

REGISTRATION EXAMINATION

What to do if you have failed the Registration Examination



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Contents

	Page
Marking and appeals process	3
Re-entry to examination	5
Preparing to sit the examination again	6
Appendix 1	7
- Appeals procedure	
Appendix 2	8
- Sitting the Examination although affected by illness or other adverse circumstance	

PLEASE READ THIS INFORMATION VERY CAREFULLY

MARKING AND APPEALS SYSTEM

Options available to candidates

Candidates who have been unsuccessful in the examination can apply for their answer sheet to be remarked and/or appeal their result. The procedures for both are outlined below. Candidates should note that both options are available to them.

Marking and re-marking of answer sheets

All examination answer sheets are marked by computer. If an answer sheet is unclear in any way, the normal procedure is that the answer sheet is carefully scrutinised manually to ensure that the marks are being awarded appropriately, relating to how the answer sheet was completed. In addition to the computer marking of all answer sheets, the answer sheets of all unsuccessful candidates are also checked manually. It is therefore unlikely that an error in computing your marks will not be identified and corrected.

However if you would like a further check of your result, you may request a second manual re-marking of your answer sheets by a person independent of the Examination committee of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The fee for this service is £100. To make such a request you should write to the Pre-registration Lead within 10 working days of receiving your result. Your request should be accompanied by a completed form, which is available on our website at www.psni.org.uk

You should mark your request for the attention of the “*Pre-registration Lead, Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, 73 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HL*”. The fee will be refunded in the event of a change in the outcome of your examination.

PLEASE NOTE: the independent marker will simply check that you have been credited with the correct number of marks by repeating the manual re-marking exercise carried out. The marker will not necessarily be a pharmacist. There is no element of interpretation as to “what you meant to write or answer”.

Appeal against results

You can appeal against your fail result as detailed in appendix 1. This regulation provides for you to have your result re-considered by the Examination committee, not to have your papers re-marked (see above for information about the option of re-marking). That is, to challenge your result on the grounds that it is wrong for some reason other than the marks being at fault.

Please note the following with respect to the validity of appeals:

If you notified the Pharmaceutical Society of adverse circumstances or illness for consideration when results were awarded (see appendix 2) an appeal for the same reasons will not be accepted.

If you experienced adverse circumstances or illness before or during the examination which might have affected your performance, and did not notify the Pharmaceutical Society of this for consideration before results were awarded (see appendix 2), an appeal for this reason will not be accepted.

An appeal against a result is only valid for consideration by the Pharmaceutical Society if it contains an extenuating reason for failure that does not fall in one of the above categories, for example a procedural irregularity. That is, where the appeal is based on some aspect of the examination process.

If you believe you have valid grounds for appealing against your result you should send any such appeal to the “*Pre-registration Lead Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, 73 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HL*” with evidence to corroborate the circumstances on which you are basing your appeal. This should be sent by Recorded Signed-for service (which provides proof of posting, signature on arrival and online confirmation of delivery). It should be postmarked no later than 21 days after the date of the publication of your result. The PSNI will not normally write to any person or body to seek evidence to corroborate circumstances claimed by a candidate.

Your submission will be considered by a majority of the Examination committee. Your appeal will be considered by the Examination committee in such a way as to make disclosure of your identity impossible. The Examination committee will be shown copies of your letters and corroborating evidence with names, addresses and other identifying marks blanked out. Other information will not be deleted so you should only send information that you are happy for the Examination committee to see. The Examination committee will, of course, treat all correspondence with complete confidentiality. Every case presented to the Examination committee will be considered individually.

You are advised that the process of consideration by the Examination committee may take some time: a quick decision cannot be guaranteed. The appeal will be considered by the Examination committee normally within a period of 60 working days after receipt by the PSNI of the candidate’s written appeal.

RE-ENTRY TO THE EXAMINATION

Applying to enter for a second attempt

If this has been your first fail at the examination, you will be permitted to have a second attempt within 18 months. After this period has elapsed the Registrar might stipulate condition e.g. further training for you to fulfil before a re-sit.

Applying to enter for a third and final attempt

If this has been your second fail at the examination, you will be permitted to have a third and final attempt only after you have undertaken six months employment in a register NI community or NI hospital pharmacy.

Full details of the six month placement and the necessary paperwork which needs to be submitted can be found on www.psni.org.uk

The purpose of the six month period is to provide you with more pharmacy practice experience to prepare you for your final examination attempt. There are no requirements for the period in terms of competences to be achieved, as you normally have already completed a full pre-registration training year (unless you are undertaking an extension to your training).

You must sit the examination within 12 months of completion of this period of employment.

A full list of available community pharmacy training sites can be found by contacting the UCA (Ulster Chemists Association). Hospital pharmacy training sites can be found by contacting the Business Services Organisation (BSO).

When is the next examination?

The examinations are held in June and October of each year. It is essential that you submit the examination entry form and fee so that it is received by the PSNI before the deadline date for receipt of entries. The examination entry form will be available on the PSNI website www.psni.org.uk

If you do not make an entry by the entry deadline for an examination sitting, you will not be sent a reminder as it will be assumed that you have decided not to sit the examination at that time. Late entries will not be accepted.

PREPARING TO SIT THE EXAMINATION AGAIN

To help you prepare to sit the examination again, you should:-

Use the feedback provided to you by the Pre-registration Lead to identify areas of study you need to particularly work on. Your ex-tutor might be able to help you if s/he is amenable to doing so.

Use the sample papers provided by the PSNI to become familiar with the question styles and to practise your examination technique. Sample papers are available on our website.

Please note that the PSNI is unable to provide further help or advice to individual candidates about their performance to date or guidance about future attempts at the examination.

The Pharmacists Advice and Support Service (PASS) offer a confidential helpline for pharmacists and pre-registration trainees who are experiencing tension or difficulties. PASS can be contacted on 02890326927.

The PSNI is aware that there are training providers to help Pre-registration students and would encourage the use of extra support. The PSNI does not accredit any particular training providers.

Calculations training literature is available and the PSNI recommend you avail of these sources.

To ensure that you are kept up-to-date on information relating to the examination, please advise the society of any changes to your personal details. It is your responsibility to do this. Any changes should be emailed to pre-registration@psni.org.uk.

APPENDIX 1

Appeals procedure

A candidate who wishes to appeal against the result of an examination attempt may normally do so on procedural grounds only i.e. that some aspect of the examination procedures or systems has not been applied correctly in his or her case. He or she must set out the grounds of the appeal in writing to the "*Pre-registration Lead Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, 73 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HL*" by registered mail postmarked no later than 21 days after the date of issue of the Examination results. The appeal will be considered by the Examination committee normally within a period of 60 working days after receipt by the PSNI of the candidate's written appeal.

Appeals will be considered by at least a majority of the Examiners, without knowing the candidate's identity or the number of his or her Examination attempt.

APPENDIX 2

Sitting the Examination although affected by illness or other adverse circumstance

- 1.1** A candidate who is affected by illness or other adverse circumstance before or on the day of the Examination but decides nevertheless to continue with the Examination will be assumed by the Examination committee to have intended to complete the Examination. If the candidate wishes his or her circumstances to be considered by the Examination committee under the provision of regulation 1.4 or 1.5 below, he or she must draw the circumstances to the attention of an invigilator at the Examination centre in order for the invigilator to make a written report, the report to be signed by the candidate. One copy of the report will be given to the candidate and one will be forwarded to the Examination committee. The candidate must then submit a written request to the Examination committee, via the Pre-registration Lead, for his or her illness to be considered either under the provisions of regulation 1.4 below or under the provisions of regulation 1.5 below, but not both.
- 1.2** A candidate who is taken ill during the Examination such that he or she cannot continue with the Examination must draw this to the attention of an invigilator at the Examination centre at once, in order for the invigilator to assist with the indisposition and to prepare a written report to be signed by the candidate. One copy of the report will be given to the candidate and one will be forwarded to the Examination committee. If the candidate wishes his or her circumstances to be considered by the Examination committee under the provision of regulation 1.4 or 1.5, he or she must then submit a written request to the Examination committee, via the Pre-registration Lead, for his or her illness to be considered either under the provisions of regulation 1.4 below or under the provisions of regulation 1.5 below, but not both.
- 1.3** A candidate who submits a written request to the Examination committee for his or her illness or adverse circumstances to be considered must state whether the request is for consideration under the provision of either regulation 1.4 or regulation 1.5, but not both. The Examination committee will not decide on the candidate's behalf under which regulation consideration is to be given. If a candidate requests consideration under the provisions of one of these two regulations (namely 1.4 or 1.5) the Examination committee will not subsequently give consideration under the other of those two regulations.

1.4 Request to be granted a pass

Where a candidate's actual performance in the Examination narrowly fails to meet the pass criteria, the Examination committee may take into account the candidate's illness or adverse circumstances and grant him or her a pass.

A candidate who believes that his or her performance has been adversely affected

by his or her illness or other circumstance before or during the Examination, and who has acted in accordance with regulation 1.1 or 1.2, and 1.3, may request in writing to the Pre-registration Lead that his or her illness or circumstance be taken into account by the Examination committee at their meeting to award results, and a pass granted. The candidate must send appropriate corroborating evidence with his or her request. The request must be sent by registered mail and postmarked no later than the 5th working day after the Examination date, to ensure that it is contemporary and available for consideration by the Examination committee at their meeting to award results.

It will be solely for the Examination committee to decide whether the candidate's illness or adverse circumstance is likely to have been the cause of the candidate's narrow failure such that he or she should be granted a pass.

1.5 Request for an Examination attempt to be nullified.

A candidate who considers that his or her performance has been severely affected by illness or other circumstance on the day of the Examination, and who has acted in accordance with regulation 1.1 or 1.2, and 1.3, may request in writing to the Examination committee that he or she be deemed not to have made an entry on this occasion, and that his or her Examination attempt be nullified. The candidate must send appropriate corroborating evidence with his or her request. The request must be sent by registered mail and postmarked no later than the 5th working day after the Examination date, to ensure that it is contemporary and available for consideration by the Examination committee at their meeting to award results.

1.6 When considering a candidate's request for his or her Examination attempt to be nullified, the Examination committee will do so before undertaking the process of awarding results and without knowing the candidate's marks. If the Examiners grant the candidate's request, the candidate will not be informed about any marks he or she might have obtained and he or she will be deemed not to have made an entry. He or she may be required by the Registrar to undertake additional practice experience before being permitted to take the Examination on another occasion.

1.7 If a candidate's request for his or her Examination attempt to be nullified is not granted, the Examination committee will go on to consider his or her marks with those of other candidates within the process of awarding results. The Examination committee will not pay further regard to the candidate's reported illness or other adverse circumstance.

1.8 When considering a candidate's illness or adverse circumstances under regulation 1.4 or 1.5, the Examiners will do so without knowing either the candidate's identity or the number of his or her Examination attempt.