



# The Society of Apothecaries of London

## Guide to The Diploma in the History of Medicine (DHMSA) Incorporating the Regulations and Syllabus

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### **Notice of future amendments to the Guide (incorporating the Regulations and Syllabus) and revisions following publication of this version.**

The DHMSA Examination will continue to change to reflect developments. While every attempt has been made to ensure that this version of the DHMSA Examination Regulations and Syllabus is accurate, further changes to the DHMSA examination, the Regulations and closing dates may be implemented during this time. Candidates should refer to the Society of Apothecaries website ([www.apothecaries.org](http://www.apothecaries.org)) for the most up-to-date information, and where any such changes will be detailed. In order that candidates are fully briefed about the status of any proposed changes, they are advised to regularly check the Society website.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Diploma in the History of Medicine was instituted by the Society of Apothecaries of London in 1970 as a natural development of the activities of the Society's Faculty of the History of Medicine and Pharmacy, which was established in 1959. It is designed in part as a qualification for those who may be called upon to teach the history of medicine, either in separate formal courses or as part of the undergraduate course of medical studies or of studies in history or the social sciences. It is the Society's intention that the Diploma shall be regarded as a proof of a good general knowledge of up-to-date sources and methods of inquiry, of an adequate factual knowledge of one special period or topic within the field, and an ability to lecture in an interesting manner.

## COURSE CONTACT DETAILS

For further details on the course please contact:

Course Administrator  
Faculty of the History and Philosophy of Medicine and Pharmacy  
Society of Apothecaries  
Apothecaries' Hall  
Black Friars Lane  
London  
EC4V 6EJ

Tel: 020 7236 1189

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[facultyHP@apothecaries.org](mailto:facultyHP@apothecaries.org)

[www.apothecaries.org](http://www.apothecaries.org)

## DATE AND PLACE OF THE EXAMINATION

The Examination is held annually at Apothecaries' Hall (for address refer to front cover).

## EXAMINATION TIMETABLE AND FEES

Please refer to the **Administrative Guidance for Candidates** (available online at [www.apothecaries.org](http://www.apothecaries.org)).

## REGULATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION

1. Candidates must complete either:
  - a. The Diploma Course organised by the Society's Faculty of the History of Medicine and Pharmacy (attendance at a **minimum of 70%** of the course lectures will usually constitute completion of the course), *or*
  - b. An appropriate university course.

Failing this, candidates will be required to show evidence of competence (e.g. list of publications on the history of medicine) before admittance to the examination.

2. Form A (for those applying for the first time) or Form R (for re-entrants) and the fee must be received by the closing date published in the **Administrative Guidance for Candidates** (available online at [www.apothecaries.org](http://www.apothecaries.org)).
3. With effect from 1 September 2007, entry and re-entry to the examination must be made within 3 years of completing the course.

## THE EXAMINATION

4. The examination will be conducted in English throughout, and will consist of:
  - **The written papers:** Two 2-hour papers
  - **A dissertation-essay:** On a topic chosen by the candidate and approved by the Convenor
  - **A test lecture:** On a topic (to be totally different from the dissertation-essay) chosen by the candidate and must be approved by the Convenor. Failure to do so risks failing the examination.
  - **An oral examination:** A discussion based mainly on the dissertation-essay

All parts of the examination should be taken in the same year unless there are extenuating circumstances accepted by the Convenor.

5. **A candidate who fails to satisfy the Examiners** in Papers 1 and 2, considered together, will be marked as failing the whole examination, as will those who fail any three of the five sections of the examination. In such cases the entire examination must be retaken; if a candidate's dissertation-essay has been passed, however, there will not be a requirement to resubmit this.
6. **A candidate who passes the written papers but is referred** in the dissertation-essay, oral or test lecture will be permitted to re-enter for the part(s) of the examination in which he or she has been referred, unless all three of these sections have been failed.
7. In cases where the candidate has failed to satisfy the examiners in the dissertation-essay section or where the whole examination has been failed the Registrar will notify the candidate whether or not the dissertation-essay may be revised and resubmitted.
8. All failed sections must be re-taken the following year. If this is not possible and there are extenuating circumstances, accepted by the Convenor, then permission may exceptionally be granted to re-sit the failed sections 2 years later. Candidates, should, however, note (para 3 above) that re-entry to the examination must be made within 3 years of completing the course.
9. Successful candidates are entitled to use the letters DHMSA after their names.
10. The examination fee will be determined from time to time by the Court of Assistants and published in the **Administrative Guidance for Candidates**. Candidates who withdraw from the examination after the closing date will forfeit a proportion of the fee.

11. Candidates will be issued with an admission document once a place for the examination has been confirmed. This must be produced on the day of examination, along with some form of photographic identification.
12. On the day of the written examination, candidates are forbidden to bring books, papers, mobile telephones, calculators or any other electronic aid into the examination rooms. It is strictly forbidden for candidates to talk to, or to attempt in any other way to communicate with each other whilst a written examination is in progress.
13. Candidates who present themselves for written examinations after the start time stated in the admission document will be admitted if they arrive within 30 minutes of this time, but may not be admitted if they arrive thereafter. In any case, candidates will forfeit the time lost. In exceptional circumstances, where all candidates are affected by delays, the examination timings may be amended.
14. Candidates' completed examination scripts become the property of, and will be retained by, the Society. Under no circumstances will they be available for study.
15. The Court of Assistants reserves the right to refuse to admit to the examination, or to proceed with the examination of, any candidate who infringes a regulation or who refuses to comply with the reasonable request of an officer of the Society.

## REVIEW AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

16. The stages of the review and appeal procedures are as follows:
  - a. Feedback – first, compulsory stage;
  - b. Re-mark – second, optional stage;
  - c. Appeal – third, optional stage.
17. **Feedback (compulsory).** Feedback on examination performance will be available to unsuccessful candidates at their request. Requests must be made in writing and be received by the Registrar within 28 days of the receipt of results.
18. **Re-mark (optional).** A request by a candidate for a re-mark of a paper must be received in writing within 28 days of the receipt of feedback. A request for a re-mark cannot be made without first going through the feedback stage. There is a fee of £150 for a re-mark.
19. **Appeal (optional).** An appeal to the Society's Examinations Board is open to a candidate who is not satisfied with the decision of the Examination Panel, feedback or the Re-mark Panel. In accordance with the Society's Examination Review and Appeal Procedures, the detailed grounds on which the appeal is made must be stated (and see paragraph 21 below). The appeal must be received in writing within 28 days of the candidate being notified of the feedback or re-marking report. It is not necessary to seek a re-mark before appealing. There is a fee of £150 for an appeal.
20. If the appellant is dissatisfied with the report of the Examinations Board Appeal Tribunal and wishes to make an appeal to the Court of Assistants, this should be communicated to the Registrar within 28 days of the receipt of the decision of the Appeal Tribunal.
21. The processes outlined in paragraphs 16-20 will be dealt with according to the Review and Appeal Procedures agreed by the Court of Assistants, which is available to candidates on request. In no circumstances should a candidate make representations directly to an examiner.

Mrs J M E Maclean  
Registrar

## THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION

22. Paper 1 (2 hours) tests factual knowledge and requires one question to be answered from each of 6 groups on the main periods of medical history.
23. Paper 2 (2 hours) requires one essay question, from a choice of 4 questions, to test depth of knowledge, and one interpretation question from a choice of 4. This latter question will require the demonstration of interpretive skills based on given primary sources.
24. The questions will be based on the syllabus, but candidates will be expected to have broadened their knowledge with further reading of the topics covered.
25. Scripts must be legible. If two examiners cannot decipher the handwriting, the script will be dismissed.

## THE DISSERTATION-ESSAY

### The abstract

26. An abstract of 100-200 words should be submitted electronically to [asstreg@apothecaries.org](mailto:asstreg@apothecaries.org) as early as possible in the Course, and certainly before any detailed writing or other research work on the dissertation-essay is undertaken. It should contain a clear idea of the thesis of the dissertation-essay with some indication of the sources to be used.
27. **Abstracts must be submitted for approval no later than the deadline published in the Administrative Guidance for Candidates ([www.apothecaries.org](http://www.apothecaries.org)).**

### Advice on selecting an appropriate title

28. The topic, to be chosen by the candidate, is to be in a field of special personal and /or professional interest in the history of medicine and must be written in English. It will not be a paraphrase of textbooks or Internet material. The candidate must demonstrate original work with competence in accessing and using primary source material, which should be put into context with the relevant secondary literature. There should be a well defined thesis, argument and conclusion to the dissertation.
29. Experience suggests that the commonest mistake is to attempt to cover a subject stretching over an excessively long chronological span: a dissertation-essay of this length seeking to survey centuries or even millennia of history is likely to lapse into a mere listing of personalities and achievements, for which no real credit can be given.
30. Candidates are also advised against embarking on any investigation of a medical speciality or similar topic in which attention given to the current situation is likely to outweigh a concern with more distinctively historical issues.
31. It is emphasised that although the dissertation-essay allows the candidate to demonstrate specialist knowledge, it should be written with the non-specialist in mind.
32. The Society is unable to offer candidates formal tutorial assistance but course tutors are usually willing to provide guidance.

## References

33. The dissertation-essay must be fully referenced using the **Harvard** (author - date) style of referencing. This is now used widely in history and the humanities, and is the most appropriate for the dissertation-essay.
34. Full details of the style of referencing, which should be followed meticulously, can be found at:  
[http://www.bma.org.uk/library\\_medline/electronic\\_resources/factsheets/LIBReferenceStyles.jsp](http://www.bma.org.uk/library_medline/electronic_resources/factsheets/LIBReferenceStyles.jsp)
35. References to Internet sources should include all the information required for a full and complete reference plus full details of the website (the URL of the site) and the date on which it was accessed, as the content of sites may change with time.
36. References should be cited in the text in Harvard style as specified in paragraph 34. The full list of references should be arranged as endnotes in alphabetical order of author's surname at the back of the dissertation-essay.
37. Additional footnotes should **not** be used unless they are absolutely essential to the argument.
38. Sources will normally be in English. Foreign sources may be used when there is a generally accepted published translation.

## Further requirements

39. The dissertation-essay must include a word count and **must not** exceed 5,500 words excluding appendices, references, footnotes and bibliography. It may be appropriately illustrated. It must be fully documented with references and bibliography.
40. Three hard copies and an electronic copy must be submitted no later than the deadline published in the **Administrative Guidance for Candidates** ([www.apothecaries.org](http://www.apothecaries.org))
41. Any evidence of plagiarism at the time of the examination or subsequently will result in rejection of the candidate.
42. The dissertation should include a title page with the following:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Diploma in the History of Medicine</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dissertation-essay title</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Candidate name</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Date (e.g. 26 June 2009)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Word Count: (e.g. 5,239)</p>
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43. Candidates should make and sign a declaration such as the one given below. It should be incorporated into the Dissertation.

### Declaration of Originality

Name: .....

I certify that this dissertation is entirely my own work, and I allocate joint copyright to the Society of Apothecaries.

Signed ..... Date .....

### REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PRINTED VERSION

44. **Printing** - Dissertations should be printed in 12 point black type, double-spaced on single sides of A4 paper. The left hand margin should be wide enough to accommodate the binding without obscuring text.
45. **Binding** - Dissertations must be bound in an efficient, but not necessarily formal, manner. Inexpensive binding techniques include comb binding, perfect binding, velobinding and wire-O binding. Three copies must be supplied.
46. **Headers and footers** – Your name and the dissertation title should appear in the document header from page 2 onwards. The page and total number of pages, given as “Page X of Y”, should appear in the footer.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ELECTRONIC VERSION

47. A machine-readable, electronic version of your dissertation must be submitted via e-mail to the Assistant to the Registrar ([asstreg@apothecaries.org](mailto:asstreg@apothecaries.org)), no later than the deadline published in the **Administrative Guidance for Candidates**.
48. **File names** – Each dissertation should be presented as a single file. File names must be created as: Your name DHMSA Dissertation title Date (YYMMDD). For example:

**Bob Smith DHMSA Ancient Chinese Medicine 090626.doc**

### THE TEST LECTURE

49. This takes the form of a timed 15-minute lecture on the history of medically-relevant aspects of the candidate's professional field or major interest. It must be totally different in theme and scope from that dealt with in the dissertation-essay.
50. The candidate is required to give a complete and balanced lecture in the 15 minutes. The lecture should be appropriate for the intended audience, should have a clear introduction and conclusion. The content should be presented systematically. Marks will be awarded for overall quality of presentation, engagement with the audience and the appropriate use of audio-visual aids, artefacts and the treatment of source material. No question period will be allocated.

### The abstract

51. The lecture title, and an **abstract of 100-200 words**, must be submitted for approval by the examiners electronically **at the same time** as the dissertation-essay title and abstract is submitted to [asstreg@apothecaries.org](mailto:asstreg@apothecaries.org) (i.e. no later than the deadline published in the Administrative Guidance for Candidates (<http://www.apothecaries.org/>)).

## The written précis

52. Candidates must submit a 300-500 word written précis of the whole lecture, along with details of projection requirements, electronically to [asstreg@apothecaries.org](mailto:asstreg@apothecaries.org) **no later than the deadline published in the Administrative Guidance for Candidates.**

## Further information

53. The lecture is a test of content, presentation and communication and may be assisted by relevant visual aids and artefacts, when thought appropriate. The audience will consist of the examiners and the other candidates.
54. Candidates are free to pitch the level wherever desired, provided that the level is stated.
55. A laptop computer and a multimedia projector will be available on the examination day for use by candidates, if required. Candidates should ensure in advance the compatibility of their resource with the equipment available. Candidates wishing to use PowerPoint must submit the file electronically to [asstreg@apothecaries.org](mailto:asstreg@apothecaries.org) **no later than the deadline published in the Administrative Guidance for Candidates.**

## THE ORAL EXAMINATION

56. This will last for 15 minutes and will take the form of a discussion based on the dissertation-essay.

## MARKING

57. Marking of the 5 sections is weighted as follows:

Paper I	20%	}	40%
Paper II	20%		
Dissertation-essay	30%	}	40%
Oral	10%		
Test lecture			20%

58. The pass mark overall and for each section is 60%.
59. Candidates who fail to comply with the regulations will be marked down and may fail that section of the examination.

## SYLLABUS

60. The following topics constitute the syllabus:
- Historical method, with especial reference to medicine. Appropriate methods of enquiry, and sources for the study of history and the history of medicine.
  - The medicine of India and China, seen within their philosophical and social context.
  - The medicine of the classical world and of Islam with their relationship to the Western medical tradition.
  - The changing of concepts of disease and understanding of its causation.

- e. Medicine in the medieval and renaissance periods leading to the medical enlightenment of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- f. The development of medical practice from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.
- g. The growth of science and its effect on medicine.
- h. The role of anatomy and physiology in medical education and the evolution of clinical diagnosis and investigation.
- i. Epidemics, demographic change and their social sequelae.
- j. The history of nursing and the role of women in medicine.
- k. The development of the medical specialities.
- l. The development of surgery, anaesthesia, obstetrics and gynaecology, tropical medicine and public health.
- m. Medical ethical codes and their relationship to society and professional interests.

**NB** Not every subject will be covered every year.