

Master of Pharmacy (MPharm)

Interview instructions for applicants

These guidelines are for applicants who, as part of the application process for the MPharm programme, have been invited to attend an interview at the University of Suffolk.

Your interview will be conducted face-to-face at the University. Please review your interview invitation to determine whether you have been invited to attend the morning or afternoon interview session. Please report to the **Waterfront Building Reception** for registration on the day.

To ensure a prompt start, we advise arriving 15 minutes before your allocated time. When planning your journey, please consider any potential traffic or public transport delays.

Morning interviews

Please arrive so that we can start promptly at **9.30am**, we anticipate those attending the morning session will finish all interview activities by 12.30pm.

Afternoon interviews

Please arrive so that we can start promptly at **1.00pm**, we anticipate those attending the afternoon session will finish all interview activities by 4.00pm.

Interview Day Schedule

Below you will find important information about your interview. Please read everything carefully to ensure you understand what is required and are fully informed about how the interview will proceed.

The session will be structured into FOUR phases.

Phase 1 – Registration and Welcome

On arrival, please report to the **Waterfront Building Reception** for registration. You will be required to show a photographic ID (e.g., passport, student ID card, driving licence) to confirm your identity.

Phase 2 – Briefing and Pharmacy Overview (20 minutes)

A short presentation will be delivered by a senior academic from the Pharmacy Team, who will briefly explain what to expect on the MPharm programme and how the interview will run. You will be allocated to a group, which will determine the time for each Interview Tasks below.

Phase 3 – Interview Tasks (candidates only - 1 hour 10 minutes)

You will take part in a series of selection tasks designed to assess key skills relevant to the study of pharmacy.

These include:

- An online assessment testing basic **Calculation Skills**.
Five Mini-Interviews designed to evaluate communication skills, scientific understanding, ethical values, professionalism, decision-making, knowledge of the pharmacy profession, interpersonal and group-working abilities.
 - MI 1: Pharmacy Awareness and Professionalism
 - MI 2: Situational Judgement Test
 - MI 3: Service User Interaction
 - MI 4: Scientific Knowledge
 - MI 5: Teamwork Exercise

For more detailed information on each activity please read the following:

1. Calculation Skills - Online Quiz (20 minutes): You will complete an online test and answer 10 multiple-choice questions. These questions will test basic mathematical skills relevant to studying pharmacy, such as unit conversions and simple arithmetic (e.g., addition, subtraction). You will not be tested on advanced mathematics or complex theories. The test will be undertaken under supervision, and you will not be able to use a calculator.

2. Multiple Mini-Interviews (5 × 10 minutes): The Multiple Mini-Interviews (MMIs) will take place sequentially (from 1 to 5) and will last for 50 minutes in total. Mini-Interviews 1, 2, 4 and 5 will be conducted by an academic, while Mini-Interview 3 will involve both an academic and a service user.

The MMIs will consist of the following activities:

- **Mini-Interview 1: Pharmacy Awareness and Professionalism (10 minutes):** You will have a discussion to explore your insights into the role and the principles of professionalism. The interviewer will also consider your motivations for entering the profession, your awareness of the expected standards, and aspects related to good conduct, character, and health.
- **Mini-Interview 2: Situational Judgement Test (SJT) (10 minutes):** You will be presented with a values-based scenario to evaluate your ethical principles, decision-making abilities, professionalism, empathy, and integrity. No prior clinical knowledge will be required.
- **Mini-Interview 3: Service User Interaction (10 minutes):** You will take part in a discussion involving a member of the public or a patient representative, where your communication skills, empathy, and active listening will be assessed in a non-clinical scenario. The key aspect will be how well you interact and communicate with a patient in a simulated scenario, focusing on communication, understanding, and support. No prior clinical knowledge will be required.
- **Mini-Interview 4: Scientific Knowledge (10 minutes):** You will discuss your knowledge and understanding of the scientific foundations of pharmacy. You will be expected to explain a fundamental scientific concept (based on the A-level syllabus or equivalent) and explore how it supports pharmacy in practice.
- **Mini-Interview 5: Teamwork Exercise (10 minutes):** This activity is based on a scenario designed to assess your collaborative problem-solving skills. You will be presented with a scenario that simulates a group task, similar to those encountered in professional pharmacy settings. You will be asked to describe how you would approach the task, demonstrating your communication, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills relevant to effective teamwork.

Phase 4 - Tour of the Campus (30 minutes): Student ambassadors will guide applicants and their family or friends on a tour of the University's teaching facilities and simulation suites.

Q&A: At the end of the day, should you have any remaining questions, an academic will be available to assist you. Attendance at this final session is optional; if you feel that all your queries have been adequately addressed, you are welcome to depart.

Outcomes from the selection event could be:

Offer | Reserve List | Alternative course offer | Reject

All offers of a place on the MPharm programme are subject to the following conditions:

- Verification of the required academic qualifications.
- A satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- A satisfactory Health checks.

Applicants who have successfully passed the selection event and who have already achieved the qualifications required for direct entry, such as those who have taken a gap year, may receive an unconditional offer.

Please note: Any offer, including unconditional offers, may be withdrawn at any time if the applicant fails to meet any of the above requirements.

What does it mean if I am on a reserve list?

If you have been offered a place on the 'reserve list', you will initially see a 'Reject' decision in your UCAS Hub and you will receive an email from the university offering you a place on the reserve list. If you would like to be on the reserve list, you will need to respond to that email to let us know. We may call candidates from the reserve list to offer a place on to the course any time from August until end of September. Your place on the list will be determined by the score you achieved at the interview. The reserve list enables us to meet our commission numbers when candidates who accept an offer subsequently chose to withdraw or do not meet the conditions of their offer and their offer is withdrawn, so another space becomes available. Please note that we are unable to inform candidates where they are on the reserve list.

If I am on the reserve list, will I automatically get a place the following year?

Unfortunately, no. Candidates accepting a place on the reserve list will need to reapply to be considered for a place the following year if they are not offered a place from the reserve list.

Feedback to those unsuccessful candidates is available on request via the Admissions office only. Please email admissions@uos.ac.uk and your request will be forwarded to the Admissions Tutor for reply.

Important Information

Below you will find additional information, along with tips and resources to help you prepare.

Work Experience

We strongly encourage applicants to gain experience observing or working with pharmacists, or other healthcare professionals, prior to the interview. However, we understand that securing work experience is not always possible.

If you have had the opportunity to gain experience in a pharmacy or healthcare setting, please note that we do not require documentary evidence. Our primary interest is in your understanding of the pharmacist's role and the broad scope of their responsibilities.

If you have not been able to gain work experience, we recommend that you undertake thorough research into the pharmacy profession, including the diverse environments in which pharmacists work and the responsibilities they hold. You should also be prepared to reflect on your wider experiences, such as volunteering, part-time work, or extracurricular activities, and discuss how these have helped you develop the skills required to work with and care for others.

Standards for Pharmacy Professionals

Please ensure you read the Standards for Pharmacy Professionals prior to your interview (<https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/pharmacists/standards-and-guidance-pharmacy-professionals>). Pharmacists are regulated professionals who must adhere to these standards, which are published by the General Pharmaceutical Council, the regulatory body for pharmacy. As a student on the MPharm programme, you will also be expected to follow these standards.

We would like you to familiarise yourself with this document before your interview, as at some point, you will be discussing these with your interviewer (mini-interview 1).

Health Questionnaire and Character Checks

Entry to the University of Suffolk MPharm programme is subject to several admission criteria. Applicants must have the appropriate academic qualifications and successfully pass a selection event. In addition, the MPharm programme is a professional course during which you will have the opportunity to do some placements and potentially work with vulnerable patients, as such all successful applicants will also be required to demonstrate the following:

- Satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (or equivalent for international students)
- Satisfactory Health check

Failure to do so, will result in the withdrawal of the offer.

We encourage applicants to raise any problems or concerns related to good character or medical health as early as possible, so that we can provide appropriate support and guidance. If you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact Admissions (email: admissions@uos.ac.uk and tel: 01473 338348).

Suggested Resources

Useful Websites

- GPhC | [Standards and guidance](#) for pharmacy professionals
- General Pharmaceutical Council ([GPhC](#))
- GPhC | [Pharmacists](#)
- NHS | [Pharmacy Careers](#)
- The National Health Service ([NHS](#))
- British Pharmaceutical Students' Association ([BPSA](#))
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society ([RPS](#))
- Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency ([MHRA](#))
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence ([NICE](#))
- World Health Organization ([WHO](#))

Journals - Open access (free) articles are identified with the following icon

- [Pharmacy](#)
- [Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology](#)
- [International Journal of Pharmacy Practice](#)
- [The Pharmaceutical Journal](#)

Note: These links are suggested as a general guide only and are not specifically endorsed or published by the University of Suffolk; this is also not an exhaustive list, and you should ensure that you prepare for your interview fully through wider reading.

We hope that you will find this information useful. However, if you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the Student Centre (01473 338833 or studentlife@uos.ac.uk), where the staff will be happy to assist you.

Finally, we look forward to speaking with you soon and wish you well in interview. Please give yourself the best chance of success, by ensuring that you are well prepared.

Best wishes on behalf of the Course and Admission teams.

Nathalie Lavignac
Admissions Tutor