



# Summer and Autumn 2021 registration assessment dates announced

**Friday 12 March**

We are now able to confirm the remaining registration assessment dates for 2021. The sittings will take place on:

**Summer assessment: 27, 28 and 29 July 2021**

**Autumn assessment: 16 November 2021**

These sittings will be delivered through Pearson VUE, mainly at test centres in the UK.

The registration assessment sittings are usually held in June and September. These dates in July and November are the earliest available where Pearson VUE test centres can accommodate the predicted number of candidates under the current social distancing guidelines. The GPhC Council has agreed that provisional registration of pharmacists will be extended to January 2022, to enable trainees from the 2020/21 cohort to apply to join the provisional register once their training is satisfactorily completed, so that they can take up offers of employment at the same time as they usually would, from 1 August 2021. More information about the extension of provisional registration can be found below.

We are keen to remind candidates that they should only take the assessment if they are confident they are 'fit to sit' - the extension of provisional registration gives candidates important options.

Holding the summer sittings over three days will increase the opportunity for candidates to find a test centre place near to them. Candidates on each of the three days will sit a different paper, but we would emphasise that number and types of questions, and the standard required to pass will not change.

The numbers eligible to sit the assessment in July and November 2021 will be larger than usual and include those finishing their training in 2021, current provisional registrants who chose not to sit in March, or were unsuccessful at this attempt, and trainees from previous years waiting to sit for a second or third time.

The social distancing measures currently in place in Pearson test centres mean their capacity is reduced significantly, and there is considerable demand for testing spaces and online availability from other clients, as organisations adapt to the current conditions. Although social distancing rules may be less restrictive by the time of the sittings, this is not guaranteed, and it is important that we are able to offer a place to all candidates who are eligible to sit. We will also be considering the option of remote sittings for candidates in the UK and overseas subject to the latest government guidelines.

Candidates will receive their results around six weeks after each sitting due to the marking process which needs to be carried out once the answer data has been collated. This means that the earliest

possible date that candidates who pass the summer assessment could join the register as a pharmacist will be 15 September 2021. For candidates who pass the autumn assessment, this will be 1 January 2022.

### Extending provisional registration

We understand that these assessment sitting dates mean that trainees and provisionally registered-pharmacists will have to wait longer than expected to sit the assessment, join the register, and take up roles as fully-registered pharmacists. We know this will also have an impact on employers who would have been expecting newly-qualified pharmacists to join the register from August 2021.

The GPhC Council has agreed that provisional registration of pharmacists will be extended to January 2022, to enable trainees from the 2020/21 cohort to apply to join the provisional register once their training is satisfactorily completed, so that they can take up offers of employment at the same time as they usually would, from 1 August 2021.

The same eligibility criteria will apply to those wanting to join the provisional register in 2021. They will be able to join once they have successfully completed 52 weeks of training (including if they reach 52 weeks after they have sat the registration assessment). We hope this will mitigate some of the issues that delays to the registration assessment sittings may cause to trainees, employers and pharmacy services.

This will also allow current provisionally-registered pharmacists who do not feel fit to sit in March, and decide to sit in the summer or autumn instead, to continue working in their current roles until they receive their registration assessment results. It also gives current trainees the option to work as a provisionally registered pharmacist up until January 2022, if they decide they do not feel fit to sit in July and decide to sit in November instead.

We have contacted employers, training providers, tutors and trainees with more information so they are able to decide their next steps.

Duncan Rudkin, GPhC Chief Executive, said: “Pre-registration pharmacy trainees who have been completing their training during the last 12 months, including those who have gone on to join the provisional register, have risen to the challenge of dealing with a range of unprecedented circumstances. They have made a hugely valuable contribution to providing pharmacy services and delivering patient care during the pandemic, in all areas of pharmacy practice, and we are grateful for all the work they have done.

“We understand that holding the sittings in July and November will have an impact on pre-registration trainees, provisionally-registered pharmacists and employers. Unfortunately, the pandemic continues to be a significant factor in the logistics of holding assessment sittings and has meant that earlier dates are simply not feasible.

“We regret any challenges this may cause and we hope that extending provisional registration will help mitigate these challenges for trainees and employers. This will also help give potential candidates further options when deciding when they feel fit to sit, depending on their individual circumstances.

“We are committed to learning lessons from feedback from candidates about the forthcoming March assessment and are working with Pearson VUE to improve candidates’ experience of sitting the assessment.”