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CERTIFICATE IN PHARMACOEPIDEMOLOGY AND PHARMACOVIGILANCE - REGULATIONS

Regulations for the Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance of The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

1. The Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance of The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine will be awarded to students of the School who have satisfactorily completed the 30 week, part-time course, Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance at the School, and complied with the requirements of the School.
2. Course Curriculum. This will provide participants with a basic understanding of the concepts and practice of Pharmacoepidemiology & Pharmacovigilance.
3. Registration. Students seeking registration for the Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance will normally have a science, biomedical or biostatistical background, hold a second class honours degree of a United Kingdom university (or equivalent) in a science, medical, statistical or related subject and have appropriate experience in the area.
4. Satisfactory completion of the course. Students must complete a project set by the course organisers, and sit unseen written examinations. The unseen written examinations will consist of two examinations held at the end of the course and compensation is allowed between these two papers. The achievement of a pass in both the project and the examinations will be considered an overall pass. At the discretion of the Board of Examiners and in accordance with the course Marking Scheme, students who narrowly fail one component of the course may be awarded an overall pass. Except with the prior agreement of the School, or in the case of acute illness or other exceptional cause, the written papers will be taken at a specified time at the end of the course. The project must be submitted after the final teaching block, about 2 weeks before the written examination, on a date specified by the organizers.
5. The Board of Examiners. The Board is responsible for assessing students and awarding a pass, fail, or, for exceptional candidates, a distinction. It will make recommendations for the award (or otherwise) of the Certificate on the appropriate form, signed by the Chair of the Board of Examiners and the External Examiner. This will be forwarded to the Examinations Officer and Head of Registry Services for ratification.

Successful candidates may use the post nominals Cert. P Epi & P Vig.

6. Failure to pass written papers. A candidate who fails the written papers but passes the project will be entitled to re-enter the examination on one further occasion only. This will normally be to the corresponding examination one year later.
7. Failure to pass the project. The candidate may re-submit the project within a time limit set at the Chairman of the Board's discretion,
8. Deferral of written examinations or project. A candidate who with the Examination Board Chairman's agreement, defers taking the written examinations will be entitled to take the examination one year later.

A candidate who, with the Chairman's agreement, defers submitting the project may re-submit that project within a time limit set at the Chairman of the Examination Board's discretion, or undertake the project set for the following year and submit it at the time stipulated for that year's course, given that the project for the following year is on a different topic.

9. Notification of results. Candidates will be notified of their results by email following the Examination Board meeting normally held in July. Certificates will be posted to candidates by Registry during August/September.
10. The Board of Examiners will normally comprise of:
 - An internal (LSHTM) chair who should not be the Course Organizer)
 - An external examiner (chosen by the course committee and approved by the school) and
 - Up to six other members. The majority should be drawn from the Course Committee and should be employed by the School.

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CERTIFICATE IN PHARMACOEPIDEMIOLOGY AND PHARMACOVIGILANCE – MARKING SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

There are two overall assessed components which contribute to the award of the Certificate. These are as follows:

1.1. Unseen Examination

60 % of total mark for the course which comprises of:

- A short question examination (75 %)
- A multiple choice question examination (25 %)

1.2. Project

40 % of total mark for the course which comprises of:

- An academic, research based project.

These two components (Unseen Examination & Project) are referred to as overall components of the Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology & Pharmacovigilance.

2. ASSESSMENTS

2.1. Assessment of work

The Project and Short Question Examination are blind double marked. Marks are reconciled between the two markers. The Multiple Choice Paper is marked by computer scanning. Marks are confirmed by the Board of Examiners, as described in the Teaching Policies and Code of Practice.

All assessments are numerically marked and converted to a percentage.

2.2. The Short Question Examination

This element contributes 75% towards the Unseen Examination component (45% towards the final mark for the course). Students are asked to attempt 9 out of 16 questions. Each question is then marked out of 10. The highest total possible mark for this examination is 90.

The percentage score for this examination is then calculated as follows:

$$SQ = \frac{100 \times \sum \text{marks for each question}}{90}$$

2.3. The Multiple Choice Question Examination

This element contributes 25% towards the Unseen Examination Component (15% towards the final mark for the course). There are five possible answers to each question, and students select the most appropriate answer. Correct answers receive 1 mark; incorrect answers receive -¼ (-0.25) mark. An unanswered question receives zero marks. The highest total possible mark for this examination is 40. MCQ papers are marked by computerised scanning.

The percentage score for this examination is then calculated as follows:

$$MCQ = \frac{100 \times \sum \text{totalmarks}}{(\text{numberofquestions})}$$

2.4. Unseen Examination Component

The Short Question (SQ) and Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examinations are combined to produce the Unseen Examination Component percentage. Compensation is permitted between the two papers i.e. given that an overall mark of not less than 50% is achieved a student may score less than 50% on one paper.

The overall percentage for the Unseen Examination Component is then calculated as follows:

$$UE = (SQ \times 0.75) + (MCQ \times 0.25)$$

2.5. Academic Research Based Project

The project contributes 40% towards the final mark for the course. All projects are blind double marked. Students are given a numerical grade for each section of the project and the highest total possible mark is 100. The project sections vary according to the topic selected for any year and students will be given a section/marks breakdown with their project instructions. The highest total possible mark for this examination is 100.

The marks in each section are totalled to give a total sum of marks and the percentage score is calculated as follows:

$$P = \sum \text{project marks}$$

2.6. Calculation of the Overall Percentage

The Overall percentage is obtained as follows:

$$\text{Overall \%} = (UE \times 0.6) + (\text{Project} \times 0.4)$$

3. FINAL RESULT

3.1 The final result is determined by considering the overall percentage and the following rule:

For the student to automatically achieve an overall pass, the percentage for both the unseen exam and project component must be 50 or above, regardless of the overall percentage. Any component with a percentage of <50 is considered a fail.

The award is made as follows:

Pass With Distinction

A distinction is automatically awarded if the percentages for both the Unseen Examination and Project Component are 80 or above.

Consider Distinction

A candidate is considered for distinction if the percentage score for either of the two components is 80 or above and the percentage score for the other component is >70 and <80. Borderline pass/distinction cases will be decided by the Examination Board who will review the candidate's assessed work.

Pass

A pass is automatically awarded if the overall percentage is 50 or above and no individual component percentage is below 50.

Consider Pass

A candidate is considered for a pass if the percentage score for one of the two components is 50 or above and the percentage score for the other component is >40 and <50. The candidate's work will be reviewed by members of the Examination Board. The Board will decide whether they should be awarded a fail or a pass. If a pass is awarded, a note will be made on the student's ER2 Statement of Results, to show that they were awarded a pass as a result of the Examination Board's recommendation, after consideration of the student's assessed work.

Fail

A candidate is failed if they meet none of the criteria for award above.

4. RE-SITS

4.1. Unseen examination

A student who attains a percentage of <50 in the Unseen Examination Component papers but passes the project will be entitled to re-enter the examination on one further occasion only. This will normally be to the corresponding examination one year later. 4

4.2. Project

A student who attains a percentage of <50 in the Project Component may re-submit the project within a time limit set at the Chairman of the Board's discretion.

5. REPORTING CANDIDATES RESULTS

5.1 Results must be agreed by the Board of Examiners and signed off by the Chair and the External Examiner(s) using the ER1 form. The ER1 form should then be submitted to the Deputy Registrar by hand. Candidates will be notified of their results by email from the Course Organizers following the Examination Board meeting normally held in July. An ER2 Statement of Results form and Certificates will subsequently be sent to candidates by Registry.

6. MARKING EXAMPLES

6.1 Short Question Examination

If a student scores a total of **36** marks (for the 9 questions overall) the percentage calculation finds that they score **40% overall for that paper.**

6.2 Multiple Choice Examination

If there are 25 questions, and a student answers 15 correctly, 8 incorrectly (score of minus 2) and fails to answer 2 (0), their overall score will be **13** out of a total of 25 marks. The percentage calculation finds that they score **52% overall for that paper.**

6.3. Unseen Examination Component

The Unseen Examination Component would then be calculated as follows:

$$(40 \times 0.75) + (52 \times 0.25) = 43$$

The percentage calculation finds that they score **43% overall for the exam component.**

6.4. Academic Research Based Project

If a student scores a total of **70** marks the percentage calculations finds that they score a **percentage of 70% overall for this component.**

6.5. Calculation of Final Course Percentage

The overall percentage is calculated as follows:

$$(43 \times 0.6) + (70 \times 0.4) = 53.8\%$$

Although the final mark is >50%, the student's overall result is Consider Pass, since the Unseen Examination component scores <50% and the Project scores >50%.

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