ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

Master of Pharmacy (MPharm)

September 2016
1. **Introduction**

1.1 This document sets out the academic regulations for the Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) programme of study with the Medway School of Pharmacy leading to a joint award from the University of Greenwich and the University of Kent. They apply to all students registered for the MPharm programme, regardless of their university of registration.

1.2 These Regulations set out the requirements for the assessment and progression of students, the award of credit and the classification of academic awards. They are subject to the approval of the senior academic bodies of both institutions (The University of Kent’s Senate and the University of Greenwich’s Academic Council).

1.3 Hereinafter in these Regulations ‘the universities’ shall be taken to refer to the University of Greenwich and the University of Kent, who hold conjoint responsibility for the Medway School of Pharmacy.

2. **Minimum and Maximum Registration Periods**

The period of registration normally permitted for the Medway School of Pharmacy’s MPharm programme (whether undertaken full-time or part-time) shall be:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Certificate of Higher Education</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>6 years</td>
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| Diploma of Higher Education     | 2 years | 6 years |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-honours Degree (Full-time)</th>
<th>3 years</th>
<th>6 years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honours Degree (Full-time)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPharm (Full-time)</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
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These time limits include any period of intermission and any period of time in which a student is repeating part of the programme of study. The MPharm degree must normally be completed within six years to be recognised by the regulatory body for registration purposes.

3. **Programme Structure, the Award of Credit and Progression**

3.1 The MPharm programme comprises an approved set of modules and is divided into four stages. Each module is at a specified level and a student is awarded a specified number of credits at that level following successful completion of the module.

3.2 A student who successfully demonstrates via assessment that they have achieved the specified learning outcomes for a module will be awarded the number and level of credits prescribed for the module. Assessment methods vary between modules and assessment is designed so that achievement of the pass mark or above will demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. Elements of assessment may be formative or summative in nature. Module specifications will state whether the pass mark has to be achieved overall and/or in prescribed elements of summative assessment. For all modules at Levels 4 and 5 the pass mark is 40%. For all Level 6 and 7 modules the pass mark is 50%.

3.3 Students must achieve specified requirements in each stage before being permitted to progress to the next stage. Each stage will consist of modules amounting to 120...
In order to be eligible for the award of the MPharm or of an exit award of CertHE, DipHE, BSc or BSc (Hons), a student must obtain at least the minimum number of credits required for that award at the specified levels. These requirements are set out below in section 9.

3.4 Threshold Marks
For the award of credit a student is required to achieve at least the module pass mark in each component part (coursework and examination) of the summative assessments for each module.

3.5. Failure and the Retrieval of Credit

Referral

3.5.1 Where a student has failed one or more modules and is not permitted to progress to the next stage of a programme, the Progression and Award Board may permit the student to undertake further assessment in failed modules. The opportunity to undertake further assessment following the failure of a module is known as referral. Depending on the scale of failure, only one further assessment opportunity in failed modules will normally be permitted (with the exception noted at 3.5.2 below), to a maximum of two attempts in total. Where the credit for a failed module is retrieved via referral, the overall mark awarded for the module will be capped at the pass mark.

3.5.2 Where the student has failed no more than 30 credits and attained an overall stage mark of 50% or more, the Progression and Award Board will permit a third attempt (up to a total of three including the initial assessment).

3.5.3 Where a student has failed more than two modules at the first opportunity, and attained an overall stage mark of less than 30% without presenting acceptable evidence of mitigating circumstances, s/he will normally be required to withdraw from the programme for reasons of unacceptable academic performance.

3.5.4 Where a student is required to be reassessed in a module, this will normally take place at the next available opportunity, and before progressing to the next stage of the programme. Students will not be permitted to progress to the next stage of the programme unless all of the credits required for the previous stage of the programme have been achieved.

3.5.5 A student for reassessment may not be reassessed in elements that are no longer current. The Progression and Award Board may make such special arrangements as it deems appropriate in cases where it is impracticable for students to be reassessed in the same elements and by the same methods as at the first attempt.

3.5.6 The use of mechanisms that allow for the award of credit based on the near failure of a limited number of modules (‘compensation’) or, very exceptionally, below that level (‘condonement’) will not be permitted with respect to modules taken at any stage of the MPharm programme. This is due to the importance of ensuring that successful students possess the firm foundation of knowledge and skills that is required for upholding patient and public safety.

3.5.7 Competency assessments (Numeracy, Closed-book MCQ, MyFolio/Mahara, Objective Structured Pharmacy Examinations [OSPEs], Dispensing and OSCEs): Students who demonstrate unsafe practice(s) which potentially pose(s) a risk to patients or the public will automatically fail that assessment and will be referred for reassessment at the next opportunity. Competency assessments will be offered on a pass/fail basis only to reflect this requirement for safety. Competency assessments must be passed for a student to be awarded the MPharm.
3.5.8 In Stage 4, students shall normally have an opportunity for reassessment (of all forms of assessment, including competency assessments) once only, and not before the final Progression and Award Board has met. Reassessments must be completed within one year of the original failure.

3.5.9 In cases where a student fails modules to a value of more than 20 credits at the first attempted completion of Stage 4, the Progression and Award Board will take into account the degree of failure before deciding that, either:

(a) The student should be re-assessed in the failed modules in a manner determined by the Board;

or

(b) The student should be awarded the BSc (Hons) Pharmaceutical Studies.

Students who fail on reassessment will be required to leave the programme and will be awarded a BSc (Hons) Pharmaceutical Studies.

Deferral

3.5.10 If the Progression and Award Board, in considering the advice of its Mitigating Circumstances Panel, agrees that a student has provided the Board with sufficient evidence as to why an examination or assessment has been missed or a poor mark attained, the Board can recommend that the student be allowed to re-sit the assessment or examination as if for the first time and without the penalty of a capped mark. This is known as deferral. Where the credit for a failed module is retrieved via deferral, therefore, the overall mark awarded for the module shall stand.

Failure to Progress

3.5.11 Students who have exhausted all attempts permitted by the Progression and Award Board and still fail to meet the requirements for progression will be required to withdraw from the programme. Students in this position who satisfy the requirements specified in section 8 of these Regulations may be awarded an appropriate exit award.

4. Progression Requirements

MPharm Stage 1

4.1 Credits will be awarded for modules in which a mark of at least 40% has been achieved, thus indicating that the student has met the learning outcomes of the modules for at least a threshold pass.

4.2 In order to progress to Stage 2 of the programme, a student will be required to gain 120 credits at Level 4 and pass all Stage 1 core modules.

MPharm Stage 2

4.3 Credits will be awarded for modules in which a mark of at least 40% has been achieved, thus indicating that the student has met the learning outcomes of the modules for at least a threshold pass.

4.4 In order to progress to Stage 3 of the programme, a student will be required to gain 120 credits at Level 5 and pass all Stage 2 core modules.

4.5 The summative assessment results for Stage 2 will contribute 20% towards the classification of the final award.

MPharm Stage 3
4.6 Credits will be awarded for modules in which a mark of at least 50% has been achieved, thus indicating that the student has met the learning outcomes of the modules for at least a threshold pass.

4.7 In order to progress to Stage 4 of the programme, a student will be required to gain 120 credits at Level 6 and pass all Stage 3 core modules.

4.8 The summative assessments at Stage 3 will contribute 30% towards the classification of the final award.

4.9 Where a student fails and does not successfully retrieve the assessments for Stage 3 of the MPharm but obtains the necessary 300 credits (see 8.1.3 below), the award of a BSc Pharmaceutical Studies will be unclassified, and result in the award of a non-Honours degree.

MPharm Stage 4

4.10 Credits will be awarded for modules in which a mark of at least 50% has been achieved, thus indicating that the student has met the learning outcomes of the modules for at least a threshold pass.

4.11 In order to qualify for the award of the MPharm, a student will be required to gain 120 credits at Level 7 and pass all Stage 4 core modules.

4.12 The summative assessments at Stage 4 will contribute 50% towards the classification of the final award.

4.13 Where a student does not progress onto Stage 4 of the MPharm but obtains the necessary 360 credits (see 9.1.4 below) or fails and does not successfully retrieve the assessments for Stage 4, the award of a BSc (Hons.) Pharmaceutical Studies will be made on the basis of a 20% contribution for Stage 2 and an 80% contribution for Stages 3/4.

5. The Subject Assessment Panel (SAP)

5.1 The purpose of the Subject Assessment Panel (SAP) is to confirm the marks for a student cohort on the range of modules that falls under its purview. These marks go forward into the students’ profiles, for consideration at the Progression and Award Board.

5.2 It is the responsibility of the relevant Module Leader to ensure that the data submitted are accurate and complete. The Chair of the Panel must be satisfied, before the meeting of the Panel, that all module results are available and have been checked. The SAP report must be authorised as accurate by the Chair, and by any External Examiner(s) present.

5.3 The SAP is responsible for overseeing the performance of students on individual modules and considering, in the light of any comments from Module Leaders and External Examiners, whether any changes might be required to the marks awarded or to the modules in the future.

5.4 The functions and terms of reference of the Subject Assessment Panel are as follows:

1. To consider and review the nature of assessments and examinations for a group of modules within the Panel’s subject area;

2. To receive and consider comments from External Examiners and Module Leaders on the student cohort’s performance on individual modules;
3. To confirm as appropriate the marks for the modules under its purview.

5.5 The Subject Assessment Panel shall therefore decide the final result of the marks allocated to the students on the modules within which they have been assessed. Comment from the External Examiner(s) on the standard of marking may result in the adjustment of the marks for the whole cohort, but on no account should this be used to modify the marks of individual students without consideration of the marks for the whole cohort.

5.6 The Medway School of Pharmacy must ensure that formal written records of the proceedings of each Subject Assessment Panel are maintained.

5.7 **Composition of the Subject Assessment Panel**

The Subject Assessment Panel shall consist of the following:

- The Head of the Medway School of Pharmacy (Chair) or nominee;
- Teaching staff for the modules under consideration by the Panel, as internal examiners;
- Participating External Examiner(s) for all Level 5 and Level 6 Panels: at least one External Examiner must be involved and evidence provided of their involvement if they are not in attendance.

6. **The Progression and Award Board**

6.1 The responsibility for the assessment of a student’s performance is delegated by the senior academic bodies of the universities (the Academic Council and the Senate) to the Progression and Award Board, either for one or for several programmes.

6.2 The Progression and Award Board shall decide the final result of the process of assessment for each student. The decisions of the Board shall not be subject to any further approval within the universities but, in the case of an externally validated examination, they shall be subject to confirmation by the external body concerned. The decisions of the Board shall be recorded and results made available as soon as possible after the meeting.

6.3 The Medway School of Pharmacy must ensure that formal written records of the proceedings of each Progression and Award Board are maintained.

6.4 The Progression and Award Board is responsible for ensuring that standards are maintained and that all the requirements for assessments that contribute to the conferment of an academic award, as laid down in the programme specification and in the regulations of any other appropriate awarding or accrediting body, are complied with.

6.5 **Delegation of Responsibility by the Progression and Award Board**

The Progression and Award Board may delegate to other sub-committees or individuals such functions as may be appropriate; for example, final decisions on the acceptance or rejection of claims of mitigating circumstances may be delegated to a Panel. Any progression implications will nevertheless remain the remit of the Progression and Award Board.

6.6 Lists of marks for the modules for a student cohort will already have been confirmed by the Subject Assessment Panel. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader, working in conjunction with those responsible for student records, to ensure that the
data submitted to the Progression and Award Board are accurate and complete. The Chair of the PAB must be satisfied, before the meeting of the Board, that all module results and records of mitigating circumstances related to the students to be considered, are available, so that each student’s profile is reviewed in full at the meeting.

6.7 Recommendations for the award of credit, the referral, deferral and progression of students and the conferment of academic awards shall be made to the universities by the Progression and Award Board for the programme. The functions and terms of reference of the Progression and Award Board are as follows:

1. To oversee progression and award procedures in designated programmes to maintain standards;
2. To ensure compliance with the requirements for progression and awards;
3. To examine individual student assessment profiles;
4. To review and make decisions on the progression of students and on reassessment in the light of overall performance, where necessary taking personal mitigating circumstances into account;
5. To make decisions on awards;
6. To authorise the decisions made, including certifying the results through the signature of the Chair, the Officer and the External Examiner and through the minuting of key decisions in relation to progression, reassessment in the light of overall performance and consideration of any mitigating circumstances.

Exceptionally it may be necessary to use Chair’s action to finalise a decision, and in such circumstances the Chair should normally consult the External Examiner. The decisions made by Chair’s action must be recorded and presented for information at the next meeting of the Progression and Award Board.

6.8 Composition of the Progression and Award Board

The Progression and Award Board shall consist of the following:

- Head of the Medway School of Pharmacy (Chair) or nominee
- The appropriate Programme Leader(s)
- Representative members of teaching staff as internal examiners
- At least one External Examiner
- A Minuting Officer
- A University Officer who is knowledgeable of and able to give advice regarding the application of these Regulations, who acts as the guardian of the Regulations on behalf of the universities.

The proceedings of a Progression and Award Board shall not be invalidated by the absence of any person designated by the Chair as a member of the Board.

6.9 Student Membership

In normal circumstances, no student should be a member of a Progression and Award Board or attend an examiners’ meeting. If, however, a person who is otherwise qualified to be an examiner for a programme (for example, as a member of staff or as an approved External Examiner) is coincidentally registered as a student on another
programme of study, in either of the universities or elsewhere, that should not in itself disqualify that person from carrying out normal examining commitments.

6.10 Declaration of Personal or Actual Interest

The Progression and Award Board shall be advised if any member has a personal or professional connection with any of the students being considered. The Chair has discretion to request anyone declaring an interest to retire from the meeting at the point at which discussion of the student’s profile takes place.

7. External Examining and the Assurance of Standards

The essential role for External Examiners appointed by the universities shall be to provide independent, informative comment and recommendations upon whether or not:

i. The universities are maintaining the academic standards set for their awards in the Medway School of Pharmacy;

ii. The assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme and is conducted in line with the policies and regulations agreed between the two universities for the Medway School of Pharmacy;

iii. The academic standards and the achievements of students of the Medway School of Pharmacy are comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which the External Examiners have experience;

iv. In providing an oversight of standards, External Examiners will be encouraged to identify formally:
   - Good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment
   - Enhancements to the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.

v. In providing oversight of the standards of the universities’ awards, External Examiners will be expected to:
   - Attend annually either the Subject Assessment Panel (SAP) or Progression and Award Board (PAB), or both, as required by the Medway School of Pharmacy. The School will ensure that all PABs are attended by at least one External Examiner to oversee its deliberations, as described in 6.6 above.
   - Attend, as required by the Medway School of Pharmacy or the relevant PSRB, other specified assessment activities, which may include, *inter alia*, vivas, objective structured pharmacy examinations (OSPEs), in which students are assessed and where external comment is normally expected to form part of external quality oversight of the module or programme;
   - Report to the Vice-Chancellors of the universities, as Chairs of their senior academic bodies, on any matters of serious concern arising from the assessments, which put at risk the standard of the universities’ awards in the Medway School of Pharmacy.
8. The Conferment of Awards

8.1 The Progression and Award Board may make recommendations for the conferment of the following awards:

- Certificate of Higher Education
- Diploma of Higher Education
- BSc Pharmaceutical Studies (at least 300 credits)
- BSc (Hons) Pharmaceutical Studies (at least 360 credits)
- Master of Pharmacy

8.1.1 A Certificate of Higher Education will be awarded if a student successfully completes the Stage 1 of the MPharm programme, or its equivalent (at least 120 credits at Level 4), but does not continue into Stage 2, or if the candidate fails the second year assessment and does not retrieve the failure.

8.1.2 A Diploma of Higher Education will be awarded if a student successfully completes Stages 1 and 2 of the MPharm programme, or its equivalent (at least 240 credits, of which at least 90 must be at Level 5 or above), but does not progress into Stage 3, or if the candidate fails to obtain a BSc degree after the Stage 3 assessment and does not retrieve the failure.

8.1.3 BSc (Non-honours): a candidate who completes Stages 1-3 of full-time study on the MPharm programme, (at least 300 credits, of which at least 150 credits must be at Level 5 or above, including at least 60 at Level 6 or above), but does not progress into the final year may be eligible for the award of a BSc degree Pharmaceutical Studies, or may be permitted to undertake additional modules in order to qualify for a BSc (Hons) degree. This is an exit award and the student will not be allowed entry into Stage 4 of the MPharm programme.

8.1.4 BSc (Honours): a candidate who successfully completes Stages 1-3 of full-time study on the MPharm programme, (360 credits, of which at least 210 credits are at Level 5 or above including at least 90 credits at Level 6 or above) but does not pass the final year may be eligible for the award of a BSc (Hons) degree Pharmaceutical Studies, or may be permitted to undertake additional modules in order to qualify for a BSc (Hons) degree. This is a terminal award and the student will not be awarded an MPharm degree.

8.1.5 Candidates who complete the programme and pass Stage 4 will be eligible for the award of the MPharm (Pharmacy). An MPharm will normally be awarded if a student successfully completes 480 credits with 120 credits at Level 7 of the MPharm programme (as required by General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), the regulatory body for Pharmacy).

8.1.6 Only students awarded the MPharm qualification may be considered for registration with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC).

8.1.7 Once a recommendation for award has been approved on behalf of the two universities, the graduand will be invited to attend the Joint Awards Ceremony.
9. **Summative Assessment Regulations for the Award of the MPharm (Pharmacy) Degree**

9.1 The summative assessment marks for Stages 2, 3 and 4 of the MPharm programme will be aggregated to make a weighted contribution to the final overall average mark for classification purposes, in accordance with the weightings set out in section 4 above.

9.2 Students entering the programme at stages other than Stage 1 of the MPharm will have the credits with which they were admitted onto the programme form a part of the total credits required for the programme; however, no marks accrued as a part of achieving those credits will be able to be considered as contributing to the aggregation for their award. In those circumstances, the weighting of marks contributing to their award will be based on the credits accrued on the MPharm programme.

9.3 Candidates who pass Stage 4 will be eligible for the award of the MPharm (Pharmacy). The classifications for the MPharm will follow those for a BSc (Hons) degree:

- **First Class Honours**: 70% and above
- **Upper Second Class Honours**: 60% - 69%
- **Lower Second Class Honours**: 50% - 59%
- **Third Class Honours**: 40% - 49%

9.4 An aegrotat degree may not be awarded for the MPharm and is **NOT** recognised by The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC).

9.5 **Borderline Judgements**

9.5.1 The Progression and Award Board may use its discretion in considering cases on the borderline of classification categories. A borderline case is normally defined as a student who has an overall Grade Point Average within 2.0 percentage points below the classification percentiles stated in 9.3 above (e.g. 38.0, 48.0, 58.0 and 68.0 respectively for third, 2:2, 2:1 and 1st class degree classifications). Exceptionally, the Progression and Award Board may give consideration to student profiles that fall outside this 2% boundary where the student has had mitigating circumstances confirmed by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

9.5.2 The Medway School of Pharmacy will hold viva voce examinations for borderline candidates, in advance of the Progression and Award Board, to aid in the determination of the final degree classification. Candidates must be informed that a viva voce examination will not affect their marks in any way, but may provide the opportunity for them to be considered for the award of a higher classification.

9.5.3 Based on a review of student profiles, the External Examiners, Internal Examiners and the Programme Leader shall agree a list of candidates to be invited for the viva voce examinations. All of the candidates’ assessed work must be made available for review by the External Examiners prior to the viva voce examinations.

9.5.4 The Viva Voce Panel shall be chaired by an appropriate External Examiner. The Panel shall comprise up to two External Examiners and one Internal Examiner with relevant expertise. Decisions made following a viva voce examination will be communicated to the Chair of the Progression and Award.
10. **Late Submission of Coursework**

10.1 If coursework is received later than the deadline specified, the work will be marked in the normal manner so that, regardless of any subsequent decision made in relation to the late submission, the work has been appropriately assessed.

10.2 Where work has been submitted late and either no plea of mitigating circumstances has been received or a plea has been made but not found to be acceptable, a mark of zero will be recorded for the work.

10.3 Where a plea of mitigating circumstances has been made and found to be acceptable, the mark achieved will be recorded. In due course, in making its decision about the student’s progression or award, the Progression and Award Board will decide whether the mitigating circumstances can be regarded as having had an adverse effect on the student’s profile.

11. **Attendance and Progression**

11.1 Students are required to demonstrate a commitment to their programme of study by regular attendance at lectures, laboratory classes, seminars and workshops and successful completion of summative and formative assessment tasks.

11.1.1 Failure by a student to meet the required 80% attendance for scheduled practical and workshop sessions within a module, without valid mitigating circumstances, will normally result in a capped coursework mark (capped at the pass mark for the module).

11.1.2 Students who attend fewer than 60% of the scheduled practical and workshop sessions within a module will be deemed not have met the learning outcomes of the module and will normally be regarded as having failed that module. In exceptional circumstances, where the Progression and Award Board deems that the learning outcomes have been able to be met, the module may be passed and assessment on the module capped at the pass mark.

11.1.3 Failure by a student to meet the required 100% attendance at Practice Placements (Community, Hospital or Industry) within a module, without valid mitigating circumstances, will normally result in a capped mark for the module as whole (capped at the pass mark).

11.1.4 If the Progression and Award Board, in considering the advice of its Mitigating Circumstances Panel, agrees that a student has provided the Board with sufficient mitigating evidence as to why they have not met the specified attendance requirements for any module, the Board can recommend that the student be allowed to pass the module without penalty.

12. **Intermission**

Where a student admitted to the MPharm programme wishes to interrupt their programme of study for a prescribed period of time, the appropriate intermission procedure must be followed. It is important that students read the guidance about intermission available on the website before making an application to intermit. The form to apply for intermission should be completed and submitted to the Head of School prior to withdrawal from the universities’ registration system.

13. **Mitigating Circumstances**
13.1 It is the responsibility of students to attend examinations and to submit work for assessment as required; however, if there is evidence of the student becoming unwell prior to or during the assessment or if there are personal circumstances which they deem to have affected their performance, the student is required to provide documentary medical evidence or evidence of these circumstances within the deadlines specified in order to support a request for mitigating circumstances to be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

13.2 If a student does not provide the Panel with information about any personal circumstances that may have affected their performance in assessments or their capacity to complete the assessments, or to do so in the time span required, any subsequent appeal on these grounds may be rejected.

13.3 If a student fails to attend examinations or to submit work for assessment without good cause, the Progression and Award Board has the authority to deem the student to have failed the assessments concerned.

14. Appeals

14.1 If a student wishes to appeal a decision of the Progression and Award Board, they must complete and submit the requisite appeal form before the specified deadline or the appeal will not be able to be heard.

15. Cheating and Plagiarism

15.1 There are various forms of academic dishonesty but this will normally refer to cheating in examinations or presenting work for assessment which does not represent the student's own efforts. All examples of cheating or plagiarism will be penalised, as described in the Academic Offences Regulations agreed by the universities.

15.2 If it is established that a student has cheated or otherwise attempted to gain an unfair advantage, the School will follow the relevant disciplinary procedures agreed by the universities in considering the case.