

- i. Attending a review class.
- ii. Get a personalized teacher.
- iii. Change your learning strategy.
- iv. Address any language challenges. **If You Cannot Pass TOEFL.** For most applicants, the Speaking section is their challenge. This is mainly because of the foreign accent. If you cannot pass TOEFL, take an English or Speech class at a community college. Attend classes specific for TOEFL iBT.
- v. **Cannot Get into NOVA University (NSU) or Western University Foreign Graduate Programs.**
 - Over the years, these programs have gained tremendous popularity amongst foreign pharmacists. Thus, it is not surprising that people who pass the Western University's Internal Assessment with a score of 160 (120 is passing) out of 200 still do not get accepted into the program
 - NSU accepts about 30 students whereas Western takes about 20 students per year. However, the applicants to these schools range from 100 to 500 per year

- The average admission grade point average (GPA) for Western University in 2012 was 3.67
- vi. Financial Issues.
- Attending pharmacy school is expensive
 - The tuition per year ranges from 10,000 to 50,000
 - If money is an issue, but you still want some education, you can consider a Ph.D
 - Ask a US citizen or permanent resident to co-sign a private student loan if you are not a permanent resident or citizen
- vii. Time Constraints.

If you are unable to commit to the time it will take to attend pharmacy school there are other alternatives.

- a. Find nontraditional pharmacy jobs or pharmacy jobs that do not require a license.
- b. Teach at a pharmacy technician school.
- c. Work in the pharmaceutical industry.

Conclusion:

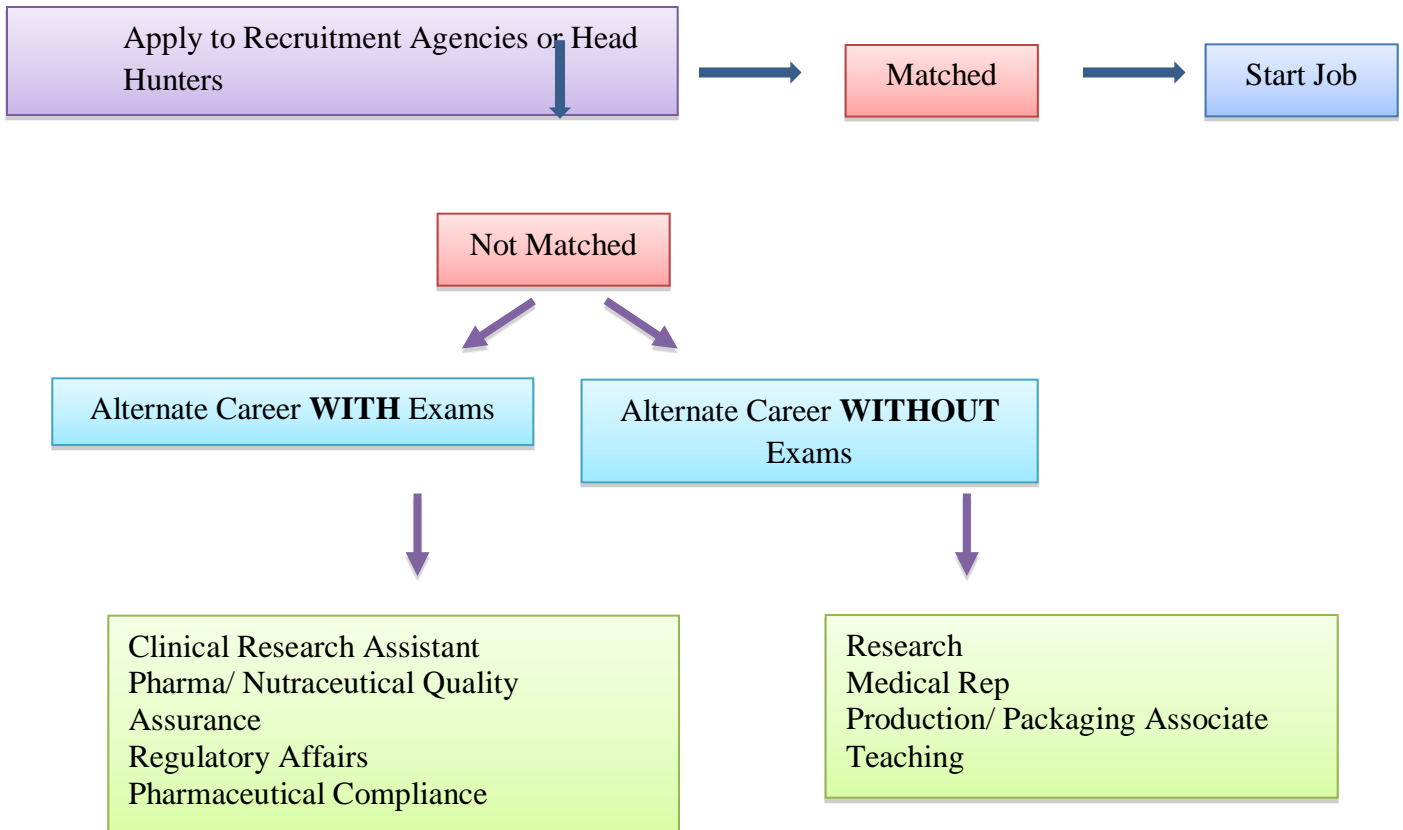
The pharmacy license process is full of challenges for the foreign trained pharmacist. However, a good number have been able to overcome these obstacles. There are so many opportunities for foreign-trained pharmacist in the pharmaceutical world. If getting a license is not happening for you consider other ways to use your education and make a decent living.

9. References and Resources:

- i. FPGEC Certification Program.
- ii. Nova Southern University International PharmD Program.
- iii. Western University International Post-Baccalaureate PharmD (IPBP) program.
- iv. Find pharmacy jobs at Healthcare Careers.

10. Pathway to start In Pharmaceutical Industry in the Canadian system:

Certification is **not** mandatory but an advantage.



11. Alternate career with exams:

i. Clinical Research Assistant:

- CRA Certification is required
- Check website of Humber, Seneca and Sheridan Colleges for eligibility
- Salary variable 50-90K based on experience

ii. Pharma/Nutraceuticals Quality Assurance:

- Quality Assurance Certification is required
- Programs offered by various colleges
- Well paid 60-100K based on experience

iii. Regulatory Affairs:

- Programs offered by various colleges
- Well paid 60-100K based on experience

iv. Pharmaceutical Compliance:

- Programs offered by various colleges
- Well paid 60-100K based on experience

12. Alternate career without exams:

i. Research:

- Jobs usually need experience
- Usually in projects so job is temporary

ii. Medical representative:

- Apply in pharmaceutical companies

iii. Production/packaging associate:

- Manufacturing and packaging work 12/hr to 15/hr salary

iv. Teaching:

- In private colleges, as pharmaceutical Instructor
- Teaching Research Assistant with University Professor

v. Further study:

- MPH Masters in Public Health, Ryerson University
- Masters in pharmaceutical production
- Pharm D

13. Areas of Job Opportunities:

If you have previous experience or a Canadian Diploma the following are a few areas you can apply for jobs in:

- i.** Pharmaceutical Quality Control.
- ii.** Pharmaceutical industry in manufacturing.
- iii.** Contract Testing Labs.
- iv.** Pharma Consulting Labs.
- v.** Food Industries Quality Control.
- vi.** Research opportunities in Universities and Research Institutes/Hospitals.
- vii.** Quality Assurance.
- viii.** Regulatory Affairs.
- ix.** Production (Pharma, Nutraceuticals and Food Industries).
- x.** Medical Technologist (Requires Certification).
- xi.** Government Organization (Health Canada, Environment Canada etc.).

14. Other resources / funding for courses:

- Humber College <https://humber.ca/>
- Seneca College www.senecacollege.ca/
- Sheridan College <https://www.sheridancollege.ca>
- Michener Institute www.michener.ca

15. References:

1. learn.utoronto.ca/international-professionals
2. www.pebc.ca
3. National association of board of pharmacy
4. Humber College, Toronto and Orangeville, Ontario, Canada.
<https://humber.ca/search/ce/programs.html>
5. Seneca College, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. <http://www.senecacollege.ca/ce/programs.html>
6. ASQ Certification in Canada. <https://asq.org/global/countries-canada-certification>
7. The Michener Institute of Education at UHN, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
<http://michener.ca/program/medical-laboratory-science/>
8. Career Map: Medical Laboratory Technologist
http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/working/OI_HOW_WORK_MEDLAB_CM.html
9. University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
<https://www.utoronto.ca/academics/programsdirectory?page=1>
10. University of Waterloo. The School of Public Health and Public System, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. <https://uwaterloo.ca/public-health-and-healthsystems/programs>
11. Western University, Public Health Program, London, Ontario, Canada. <http://www.uwo.ca/>
12. McMaster University, Public Health Program, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.
<https://fhs.mcmaster.ca/ceb/mph/>

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