



The Society of Apothecaries of London

Diploma in Forensic Medical Sciences (DipFMS)

Administrative Guidance for Candidates

EXAMINATION TIMETABLE: 2022/2023

Deadline for electronic receipt of your completed application form to academicadmin@apothecaries.org AND Receipt of full fee electronically - see important note in section 2 below regarding fee* , and payment instructions in section 5.	5.00pm on Thursday 20 April 2023
Due date for submission of dissertations - this is the date by which your dissertation must have arrived electronically via Turnitin to the Academic Department. <u>DO NOT SUBMIT HARD COPIES BY POST.</u>	5.00pm on Thursday 25 May 2023
Written paper - Online	Thursday 15 June 2023

EXAMINATION FEES

1. The examination entry fee is £865.
2. The re-entry fee for the whole exam is £865.
The re-entry fee for the written paper only, is £480.
The re-entry fee for the dissertation only, is £435.

***IMPORTANT NOTE.** An application is not complete without the due full fee. Candidates whose employers are paying for their examination entry, who might require an invoice from the Examinations Office to prompt a payment, should note that the full fee **must** have been paid by the application deadline – you are advised to plan well ahead accordingly.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE EXAMINATION

3. Candidates who wish to withdraw from the examination must notify the Society in writing. Withdrawal penalties are detailed in the table below.

If the date of receipt of notification of withdrawal falls-	The penalty incurred will be...
Before the application deadline stated above.	No penalty
In the 2 weeks after the application deadline	£140
Within 6 weeks of the start of the examination	£255
Within 2 weeks of the start of the examination	Full Fee

PAST EXAMINATION PAPERS

4. A booklet of past examination papers is available from the Academic Department at a cost of

£17.50. Payment can be made via <https://www.apothecaries.org/product-category/exams/> and follow payment instructions.

PAYMENTS

5. Payments can be made via: -

The Society's website: <https://www.apothecaries.org/shop/>

Please Note:

- Candidates from overseas should ensure that their payments yield the correct fee in Sterling after deduction of bank charges.
- Candidates who are unable to pay via the website should contact academicmanager@apothecaries.org

CURRENT DISSERTATION TOPICS and guidance statement

6. **Candidates can choose from one of four dissertation topics below:**

Title: The future role of the invasive autopsy in the investigation of deaths, and possible alternatives.

Guidance statement:

Post mortem examinations have always been an integral part of the investigation of deaths, but the advent of new imaging techniques has begun to question the need for physical dissection of the body in every case. This is particularly so for those whose religious faith is opposed to such procedures. The United Kingdom has a high rate of post mortem examinations compared to many other countries, and with the marked decline in consented autopsies in recent years probably reflecting a change in society's attitude to such examinations, there may be pressure on those instructing medico-legal autopsies to adopt new practices.

The dissertation should look at the legal status of post mortem examinations in the United Kingdom, the attitudes which other countries and particular faiths take towards them, what alternatives to invasive autopsies are available (e.g. CT and MRI scanning), the reliability of these alternatives, and what legal questions might be raised by their use perhaps in deaths which are potentially suspicious.

OR

Title: Sexual Assault in the United Kingdom: legal, medical and scientific considerations

Guidance statement:

Sex-related crime has received a great deal of media and public attention in recent years, whether relating to sex offences against children, illegal immigrants forced into prostitution or drug facilitated sexual assault ("date rape").

The dissertation should review the legal aspects of sexual assault, defining what it is and explaining how it is tried in court. The roles of the different personnel involved (law enforcement, medical, support, scientific, legal) in the investigation of an alleged sexual assault should be reviewed, along with an appraisal of the evidence which might be obtained and its use in court. The scientific examination of material evidence to identify individuals and any substances involved in the alleged assault should also be covered. The dissertation should critically assess why such a very small proportion of allegations of sexual assault end up firstly in a trial and secondly in a conviction. Finally discuss ways in which victims might be encouraged to report such crimes and ways in which conviction rates might be improved.

OR

Title: Medico- Legal Systems and Concealed Homicide.

Guidance statement:

This deliberately broad title allows several approaches to the subject. For example, it can be explored by examining present-day medico-legal investigation systems critically, and in particular their inadequacies when it comes to identifying concealed homicide. This could be followed by a discussion of and recommendations for future developments, real or potential, to enable them to achieve their aims.

An equally valid approach would be to take as a starting point the varied means of identifying and detecting concealed homicide, and explain how medico-legal judicial or extra-judicial systems come into play in detecting such crime. A commentary on possible practical and workable improvements to such systems, in the light of recent history of the subject, is another fruitful source of discussion.

OR

Title: Deliberate self-harm, including suicide, is an increasing and disturbing phenomenon among young people today. Discuss the nature of the problem and the potential impact on society.

Guidance statement:

The title is chosen to allow candidates to explore the various aspects of the subject especially in light of the recent publicity around the role of social media. Self-harm includes non-fatal injuries and actions as well as suicide and both should be considered as part of the dissertation. Candidates may wish to explore the methods employed as well as looking at trends over the past number of years. Self-harm has medical (including psychiatric), legal and social implications and discussion of these differing aspects of the problem should be considered. Methods for tackling the problem should be included as part of the discussion on the impact of self-harm on society.

It is important that you make sure you follow the guidance provided in the Guide to the Dip FMS exam regarding structure, referencing, word limit etc. of your dissertation before submission.

<https://www.apothecaries.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/DFMS-Guide-to-the-Diploma-incl-Regulations-and-Syllabus-Dec21-v30-1.pdf>