Regardless of their level of prior training in pharmacy, all international candidates must pass the PACÉS examination given at the end of the first year of study in health fields. Entry of non-French candidates into the third cycle of studies (doctoral-level) hinges on candidates’ success on pharmacy residency exams. Two competitions are held for internationals: one for candidates from within the EU; another for candidates from outside the EU. Applications are due at the end of March. Pre-admission tests are held in September at France’s embassies and consulates; admission tests are held in December.

www.cng.sante.fr/Concours-donnant-acces-au-3eme.html

Lying at the crossroads of biology, chemistry, and medicine, pharmaceutical science covers the conception, design, manufacture, and sale of medications. Possible interactions among medicinal compounds must be taken into account, as well as dosing and counterindications.

The word pharmacy also refers to a place where medications are stored and dispensed under the care of a licensed pharmacist. In addition to selling ready-made products, pharmacists may prepare compounds prescribed by physicians for their patients and supervise the work of pharmacy assistants.

Pharmacists may also oversee patients’ compliance with and response to medications, substitute generics for branded drugs, adjust doses, renew prescribed treatments for chronic conditions, and suggest therapeutic modifications in cooperation with physicians, with whom pharmacists must stay in constant touch in the interest of public health.

Numerous pharmacy specializations are offered in various settings—chief among them retail, hospital, clinic, veterinary, government, industry, military, and humanitarian assistance.

Six years of postsecondary study are required for candidate pharmacists intending to practice in a retail pharmacy or in the pharmaceutical industry. Nine years are required for the Diplôme d’Études Spécialisées (DES).

Admission to pharmacy programs is extremely selective. Only 15–20% of students pass the exam required to enter the second year of study. The total number of places available in all fields of pharmacy each year is subject to a quota. The quota was 3,095 in 2015/16. The number of international students from outside the European Union is now 8% of the total number of students admitted into the second year following the examination administered at the end of the first year of study, known as the PACÉS, during which students in the health professions take a common curriculum.

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>STUDENTS >STUDYING
>PROGRAMS
In accordance with the European three-stage system (bachelor-master-doctorate), pharmacy studies in France are divided into three cycles. Each university is associated with one of France’s 32 regional or university hospital centers. The first year of studies, known as PACES, is a core curriculum common to all health fields. It is open to students holding a French baccalauréat or the equivalent, preferably from a scientific track. First-year students may elect to obtain additional academic training to prepare for the rigorous and selective end-of-year examination. Pharmacy programs are taught exclusively in French. The required proficiency level is B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

FIRST YEAR OF FIRST CYCLE OF PHARMACY STUDIES (DFGSP2) - L2
The core curriculum that follows the PACES focuses on health-related theoretical and applied disciplines, and on the major systems of the human body. The subjects taught in the second year are: biochemistry (general, metabolic), biology (cellular, plant, genetic, molecular), chemistry (analytical, organic, inorganic), physics, physiology and anatomy, computer science, and English.
Students must complete a six-week internship before beginning their third year. Interns are introduced to the dispensing of medications and trained in dosing, product recognition, applicable legislation, and pharmacy preparations.

SECOND YEAR OF FIRST CYCLE OF PHARMACY STUDIES (DFGSP3) - L3
The third year features advanced courses in pharmacology and herbal medicine. The DFASP (Diplôme de Formation Approfondie en Sciences Pharmaceutiques), a bachelor-level credential, is awarded upon successful completion of the third year of studies.

FOURTH YEAR (DFASP 1) - M1
In the first semester, an advanced core curriculum solidifies students’ technical and scientific knowledge of pharmaceutics. The semester ends with a short internship.
In the second semester, students choose one of four specialized tracks:
> Retail pharmacy
> Pharmaceutical industry
> Hospital residency
> Research

FIFTH YEAR (DFASP 2) - M2
Regardless of the specialization chosen—retail, industry, or hospital—the fifth year is spent in a university hospital setting. Students work half-time performing paid hospital functions. They also receive instruction on major pathologies (e.g., infectious diseases, cancers) and other topics corresponding to their chosen specialization.
For students who have elected to specialize in the pharmaceutical industry, the fifth year also includes a three-month, full-time, applied internship to be completed between April and September in a hospital or research laboratory. The DFASP (Diplôme de Formation Approfondie en Sciences Pharmaceutiques), a master-level credential, is awarded upon successful completion of the fifth year of study.

OTHER DEGREES
Master 1: Pharmacology, public health
Master 2: Science, technology, health: biotechnologies, epidemiology, clinical pharmacology, physiology, public health, medication sciences, toxicology