Plenary: Study question mark scheme

This question can be used to assess understanding of this part of the specification:

*A7.9 Why it is important to order and manage stock.*

It is a band marked question.

* AO1 = 3 marks
* AO2 = 3 marks
* AO3 = 3 marks
* QWC = 3 marks

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| Band | Marks | Descriptor |
| 3 | 7–9 | AO3  The answer shows a clear understanding of the importance of maintaining optimal stock levels in the context of a hospital pharmacy, and with reference to patient care. The difference between having stock that is vital and needed on a daily basis such as surgical gloves, without which many patients cannot be treated is compared to other items, like vaccines, which may affect smaller numbers of patients. The shelf life of products is considered when analysing the levels of safety stock. For example, a high level of safety stock of surgical gloves is recognised as being vital; vaccine safety stock may be lower, but it is appreciated that a certain level of supply should be maintained for rapid response to a local influenza outbreak, for example.  AO2  Clear knowledge is demonstrated of the importance of maintaining optimal stock levels in the context of a hospital pharmacy.  AO1  A clear understanding of the importance of maintaining optimal stock levels is shown. |
| 2 | 4–6 | AO3  The answer shows an understanding of the need to maintain optimal stock levels. There is some analysis of the safety stock levels and their importance to the operating efficiency of the hospital pharmacy.  AO2  Some knowledge is demonstrated of the importance of maintaining optimal stock levels in the context of a hospital pharmacy, with reference to the treatment of patients.  AO1  An understanding is demonstrated of the need to maintain optimal stock levels. This demonstrates reasonable breadth and/or depth of understanding, with occasional inaccuracies and/or omissions. |
| 1 | 1–3 | AO3  The answer is basic and shows limited breadth and/or depth of understanding, with inaccuracies and omissions. An attempt is made to analyse the importance of differing safety stock levels, but there is little detail.  AO2  Some knowledge is demonstrated of the importance of stock control in the context of a hospital pharmacy.  AO1  A basic understanding is demonstrated of the need to maintain stock levels. |
| 0 | 0 | No creditworthy material. |

# Indicative content

## AO1

* Stock level refers to the number of supplies available at a given time.
* Maintaining optimal stock levels means that stocks are available for use, and the supply of stock is financially efficient, avoiding waste as far as possible.
* It is important to maintain stock levels to:
  + ensure a sufficient supply of required consumables and materials
  + ensure that materials are used before their expiry date
  + reduce the costs of excess stock/avoid wasting stock which will not be used within ‘use-by’ date
  + improve efficiency
  + improve productivity
  + ensure safety of stock (chemical / drug stocks aren’t damaged/degraded).
* Storage space may limit the stocks which can be held of some items.

## AO2

* Stock is required for the hospital pharmacy to treat patients.
  + Some medicines, for example vaccines, are likely to have fairly short expiry dates.
  + Too much stock of these drugs will be wasteful, and seasonal stock, for example influenza vaccines, may not be able to be stored until the following season and may have to be discarded.
* Some products, for example surgical gloves, can be stored for long periods of time as they will not degrade/do not have a ‘use by’ date.
  + Large stocks of surgical gloves could be held, as the stock will remain useful for long periods/indefinitely.
  + Large stocks may be cheaper to purchase.
  + Large stocks may require large amounts of storage space.
* Emergency preparedness requires a safety stock level. Safety stock is in case there is a sudden need for more stock.
  + For example, there may be a local influenza outbreak that requires an immediate response. Larger stocks of the vaccine may need to be held, above forecast need, to be available to respond to an outbreak.

## AO3

* Insufficient stock of a product means that patients cannot be treated.
* Having enough stock available at any time is the most crucial part of the role. However, a stock controller must be aware of the financial cost of keeping unused stock and stock wastage.
  + Insufficient stock of some products, for example surgical gloves, will prevent treatment of patients immediately/affect operation of the organisation. This will have a negative effect on many patients of the practice.
  + Insufficient stocks of some products, for example influenza vaccines, are not quite as critical to all aspects of the work of the hospital pharmacy. Therefore, lacking stocks of this product will affect only a proportion of patients.
* Maintaining the stock of some products, for example surgical gloves, is required to ensure health and safety requirements are met, in terms of infection control. Maintaining these stocks are therefore more important than other products, for example, a consistent vaccine supply.
* Good stock controllers will re-order products in good time but not have to discard unused stock (or very little wastage). However financial considerations are less important than ensuring patient and staff safety/care.
* When considering the size of a safety stock of a product, for example vaccines, consideration should be given to the shelf life of the product to minimise the risk of wastage. However, it may be judged more important to have a large safety stock of vaccines, for example, in case an outbreak/emergency situation arises.

# QWC mark scheme

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| Mark | Descriptor |
| 3 | The answer is clearly expressed and well-structured.  The rules of grammar are used with effective control of meaning overall.  A wide range of appropriate technical terms are used effectively. |
| 2 | The answer is generally clearly expressed and sufficiently structured.  The rules of grammar are used with general control of meaning overall.  A good range of appropriate technical terms are used effectively. |
| 1 | The answer lacks some clarity and is generally poorly structured.  The rules of grammar are used with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder the overall meaning.  A limited range of appropriate technical terms are used effectively. |
| 0 | There is no answer written or none of the material presented is creditworthy. Or the answer does not reach the threshold performance level.  The answer is fragmented and unstructured, with inappropriate use of technical terms.  The errors in grammar severely hinder the overall meaning. |