If you’re looking to go into the pharmacy field upon completion of your degree, there are three main areas that you’re likely to be considering. This handout seeks to give an introduction to those areas, as well as relevant resources and job sites.

**Community Pharmacist**
A community pharmacist’s main role is the distribution of pharmaceutical products to patients, and advising them on the best form of treatments and how to correctly take their prescription. Community pharmacists normally work in places such as high street pharmacies, GP surgeries, and supermarkets large enough to have their own pharmacy. A large part of the role involves front-facing interaction with patients, so you’ll need to have good customer service skills as well as a genuine desire to help and assist people. However this isn’t the only thing the role entails, and there are opportunities to branch out into other areas. The job description of a Community Pharmacist on the Prospects page is a useful starting point - [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/community_pharmacist_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/community_pharmacist_job_description.htm)

**Hospital Pharmacist**
A Hospital Pharmacist will, like a Community Pharmacist, have some involvement in the distribution of products to patients. Where the role differs is that a Hospital Pharmacist will have more involvement behind the scenes, getting involved in the testing of products to ensure that they’re of a suitable quality, and advising doctors and nurses on the best courses of treatments available for individual patients. Competition for graduate level positions in hospitals is particularly strong, so you’ll need to make sure that your application and skillset are as strong as possible. Once again, the description of the role on Prospects is an excellent starting point - [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/hospital_pharmacist_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/hospital_pharmacist_job_description.htm)

If you’re interested in both Hospital Pharmacy and Community Pharmacy, then take a look at this article from the Pharmaceutical Journal - [http://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/news/vacation-experience-how-do-the-community-and-hospital-sectors-compare/10021448.article](http://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/news/vacation-experience-how-do-the-community-and-hospital-sectors-compare/10021448.article). Though it’s just based on one student’s experiences, it gives a good overview of some of the tasks that would generally be expected of you in each role, and the main differences between them.

**Industry Pharmacist**
The final main route is to put your pharmacy skills to use in industry. These roles are generally far more research heavy, and will mainly involve working in a laboratory, with less emphasis on the patient-facing environment that feature heavily in the other two main roles. This article from the Pharmaceutical Journal is useful for analysing whether an industry role would be suited for you, based on the skills required - [http://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/publications/tomorrows-pharmacist/getting-started-in-the-pharmaceutical-industry/20066290.article](http://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/publications/tomorrows-pharmacist/getting-started-in-the-pharmaceutical-industry/20066290.article)

Graduate level pharmacy jobs in an industrial setting are very hard to come by, with almost none being advertised. This shouldn’t come as a great surprise, given that only 4% of pharmacists working in the UK are employed by industry. The most common route into this is to pick up some experience in a non-industrial setting for a few years after graduating, and then apply to move into industry roles when your CV will be stronger. If you are planning to apply for an industrial role, the work you do in your pre-registration year is seen as very important, so make sure you bear this in mind when applying for pre-registration year host.

If you are interested in working in industry, then this Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) page offers some useful advice, as well as a recruitment timeline - [http://careers.abpi.org.uk/working-in-the-industry/research/pharmacy/Pages/default.aspx](http://careers.abpi.org.uk/working-in-the-industry/research/pharmacy/Pages/default.aspx). The Pharmaceutical Journal link above also contains some good application tips.

**Work experience**
While completion of a Pharmacy degree is undoubtedly impressive in its own right, and will prove attractive to employers both inside and outside of the pharmaceutical sector should you hold one, competition for vacancies is very competitive. They look for people who stand out from the crowd by demonstrating a high level of motivation and a proven record of workplace skills. Work experience can give you an advantage as it helps you to develop such skills and also an understanding of the world of work.
This is a brief guide to the main ways of developing work experience. If you’d like to know more, then please see our Work Experience handout. Our page about transferable skills - http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/careers/Students-Graduates/Resources/Transferable-Skills.aspx - is also useful for making sure that you demonstrate these skills in your CVs and applications.

Part-time/ Casual work
Working for only a part of the normal working week is a good option for students with time constraints. There is a wide variety of opportunities and although not all of them are graduate level they will provide you with the opportunity to gain valuable transferable skills.

Internships
By this we mean a formal scheme, usually with a major graduate recruiter and running during the long vacation, which is generally well structured, and offers an insight into a professional role and challenging work. Increasingly, major graduate recruiters use these schemes to identify good candidates for permanent positions.

Vacation work
A less structured temporary job or one that is not part of a formal scheme, but perhaps with a well-known recruiter, over one of the vacations. Often this is obtained by speculative applications or responding to one-off advertisements.

Volunteering
Unpaid work, often seen as a pre-requisite for some entry to areas such as environment and conservation, media, charities, social work. Sometimes expenses only are offered. Charities are allowed to use unpaid volunteers but note that, strictly speaking, it is illegal for other organisations to give you regular duties without paying at least the National Minimum Wage.

Work shadowing
A short period spent observing someone doing their job; a great way to learn about an occupation, especially if structured work experience is not available

Competitions
A good opportunity to show attributes such as motivation, entrepreneurship or how creative you are. Organisations offer competitions which enable you to gain an insight into a specific area of work.

Careers events
Attending events is an excellent way of helping enable your understand of the pharmaceutical sector. You also get the chance to meet employers informally and make contacts, which could improve your chances of securing graduate positions or work experience

Bioscience and Pharmacy Fair – 20th November 2015
https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/student/careers/Events/Careers-Fairs/Bioscience--Pharmacy-Fair.aspx
This is one of the most intimate and specialist careers fair run by King’s Careers & Employability, and is a great opportunity to network with pharmaceutical employers. The full list of employers attending will be confirmed nearer the time, but last year’s fair included the likes of Boots, Day Lewis and Contact Singapore.

Key resources
Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry
http://careers.abpi.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx
What we like: A great starting point for those interested in the sector. As well as lots of information about the sector, which is split into different sections depending on your level and experience, it’s a great place to find work experience. No vacancies are advertised directly on the site but if you search for the type and length of role you’re interested in, a list of recruiters and employers offering this will be returned.

British Pharmaceutical Students Association
www.bpsa.co.uk
A body that represents pharmacy students and pre-registration trainees. Membership is free for any students studying pharmacy, and gives you access to events they run and career support.

What we like: A great way to build commercial awareness and make contacts.

Major community employers
Listing for dispensing chemists
www.allinlondon.co.uk/directory/1171.php
Look under “Community Pharmacies: UK Database” in the index. You need to know the postcode of the area to locate pharmacies.

Alliance Boots
http://hr.allianceboots.com/hr/front/do/frontHome.do
Pharmacy led-group that represents the high-street store Boots.

Job sites
C+D Jobs
www.chemistryanddruggistjobs.co.uk
An online jobs portal for anyone interested in the community pharmacy sector.

What we like: Although self-described as a website for the community pharmacy sector, vacancies in hospitals and a small number in industry are also listed. The Careers News an Advice section, also available in a weekly email, are a great way to develop your commercial awareness.

PharmaJobs
www.pharmajobs.co.uk
Jobs board, largely offering permanent roles in the commercial sector.

Pharmfinders
www.pharmfinders.co.uk
Recruitment agency for the sector.

Pharmiweb (mainly industry)
www.pharmiweb.com
Mainly industry jobs across the healthcare sector, but does includes jobs related to pharmacy.

PJ Careers
http://jobs.pharmaceutical-journal.com
Online jobs board on the Pharmaceutical Journal’s website.

Jobs4medical
www.jobs4medical.co.uk/scientific-and-technology-jobs.php
Online jobs board that covers the entire medical sector, including the pharmaceutical one, in both the UK and worldwide.

Jobs.ac.uk
www.jobs.ac.uk/categories/pharmacy
Pharmaceutical roles in both academic and non-academic sectors.
NHS

NHS Careers
www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/explore-by-career/pharmacy
Information about the range of careers paths available for pharmacists in the NHS, with separate pages available for different roles with information about duties, entry requirements, salaries and more.

NHS Jobs
www.jobs.nhs.uk
The source of all pharmacy jobs in the NHS, with the exception of pre-registration placements (see Pharmalife below.)

Pharmalife
www.pharmalife.co.uk
Pharmalife handles all applications for the NHS National Recruitment Scheme (NRS), which are pre-registration training placements in the NHS in England and Wales. Applications should be started during your third year at university, with interviews taking place during the autumn term of your fourth year. There are two rounds of applications every year for this scheme, although the second one is only used to match remaining vacancies and unplaced students.

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