

Registration Examination

The Pharmaceutical Society NI recognises the pressures on the pharmacy sector at this time and acknowledges the efforts made, during the crisis, to continue to prepare pre-registration trainees for practice.

On 26 March 2020, we issued a joint statement with the GPhC, outlining our decision to postpone the scheduled examinations and undertook to consider the use of provisional registration to cover the period until examinations could be rescheduled.

The use of the Covid19 temporary register, with conditions on registration, was considered and is not currently being progressed as it is time limited and all registrations lapse when the emergency is declared over, which may be before the examination has been taken

Having taken legal opinion about the use of a “provisional register” and fully researched our options, we are advised that in order to comply with our Regulations, aside from temporary registration on the Covid 19 temporary register, we cannot admit anyone to our register from the pre-registration programme unless they have fulfilled all the conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations which include having satisfactorily completed 52 weeks of training and having successfully completed the registration examination.

Candidates intending to sit the examination will only be eligible after satisfactory completion of 39 weeks of training confirmed by their tutor, and when they have completed a minimum of 45 weeks training.

Council having considered the available options have determined that an examination will be scheduled in early August, subject to government advice on gatherings at that time. We are currently researching venues with the intention of locating a number of sites which will facilitate adequate social distancing and will make a further announcement later with dates available venues and examination registration procedures.

We would urge as many students and tutors as possible to complete any remaining compulsory aspects of training including 39 week appraisals and ensure that at least 45 weeks training have been completed by the end of July.

The Chief Pharmaceutical Officer has advised that the Department will ensure pre-registration funding is available until the registration date in August, allowing trainees to remain in post with the agreement of their employer. Consideration is also being given to measures that may be needed to help students to prepare for the exam and to support professional development during the first year in practice.

When 52 weeks training is complete, trainees will still require pharmacist supervision but need not be the sole pupil of their tutor. This additional period should be used to continue learning in preparation for entering practice and sitting the registration examination.

Should it not be possible for reasons outside our control to run the examination in August, we are developing contingency plans for alternative methods or dates of delivery and will update on these before the end of July

Trevor Patterson

Chief Executive