

Written Examination Fee Consultation Feedback

Thank you for considering the Council's consultation document on the proposed Written Examination fee. Passing the Written Examination is a requirement to register in the pharmacist scope of practice. The full consultation document can be found [here](#).

Following an extensive review of submissions Council has decided to:

- ***Undertake a comprehensive review of the Written Examination***
- ***Set the Written Examination fee at \$745.20 (incl GST) from July 2018 onwards***

Summary

The Council invited submissions on the proposed fee for the Written Examination fee, which had been calculated on a cost recovery basis. Council members were aware that the proposed increase to \$1,119.53 (incl GST) was significant from the current fee of \$520 (incl GST). The Council appreciated that many stakeholders took the time to make submissions on the proposal and carefully considered the comments made.

A recurring comment from stakeholders was to question the purpose of the Written Examination. Council acknowledged that the exam has been in place for four years without review, and decided that a comprehensive review of the Written Examination be undertaken, not least to:

- confirm that the written exam continues to meet its purpose, and
- determine costs that are fair and reasonable.

There has been no fee increase since the Written Examination's inception, yet costs have continued to rise. While the review is being undertaken Council has decided not to adopt the proposed new fee. Instead it has opted to cross subsidise some of the costs from other Council activities and limit the increase for now. Therefore, the new Written Exam fee of \$745.20 (incl GST) will be applied from July 2018.

Written Exam Review

The review of the Written Examination will:

- Map the competencies which the exam assesses, in relation to the competencies that are assessed by:
 - final year BPharm degree,
 - EVOLVE Intern Training Programme (ITP) and
 - Council's Assessment Centre (an Objective Structured Clinical Examination).

to determine the best method of assessing competencies, identify duplications, analyse risks and benefits, costs and value as well as feasibility.

- Consider comments from Auckland School of Pharmacy, Otago School of Pharmacy and EVOLVE ITP, to ensure there is no duplication of assessment of necessary learning outcomes for safe practice.
- Consider international models of pharmacist registration assessments and recommend the best fit for pharmacists in New Zealand.

Council has commenced the review project and is in the process of engaging appropriate resourcing. Recommendations from the review will be critical to clarifying the purpose of the exam and assessing its value against the costs.

It is expected that this review will be completed by September 2018. If significant changes to the exam are identified in the review, a further consultation process will follow.

Written Exam Fee Increase

The proposed WE fee of \$1,119.53 (incl GST) was calculated on a full cost recovery basis in order to offset internal and external costs incurred to manage the examination. This cost recovery model had no cross-subsidisation with other Council activity or fees. Although there were a few submissions that supported the proposed fee increase, the majority did not support it.

Council has listened to consultation responses. By setting the WE fee at \$745.20 (incl GST) the external costs associated with the delivery of the WE will be met. Unfortunately, Council's own costs, and related venue costs, will need to be cross-subsidised from within Council's other activities. An immediate impact of this will mean a reduction in Council reserves. However, we trust that this approach reflects our financial responsibility in covering the external costs of the exam.

WE candidates

Intern pharmacists and pharmacy graduates will be kept fully informed of any changes to the Council registration assessment process.

Thank you

The Council appreciates the contribution respondents provided on the consultation.

Ngā mihi nui

Michael Pead
Chief Executive