



# The Society of Apothecaries of London

## Diploma in Forensic Medical Sciences (DipFMS)

### Administrative Guidance for Candidates

Admin Guide

2023-2024

Jan V1

#### EXAMINATION TIMETABLE: 2023-2024

Application Deadline and full fee - <b>see important note in section 2 below regarding fee*</b> , and payment instructions in section 5.	Thursday 18 April 2024
Due date for submission of dissertations (This is the date by which your dissertation must have been submitted to the Brightspace Learning Platform.)	Thursday 23 May 2024
Written Paper - Online	Thursday 20 June 2024

#### EXAMINATION FEES

1. The examination entry fee is £910.
2. The re-entry fee for the whole exam is £910.  
The re-entry fee for the written paper only, is £505.  
The re-entry fee for the dissertation only, is £455.

**\*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...
2 weeks after the application deadline and 12 weeks before the examination (10% of full fee)	£182
12-6 weeks before the examination (20% of full fee)	£255
2 weeks or less before 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://catalogue.apothecaries.org/product?catalog=past\\_papers](https://catalogue.apothecaries.org/product?catalog=past_papers) and follow payment instructions.

## PAYMENTS

5. Payments can be made via: -

**The Society's website:** <https://catalogue.apothecaries.org/>

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](mailto:academicmanager@apothecaries.org)

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

**Title: The likely benefits and harms of the decriminalisation of cannabis, and psychoactive substances derived from cannabis, for social use in the United Kingdom**

**Guidance statement:**

Anyone who walks through parts of our major UK cities and smells the stench of weed might think that cannabis use was de facto legal. The question is should its use, either in vegetable form or as the two principle psychoactive compounds Delta-9-THC and Delta-8-THC be legalised. There are many scientific papers that discuss the experience of partial legalisation of cannabis for social use in North America. Can these papers inform policy makers of the likely consequences of cannabis decriminalisation in the UK and are these consequences likely beneficial or detrimental to the UK polity?

**OR**

**Title: Physician participation in human rights abuses**

**Guidance statement:**

Candidates are expected to discuss how physicians intentionally or otherwise collaborate with governments/ factions in participating in human rights abuses. This would include approval or actual participation in different types of torture, including the use of psychoactive and other drugs, forced treatments such as FMG, homosexual re-education and chemical treatment, production of fraudulent statements etc. In addition, the extent of participation of physicians in executions should also be critically discussed.

**OR**

**Title: The impact of advances in imaging technology on forensic practice**

**Guidance statement:**

Candidates are expected to review how historically and up to the current time, the use of different modalities of imaging and how their use has influenced and/or improved/enhanced forensic investigation and outcomes. Candidates should develop their argument to assess both advantages and any negative aspects of the use of different types of imaging in assisting the judicial process. Publication in journals and textbooks is extensive and will cover the candidates' requirements.

**OR**

**Title: The effect of recent cases in which expert witnesses have been criticised and punished for lack of care and/or objectivity on prosecutions involving forensic evidence**

**Guidance statement:**

For many years no action lay against an expert witness for negligence or consequence of his/her opinion or evidence, given the primacy of an expert's duty to the court. In recent years the law has developed to abandon that immunity. Further, the courts have for many years been critical of experts who disregard or pay insufficient attention to the duties imposed upon them by the law, including in the Civil and Criminal Procedure Rules. Some experts have been criticised publicly by the senior courts, including in criminal appeals and trials of civil actions (such as for personal and psychological injury). In an extreme case an expert was found in contempt of court for signing a declaration at the end of his report without an honest belief in its truth. Consider recent developments in this area and analyse how they might affect the willingness and ability of expert witnesses to give evidence in future. How might prosecutions which rely on forensic evidence be affected? Your review and arguments should focus on developments from the last 5 to 10 years, though you are permitted to refer to the wider history to set your conclusions in context. Starting points (only) for the historic case law: Jones v. Kaney [2011] UKSC 13; Arthur JS Hall & Co. v. Simons [2002] 1 A.C. 615; Dawkins v. Lord Rokeby (1873) L.R. 8 Q.B. 255. Starting points (only) for recent case law: Davies-Gilbert v. Goacher [2022] EWHC 969 (Ch); R. v. Byrne [2021] EWCA Crim 107; Liverpool Victoria Ins. Co. Ltd v. Zafar [2019] EWCA Civ 392; R. v. Pabon [2018] EWCA Crim 420.

*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.*