



British Pharmaceutical Students' Association
The Official Student Organisation of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society

Assessment Booking Statement

Once again, we find ourselves in disbelief that a group of pharmacy professionals who have endured so much already are yet again facing challenges to simply sit the registration assessment, which the regulator deems to be the only way to prove competence in order to become a qualified pharmacist. The GPhC should have used the past 12 months to look for meaningful solutions to bring the profession forward, rather than trying to simply move the current assessment from a paper-based to an online format.

Here we are 3 weeks before the assessment date with overseas candidates who have received mixed communications still unsure if they can sit the assessment remotely, candidates in the UK being treated unfairly with notifications to book places sent out at varying times, and the assessment provider not having enough places at each of their centres for candidates to sit within a reasonable distance from home, and in some cases not within their own country, during a global pandemic.

It is now time for the regulator to stand up and showcase its ability to manage the process of regulating education and training within pharmacy. We need action and not just words. Candidates need to be guaranteed that if they cannot sit the assessment at their local Pearson VUE centre, they will have the option to sit remotely, including those who have already booked their place. The GPhC must use their resources to extend remote supervision to more candidates, including the assistance of registered professionals and academics. No candidate should have to stay in a hotel overnight during a global pandemic due to the assessment. Further, urgent clarification needs to be provided regarding the varying assessment time slots, as well as assurance to candidates who have booked slots that should not have been available and those who are awaiting to book, that they will still be able to sit the registration assessment in March without any further delay.

We plead with the regulator to put all your available resources and efforts into protecting these candidates during this difficult time. Their wellbeing is of the utmost importance and there is no room for more issues to occur. We have already made recommendations that could reduce the mental burden which these candidates have to bear that we ask you to please take a moment to reconsider. The BPSA is committed to working with the regulator to voice the concerns of the candidates, and to ensure that systems are tested and processes are checked.

We believe that it is unacceptable for candidates to have to travel and accommodate elsewhere during a global pandemic due to the lack of local assessment places. However, we do not want any candidate to be unable to sit the assessment due to financial difficulties in affording travel and accommodation, especially with the financial burden caused by the pandemic, and are therefore working quickly to produce an emergency support fund in aid of this.

Yours Sincerely,

On behalf of the British Pharmaceutical Students' Association

Sean Brannen
President 2020 - 2021

Bella Shah
Vice President 2020 - 2021