



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

SCHOOL OF  
PHARMACY

# ADMISSION POLICY STATEMENT FOR PHARMACY FOR 2025 ENTRY

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**QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST  
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY**

**ADMISSION POLICY STATEMENT FOR PHARMACY FOR 2025 ENTRY**

**1. Introduction**

It is the policy of the University that all applicants are treated on a fair and equitable basis irrespective of religious belief, political opinion, race, sex, age, marital status, colour, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.

This Admission Policy Statement contains information on the entry requirements and selection criteria for the Pharmacy degree programme at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and we hope that you find it useful.

**2. Administration of Undergraduate Admissions**

Your application must be submitted through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) by 6.00 pm (GMT) on Wednesday 29 January 2025.

Once received, your application will be dealt with centrally by the University's Admissions and Access Service, rather than by the School of Pharmacy. Once your online form has been processed by UCAS and forwarded to QUB, an acknowledgement is normally sent within two weeks of its receipt by the University – we recommend that you keep a copy of this for your own records.

An initial decision on your application is made on the basis of the information which you have provided on your UCAS form. These decisions can only be made on the information given and you must show due care and diligence when completing your application, to ensure that it is completely accurate. In particular, full details must be included about the qualifications which you have completed so far, along with those which are still to be completed.

Once your application is received by the University's Admissions and Access Service, any additional information which is required is obtained, and your application will then be assessed, at which point an initial decision will be taken on your application. At this stage of the process, the decisions which can be taken on your application are:

- Application is unsuccessful
- Invitation to interview

Further information in relation to the interview is provided later in this document. After the interview process has been completed, a final decision in relation to your application will be

transmitted to UCAS by the University's Admissions and Access Service. In many cases, this decision will take the form of a conditional offer, which sets out a number of additional requirements which you must meet in order to be able to take up your offer (this normally relates to the successful completion of qualifications which you are undertaking, and the awarding of particular grades). Requests for feedback are also handled by the University's Admissions and Access Service and should be directed to them. In August, the final processing of the results of the qualifications which you are currently undertaking, and the transmission of final decisions (if applicable) to UCAS will be completed by the University's Admissions and Access Service.

### **3. Admission Criteria**

#### **3.1 The Selection Process**

The Pharmacy degree programme is accredited by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) in Great Britain and the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI), as the relevant regulators. The GPhC Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists stipulate that "all admissions and selection processes must include an interactive component, to assess applicants' values and professional suitability" and "admissions criteria should take account of the admissions requirements for periods of learning in practice." Further information in relation to this can be found on the [GPhC website](#).

This means that the selection process for the Pharmacy degree programme involves two stages:

##### Stage 1

Consideration of previous academic performance, including school, college and university grades, as appropriate.

##### Stage 2

An interview carefully designed to objectively evaluate applicants' values and professional suitability to study pharmacy. Applicants' responses during the interview will be scored by assessors highly trained and experienced within the area of pharmacy.

Your application will be scored at Stage 1, with this score forming the basis for your selection for interview (Stage 2). Should you be selected to progress to Stage 2 of the process, a final decision in relation to making you an offer to study the Pharmacy degree at QUB will be based solely on your performance at interview.

#### **3.2 Interviews**

Interviews will take place online, via Zoom, and will involve six stations which you must complete, and which will assess a range of your values and attributes. Applicants will be

expected to keep the content and nature of the interview stations confidential; any breach of this will be treated extremely seriously, and you may be putting your chance of a place on the programme at risk. Those who meet the criteria to be invited for interview will be given at least one week notice before their interview day and time and will be contacted via the email address that is provided in UCAS. Applicants may expect their interviews to take place anytime from **December 2024 to March 2025**.

The interview is designed to test the following key professional values and attributes, which have been identified as being required by students undertaking a Pharmacy degree programme:

- Person-centred
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Self-motivated learning
- Effective communication
- Professionalism and integrity
- Resilience and adaptability

Further information and advice about what to expect during the interview is available at:

<http://go.qub.ac.uk/PharmacyInterview>

Normally, an applicant's score (based on their performance within the interview), will be ranked along with the scores achieved by other applicants. However, some applicants may fail the interview outright – these applicants will not be ranked, and will not receive an offer. The decision to fail an applicant is based on the repeated identification of concerns about that applicant's performance during their interview.

Offers will then be made to the applicants who have Passed the interview and rank highest. While some offers may be made following the early rounds of interviews, the final ranking cannot be completed until all interviews have taken place. It is anticipated that the majority of decisions will be released mid to late April 2025.

Should places be available in August 2025, this rank order will also be the primary factor in considering applicants who have satisfied the minimum academic criteria being accepted for admissions in August 2025.

### **3.3 Personal Statement and References**

The information provided in the personal statement section and the academic reference together with predicted grades are noted but, in the case of the Pharmacy degree

programme, these are not the deciding factors in whether or not a conditional offer is made. However, they may be reconsidered in a tie break situation in August 2025.

### **3.4 Subject Requirements and Criteria used for Shortlisting for Interview**

#### **School Leavers taking A-level Qualifications**

##### *Subject requirements*

AAB including A-level Chemistry and at least one other A-level from Biology (preferred), Mathematics or Physics + GCSE Biology grade C/4 or GCSE Double Award Science grades CC/44 + GCSE Mathematics grade C/4 + GCSE English Language C/4.

Note: Biology to at least AS-level is preferred.

Offers are normally made on the basis of 3 A-levels. A-level General Studies and A-level Critical Thinking are not acceptable. However, performance in these subjects may be taken into account in tie-break situations after the publication of A-level results in August. Only one Mathematics subject will be counted at A-level. Performance in the second Mathematics A-level may be taken into account in tie-break situations after the publication of A-level results in August.

Please note that we do not accept an AQA/BTEC/OCR Extended Certificate, equivalent to one A-level, in lieu of an A-level.

##### *Interview shortlisting*

For admission to the Pharmacy degree programme, past performance at GCSE and AS-level is taken into account when deciding which applicants are to be shortlisted for interview. Where applicants do not cash-in AS-level examinations results at the end of Year 13 (Year 12: England and Wales), it is helpful if the equivalent grades are given in the academic reference, since this will speed up the decision-making process.

The final threshold to be called to interview is not usually determined until later in the application cycle (February-March 2025), so there may be a delay in processing applicants whose GCSE threshold is borderline. The final threshold varies from year to year depending on competition for places. The initial threshold required to be shortlisted for interview will be six GCSEs at grade A/7 or five GCSEs at grade C/4 plus AAB at AS-level.

#### **Widening Participation Initiative - School of Pharmacy: Pathway Opportunity Programme**

The School is participating in the University's Pathway Opportunity Programme. Throughout Year 13, students accepted onto the pathway will benefit from a structured series of events designed to prepare them for the transition to undergraduate study at QUB, including insight into academic and extracurricular aspects of student life, admissions guidance and support and a one-week residential summer school. Students will complete assessed work

during the programme, and those who are successful will receive a guaranteed interview. Those who are offered a place after the standard interview selection process has been completed, may be made an offer for entry onto the Pharmacy degree programme up to one A-Level grade below the normal requirements. Specific details of the eligibility criteria used for selection for entry onto this pathway are provided on the [Pathway Opportunity Programme website](#).

### **Irish Leaving Certificate requirements**

#### *Subject requirements*

H1H1H1H2H2H2 including Higher Level grade H1 in Chemistry and grade H1 in Biology + if not offered at Higher Level then Ordinary Level grade O4 in Mathematics and O4 in English. NB: Please note that Joint Physics and Chemistry is not acceptable in lieu of Chemistry.

#### *Interview shortlisting*

For admission to the Pharmacy degree programme past academic performance is taken into account when deciding which applicants are to be shortlisted for interview. The final threshold to be called to interview is not usually determined until later in the application cycle (February-March 2025), so there may be a delay in processing applicants whose Junior Certificate threshold is borderline. The final threshold varies from year to year depending on competition for places. The initial threshold required to be shortlisted for interview will be six Junior Certificate subjects at grade A/Distinction. In terms of the revised Junior Certificate grading the following equivalences will be used:

| Junior Certificate Grade | New Grading System |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| A                        | Distinction        |
| B                        | Higher Merit       |
| C                        | Merit              |

### **International Baccalaureate Diploma**

#### *Subject requirements*

34 points overall including 6,6,5 at Higher Level to include Chemistry and at least one of Biology (preferred), Mathematics or Physics + GCSE Biology grade C/4 or GCSE Double Award Science grades CC/44 + GCSE Mathematics grade C/4 + GCSE English Language C/4.

#### *Interview shortlisting*

For admission to the Pharmacy degree programme past performance at GCSE is taken into account when deciding which applicants are to be shortlisted for interview.

The final threshold to be called to interview is not usually determined until later in the application cycle (February-March 2025), so there may be a delay in processing applicants whose GCSE threshold is borderline. The final threshold varies from year to year depending

on competition for places. The initial threshold required to be shortlisted for interview will be six GCSEs at grade A/7.

### **Scottish Advanced Highers**

#### *Subject requirements*

A minimum of two Advanced Highers is normally required to include Advanced Higher Chemistry and at least one Advanced Higher from Biology (preferred), Mathematics or Physics. Applicants not offering Biology at Advanced Higher or Scottish Higher must have National 5 Biology grade C (or an equivalent acceptable to the University). All applicants must also have National 5 Mathematics grade C and National 5 English grade C (or an equivalent acceptable to the University). Where offers are made, the grades required tend to range from AB-AAB depending on the Scottish Higher profile.

#### *Interview shortlisting*

For admission to the Pharmacy degree programme past academic performance is taken into account when deciding which applicants are to be shortlisted for interview. Applicants are considered individually on their own merits taking into account grades achieved at both National 5 and Highers.

### **Access Course**

Students undertaking access courses are unfortunately not eligible for consideration for entry to the Pharmacy degree programme at QUB.

### **BTEC/OCR Level 3 Extended/National Extended Diploma**

Students undertaking BTEC/OCR Level 3 Extended or National Extended Diplomas are unfortunately not eligible for consideration for entry to the Pharmacy degree programme at QUB.

Please note that we do not accept an AQA/BTEC/OCR Extended Certificate, equivalent to one A-level, in lieu of an A-level.

### **3.5 Repeat A-level Applicants (Please also refer to above section for School Leavers taking A-level Qualifications)**

Repeat A-level applicants should reapply through UCAS by the normal closing date of 6.00 pm (GMT) on Wednesday 29 January 2025. Offers for repeat applicants are normally one A-level grade higher than the normal requirements. Grades from the previous year can be held and for subjects being retaken it is not necessary to repeat all modules. For those who are eligible for consideration, the standard interview selection process will apply for 2025 entry.

Please note that only two attempts at admission on the basis of A-level (or equivalent) are allowed.

### **3.6 Graduate Applicants**

The normal entry requirement for graduate applicants is a minimum of an Upper Second Class Honours degree, preferably in a relevant subject. Those with an Upper Second Class Honours degree in a non-relevant subject may be considered if they have the appropriate science background at GCSE and A-level. Those with a Lower Second Class Honours degree and a Masters degree will not be considered.

For those who are eligible for consideration (i.e., satisfy the normal entry requirements), the standard interview selection process will apply.

Please note that only two attempts at admission as a graduate (includes applications submitted during the final year of the degree) are allowed.

### **3.7 Mature Non-Graduate Entry**

Applications from those who have had a significant break in study or did not have the opportunity to enter higher education at the normal time are welcomed. The normal A-level and AS-level requirements apply and applicants must also have the appropriate background in the relevant subjects at GCSE, AS and A-level to fulfil the course requirements. Applicants must demonstrate evidence of recent academic study at a suitably high level. Applicants are advised to contact the Admissions and Access Service for guidance before embarking on a course of study to ensure that they will be eligible for consideration.

Access Course qualifications are not acceptable.

For those who are eligible for consideration (i.e., satisfy the normal entry requirements), the standard interview selection process will apply.

### **3.8 Internal transfer from other degree courses at QUB**

Students who decide to change pathway during the first year of study or later and wish to be considered for the Pharmacy degree programme must apply through UCAS. Applications should be made through UCAS by the normal closing date of 6.00 pm (GMT) on Wednesday 29 January 2025. For those who are eligible for consideration (i.e., satisfy the normal entry requirements) the standard interview selection process will apply. Applicants who are shortlisted for an offer following interview will be offered a place for admission to Level 1 of the Pharmacy degree programme and any examinations completed at the other School must be passed.

### **3.9 Transfer from other universities**

Students who decide to change pathway during the first year of study or later and wish to be considered for the Pharmacy degree programme must apply through UCAS. Applications should be made through UCAS by the normal closing date of 6.00 pm (GMT) on Wednesday



29 January 2025. For those who are eligible for consideration (i.e., satisfy the normal entry requirements) the standard interview selection process will apply. Applicants who are shortlisted for an offer following interview will be offered a place for admission to Level 1 of the Pharmacy degree programme and any examinations completed at the other university must be passed.

### **3.10 Transfer from other Pharmacy Schools**

Because of the competition for places to study Pharmacy and the integrated nature of the course structure, transfers from other universities are not considered (e.g., due to homesickness, financial reasons, etc.). Students who wish to be considered for the Pharmacy degree programme at QUB must apply through UCAS. Applications should be made through UCAS by the normal closing date of 6.00 pm (GMT) on Wednesday 29 January 2025. For those who are eligible for consideration (i.e., satisfy the normal entry requirements) the standard interview selection process will apply. Applicants who are shortlisted for an offer following interview will be offered a place for admission to Level 1 of the Pharmacy degree programme and any examinations completed at the other university must be passed. Please note that it is **not** possible to transfer credits from another university and enter into an advanced year of study.

### **3.11 Applicants who have previously withdrawn from Pharmacy**

Applicants who previously commenced a Pharmacy degree programme at any university and have failed exams or been asked to withdraw from the course for any reason will not normally be considered.

### **3.12 International Students**

The QUB website country/region pages provide information on entry requirements, tuition fees, scholarships, student profiles, upcoming events and contacts for your country/region, which are available at:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/pharmacy-mpharm-b230/#entry>

For those who are eligible for consideration (i.e., satisfy the normal entry requirements) the standard interview selection process will apply.

### **English Language Requirements for International and European Union (non Republic of Ireland)**

An IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each test component or an equivalent acceptable qualification is required, details of which are available at:

<http://go.qub.ac.uk/EnglishLanguageReqs>

If an international student needs to improve English language skills before entry onto this degree programme, [INTO Queen's University Belfast](#) offers a range of English language courses. These intensive and flexible courses are designed to improve a student's English ability for admission to this degree.

- [Academic English](#): an intensive English language and study skills course for successful university study at degree level
- [Pre-sessional English](#): a short intensive academic English course for students starting a degree programme at QUB and who need to improve their English.

### **International Students - Foundation and International Year One Programmes**

[INTO Queen's](#) offers a range of academic programmes to help prepare international students for undergraduate study at QUB. Students will learn from experienced teachers in a dedicated international study centre on campus, and will have full access to the University's world-class facilities.

These programmes are designed for international students who do not meet the required academic and English language requirements for direct entry. Further details of the INTO progression course suited to the Pharmacy degree programme can be found on the [INTO Queen's website](#).

#### **3.13 Deferrals**

We are happy to consider applications from students wishing to defer their year of entry. If you apply for deferred entry, you should tell us what you plan to do during your Gap Year in the personal statement section of your UCAS application.

#### **3.14 Further information**

If you cannot find the information you need within this guide, please contact the University Admissions and Access Service ([admissions@qub.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@qub.ac.uk)), giving full details of your qualifications and educational background.

### **4. Professional Nature of the Course**

Successful selection for the undergraduate Pharmacy degree programme implies selection for the profession. Fitness to practise issues must therefore be considered as part of our selection processes. The degree is subject to the University's regulations on fitness to practise. In the event of a student being deemed unfit to practise by the School, certain information will be shared with the GPhC and PSNI, the Pharmacy Schools Council and other Pharmacy Schools in the interests of patient and public safety.

#### **4.1 Conduct**

As a result of current legislative requirements, any offer to study within the Pharmacy degree programme at QUB will be conditional on a satisfactory criminal history check (Access NI Enhanced Disclosure Check). To enable the University to request this check, students will be required to provide some personal information which will be treated in the strictest of confidence, and in line with Data Protection legislation. The current cost of an Enhanced Disclosure Check is £32, however, at the time of provision of this information to you, changes are due to be implemented, and relevant procedures and/or costs may change. Students will be advised of the relevant requirements at the appropriate time. Entry to Pharmacy will be conditional on the receipt of satisfactory criminal records check(s). For international students, a Certificate of Good Conduct or equivalent will be required in lieu of an Access NI check.

#### **4.2 Excluded Students Database**

Any offer to study within the Pharmacy degree programme at QUB will be conditional on confirmation that the student does not appear on the Excluded Students Database. The Excluded Students Database is a national database which records those who have previously been excluded from professional programmes, on fitness to practise grounds. It is used only for proper fitness to practise purposes to protect patients and the public, and to prevent fraudulent applications. Normally students who have previously been excluded from professional programmes will not be made an offer.

#### **5. Health issues**

Issues relating to health are dealt with separately from the formal admissions process and decision-making bodies such as interview panels will not be aware that the applicant has declared a health issue.

A health issue such as a disability or long term condition need not bar an applicant from becoming a pharmacist provided that they are able to meet the Standards set out in [GPhC initial education and training of pharmacists](#). Applicants should contact the School in advance of completing their UCAS application to obtain advice, if required.

Students should declare any health issue that they have at the point of application because:

- Pharmacy schools have a duty to support their students but students themselves have to help the school to do this by being open and honest about their health.
- Being open and trustworthy is an important part of being a pharmacist. Patients and the GPhC and PSNI will expect this of practising pharmacists. Failure by a registered pharmacist to disclose a health issue is a breach of this duty.
- A student's insight into the impact that their health may have on their ability to study is very important. Where a student has insight, and shows this by seeking

appropriate help and support, their health issue rarely prevents them from completing the course. One way to demonstrate insight right from the start is to declare at the point of application whether you will require additional support.

The University's Occupational Health Team will be able to advise the School whether the student is able to meet the Standards set out in GPhC initial education and training of pharmacists and what adjustments the student might require.

If the applicant meets the normal academic criteria for admission to the course but there are concerns over issues relating to health, a special advisory committee separate from the normal admission procedures will be convened. This Committee will take advice from the University's Occupational Health Service before reaching a decision.

Although all of the above information is currently correct, applicants need to be aware that regulations in this area may change from time to time.

## 6. Overview of the Selection Process

