

Dear Colleagues,

Subject: Revised assessment process for Pharmacy Pre-Registration Trainee Recruitment 2020

We hope you are safe and well.

The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated a period of self-isolation and strict social distancing measures, with ongoing government restrictions on face to face gatherings to continue for the foreseeable future.

We have therefore been planning contingencies and working closely with colleagues from NHS Education for Scotland (NES) to ensure both the National Recruitment Scheme for England and Wales (NRS) and the Pre-registration Pharmacist Scheme (PRPS) in Scotland are ready to adapt should the need arise.

In analysing how best to continue our pharmacy recruitment processes, we are acutely aware that none of the options would be ideal. However, we have observed and learned from the rapid changes needing to be made across all specialty recruitment, and approached our conclusions on the basis of what we feel is the fairest and least onerous way for candidates across England, Wales and Scotland to demonstrate their capabilities during these unique times. We were also mindful that for anything we proposed:

- The delivery process must be robust and evidence-based
- The delivery process must be aligned to NHS and government advice on social distancing.
- The delivery process should be accessible to all applicants irrespective of which country they are in and whether travel restrictions are in place
- Public safety must be at the forefront of any decision

Therefore, in consultation with our valued stakeholders, including employers, the Pharmacy Schools Council, the BPSA, Health Education England Pharmacy Deans and senior leadership we are writing to inform you that:

- **for the NRS in England and Wales** a decision has been made to **cancel the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs)** for the forthcoming Pre-Registration Pharmacy 2020 recruitment cycle. The Situational Judgement Test (SJT) and Numeracy Assessment **will continue to be used** to evaluate candidate performance.
- **for the PRPS in Scotland** the national Assessment Centre in September 2020 will not take place. For candidates applying to training programmes in Scotland, **the same SJT and Numeracy Assessment will be used** to evaluate candidate performance.

This decision will benefit any candidates planning to apply to both vacancies, as they will only be required to sit the assessment once. We are working with our testing centre partner to provide the widest scope for testing possible, including the capability for candidates unable to return to the UK to test in countries worldwide.

Next Steps

- A new applicant handbook reflecting the changes this year will be published w/c 25th May
- For posts in England and Wales, you should register on Oriel for the NRS as per published timelines (NRS page can be found [here](#))

- For posts in Scotland, you should register for an Oriel account as per the published timelines (PRPS page can be found [here](#))
- You may apply to both vacancies if you wish
- In conjunction with your School of Pharmacy and the BPSA, we will be signposting you to key training material that you can access for free, which will cover the important attributes not tested by the SJT but which will be essential for you to maximise your training year
- Information about the SJT and numeracy test to help assist you in your preparation can be found [here](#)
- For any further questions you may have, we will be co-hosting a webinar with the BPSA. Details will be circulated via your Schools of Pharmacy, the BPSA and social media

We wish you all the best and thank you for your patience during this uncertain time.

Stay safe,

Pharmacy National Recruitment Office for England and Wales
NHS Education for Scotland – Pharmacy