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## Medical Sciences Divisional Board

Approved on behalf of the MSD Divisional Board by Senior Divisional Officer on  
15<sup>th</sup> September 2016

## MSc Pharmacology

**Brief note about nature of change:** i) Change from written to computer-based  
qualifying examination ii) removing qualifying status of the data-handling examination iii)  
additional formatting changes

## Effective date

For students starting from MT 2016 with immediate effect

## Location of change

MSc Pharmacology Regulations 2015/16 <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/mosbcourinphar/administratorview/>

## Detail of change

<sup>1.7</sup>4. Candidates shall be examined in all of the following ways:

<sup>1.8</sup>(i) each candidate must pass a qualifying examination at the end of Michaelmas Term. The test shall consist of one three-hour ~~written paper~~ computer-based examination on the topics covered by the Pharmacology Introductory Course, as set out in the Schedule. The Organising Committee shall not later than the end of the Hilary Term preceding the final examination submit to the examiners a list of candidates who have satisfactorily completed the qualifying examination. Candidates who fail the qualifying examination once shall be permitted to take it again in the first week of the Hilary Term of the year of the final examination.

<sup>1.9</sup>(ii) each candidate ~~must pass~~ will sit a three-hour data handling and experimental design examination (also known as the quantitative examination) ~~during Hilary~~ before the end of Trinity Term. ~~Candidates must pass the examination in order to proceed with the course, and those who fail shall be permitted to sit the examination on one further occasion only. Candidates who fail once (<50% of the maximum mark) shall be permitted to sit the examination on one further~~

occasion in the following Hilary Term.

<sup>1.10</sup>(iii) each candidate will complete a three part examination.

Part A: ~~each candidate must pass a~~An essay examination at the beginning of Trinity Term on the material covered in the Advanced Pharmacology courses. ~~Candidates must pass the examination in order to proceed with the course, and those who fail shall be permitted to sit the examination on one further occasion only.~~The mark will contribute to the final course mark according to the pre-specified weighting.

<sup>1.11</sup>Part B: ~~e~~Each candidate will be required to submit to the examiners two copies of a printed Critical Literature Review of not more than 3,000 words which will be an extended introduction to their approved research project. One practical notebook in which all practical class experiments are recorded will also be submitted. The mark will contribute to the final course mark according to the pre-specified weighting.

<sup>1.12</sup>Part C: ~~e~~Each candidate will be required to submit to the examiners three copies of a printed dissertation of not more than 10,000 words (excluding bibliography and appendices) on the research project selected for study as set out in the Schedule. The mark will contribute to the final course mark according to the pre-specified weighting. The arrangements for approval will be notified to candidates not later than the start of Michaelmas Term of the academic year in which the examination is taken.

Those who fail shall be permitted to re-sit Part A and submit rewrites of Part B and Part C on one further occasion. These resubmissions will occur with the following years submission cycle.

<sup>1.18</sup>(b) The essay and the practical notebook must be submitted by deadlines determined by the Organising Committee and posted in the *Gazette* -no later than the end of the term preceding submission.

### **Explanatory Notes**

The 2014/15 MSc Pharmacology Examiners' Report highlighted some areas for improvement with regards the format and timing of the qualifying examination in Michaelmas Term of the final (only) year of examination. Due to the format of the examination, failing candidates were unable to resit in good time and were often unaware of their results until they had undertaken a large proportion of the remaining academic schedule. The MSc course committee agreed that this was not beneficial to either the students or the course itself and agreed to change the format of the exam from written to computer-based. The content of the examination will remain the same.

The course committee also agreed to bring itself in line with comparable MScs and have only one qualifying examination as it felt having two qualifying examinations created an unnecessary hurdle for students. Candidates must still pass all elements of assessment.