

Pharmacy intern Job Description

A free job description template for the Pharmacy industry

Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This pharmacy intern job description template is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and pharmacy industry practices at the time of publication. Confirm the applicable modern award for your business and ensure compliance with all relevant employment and health-practitioner regulations.

1. Position overview

A pharmacy intern is a pharmacy graduate who is provisionally registered with the Pharmacy Board of Australia and is completing the supervised intern year required for general registration. Under the supervision of a registered pharmacist, the intern dispenses medicines, counsels patients, delivers clinical services within their scope, and completes a structured internship training program and the registration exams. It is a bridge role between graduating and becoming a fully registered pharmacist.

In Australia, pharmacy interns are covered by the Pharmacy Industry Award 2020 (MA000012), which sets a dedicated intern rate split into a first half and a second half of the intern year, sitting between the senior assistant and pharmacist rates.

This template provides a foundation for creating clear, compliant job descriptions that attract quality graduates while setting appropriate expectations for the role. Once hired, manage supervision and coverage efficiently with pharmacy rostering software.

2. Key responsibilities

Supervised dispensing

Dispensing prescription and over-the-counter medicines under the supervision of a registered pharmacist and having work checked in line with intern requirements.

Patient counselling

Counselling patients on the safe and effective use of medicines within their developing scope, escalating complex queries to the supervising pharmacist.

Internship training

Completing the accredited intern training program, assessments and logbook, and preparing for the written and oral registration exams.

Clinical services

Assisting with and, where authorised, delivering clinical services such as vaccinations, health screening and medication reviews under supervision.

Dispensary and retail support

Supporting dispensary workflow, stock and quality control, and assisting the retail team as needed to learn the whole-of-pharmacy operation.

Compliance and records

Following poisons and controlled-drug procedures, maintaining accurate records and protecting confidential patient information.

3. Skills and attributes

- Clinical foundation: Strong pharmacology and therapeutics knowledge from their degree, applied under supervision and developed through the intern year.
- Accuracy: Careful, precise dispensing and record-keeping and a willingness to have work checked as they build competence.
- Communication: Clear, empathetic patient counselling and confident liaison with the supervising pharmacist and the team.
- Commitment to learning: Motivation to complete the intern program, seek feedback and prepare thoroughly for the registration exams.
- Professionalism: Understanding of professional and legal obligations, discretion and sound ethical judgement.
- Patient focus: Genuine care for patient wellbeing and a customer-service mindset in a community setting.

4. Qualifications and requirements

Pharmacy intern positions require a completed pharmacy degree and provisional registration. Some requirements are mandatory, while others are preferred or desirable.

- Pharmacy degree (required) — A completed approved Bachelor or Master of Pharmacy degree
- Provisional AHPRA registration (required) — Current provisional registration with the Pharmacy Board of Australia (AHPRA)
- Enrolment in an intern training program (required) — Enrolment in an accredited intern training program for the intern year
- Working rights (required) — Eligibility to work in Australia
- First aid certificate — Current first aid and CPR certification is desirable
- Previous community pharmacy experience — Prior experience as a pharmacy assistant is advantageous but not essential

5. Working conditions

- Always works under the supervision of a registered pharmacist
- Shift work including some evenings and weekends for extended-trading pharmacies
- Standing for extended periods in the dispensary and on the retail floor
- Balancing dispensing duties with intern study and assessment requirements
- Handling of medicines, controlled drugs and confidential patient information under supervision
- Compliance with AHPRA, poisons and workplace health and safety requirements

6. Award information

Pharmacy industry award 2020

Pharmacy intern positions are covered by the Pharmacy Industry Award 2020 (MA000012). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for pharmacy employees. View current Pharmacy Award pay rates.

The award sets a dedicated intern rate split into a first half and a second half of the intern year, sitting between the senior pharmacy-assistant rate and the pharmacist rate of around \$41.74 per hour for FY2026/27. The rate steps up at the halfway point of the intern year. Use award interpretation software to calculate pay accurately.

Registration and supervision

A pharmacy intern must hold current provisional registration with the Pharmacy Board of Australia via AHPRA and always work under the supervision of a registered pharmacist. Verify provisional registration before they start and track it with HR software.

Under MA000012, penalties apply on top of the ordinary rate: evening (Mon–Fri 7pm–9pm) and Saturday (8am–6pm) at 125%, Sunday (7am–9pm) at 150% and public holidays at 225% for full-time and part-time staff. Check whether an enterprise agreement applies in place of the award.

7. Frequently asked questions

About the role

Q: What does a pharmacy intern do?

A pharmacy intern is a provisionally registered pharmacy graduate completing the supervised intern year required for general registration. Under a registered pharmacist's supervision they dispense medicines, counsel patients, deliver clinical services within their scope, and complete an accredited intern training program and the registration exams. It is a bridge role between graduating and becoming a fully registered pharmacist.

Q: What award covers pharmacy interns in Australia?

Pharmacy interns are covered by the Pharmacy Industry Award 2020 (MA000012), which sets a dedicated intern rate. Some larger pharmacy groups run on an enterprise agreement. Always confirm which instrument applies to your business before setting pay.

Q: How are pharmacy interns paid?

Under the Pharmacy Award, interns are paid a dedicated intern rate split into a first half and a second half of the intern year, sitting between the senior pharmacy-assistant rate and the pharmacist rate of around \$41.74 per hour for FY2026/27. The rate steps up at the halfway point of the intern year. See our Pharmacy Award pay rates guide for current figures.

Q: What is the difference between a pharmacy intern and a pharmacist?

A pharmacist holds general registration and works independently, taking legal responsibility for dispensing. A pharmacy intern holds provisional registration and must work under a registered pharmacist's supervision while completing the intern year and registration exams. Once the intern gains general registration, they can be employed as a pharmacist.

Qualifications

Q: What qualifications does a pharmacy intern need?

A pharmacy intern must have completed an approved Bachelor or Master of Pharmacy degree, hold current provisional registration with the Pharmacy Board of Australia via AHPRA, and be enrolled in an accredited intern training program. They also need working rights in Australia. A first aid certificate and prior pharmacy-assistant experience are desirable.

Q: Does a pharmacy intern need to be registered with AHPRA?

Yes. A pharmacy intern must hold current provisional registration with the Pharmacy Board of Australia through AHPRA and always work under the supervision of a registered pharmacist. Verify provisional registration before they start and track the status with HR software so it stays current throughout the intern year.

Q: What supervision does a pharmacy intern require?

A pharmacy intern must work under the supervision of a registered pharmacist at all times, with their dispensing checked in line with intern requirements. Roster so that a suitably experienced pharmacist is always on site to supervise the intern, and factor in study release for the intern training program and exam preparation.

Q: Can I employ a pharmacy intern part-time?

Interns are usually employed full-time to complete the required supervised hours within the intern year, but part-time arrangements are possible provided the total supervised hours and training requirements are met within the program timeframe. Confirm the current requirements with the intern training provider and the Pharmacy Board before finalising the arrangement.

Employment

Q: What penalty rates apply to pharmacy interns?

Under the Pharmacy Award (MA000012), for full-time and part-time staff: evening (Mon–Fri 7pm–9pm) and Saturday (8am–6pm) are paid at 125%, Sunday (7am–9pm) at 150% and public holidays at 225% of the ordinary intern rate. Overtime is generally 150% for the first two hours then 200%. Use award interpretation software to calculate rates accurately.

Q: When does the intern rate step up?

The Pharmacy Award intern rate is split into a first half and a second half of the intern year, so the rate increases at the halfway point. Record the intern's start date and progress so the higher second-half rate is applied on time. See the Pharmacy Award pay guide for current figures.

Q: What should I include in a pharmacy intern employment contract?

Key elements include: position title and intern classification, employment type, the intern rate (and when it steps up), applicable award, provisional AHPRA registration requirement, supervision arrangements, main duties and study-release provisions. Use our digital employment contracts to simplify this process.

Q: Can a pharmacy intern become a permanent pharmacist with us?

Yes, and many pharmacies retain their interns. Once the intern completes the intern year, passes the registration exams and gains general registration, they can be employed as a pharmacist. Discuss the pathway early and update their classification and employment contract when they register.

Rostering

Q: How do I roster a pharmacy intern with the right supervision?

Always roster the intern alongside a registered pharmacist who can supervise their work. Use rosters software to confirm a supervising pharmacist is on every intern shift, and to build in study release for the intern training program and exam preparation.

Q: How far in advance should I provide rosters to a pharmacy intern?

Award and agreement rules vary, so confirm the notice period that applies to your business. As a general practice, providing rosters at least 7 days in advance helps the intern plan around study and assessment commitments. Using rosters software helps ensure compliance and reduces last-minute changes.

Q: How do I track an intern's provisional registration and progress?

Use HR software to store the intern's provisional registration, intern-program enrolment and key milestones with reminders. Linking this to rosters means you can ensure supervision requirements are met and apply the correct intern rate as they progress.

Q: What breaks is a pharmacy intern entitled to?

Break entitlements are set by the applicable award or agreement and generally include a meal break for longer shifts. Because interns work under supervision, plan breaks so a supervising pharmacist remains available. Use time and attendance tools to record breaks accurately and support compliance.