

Date: March

**Re: Process and internal timelines for the selection of post-graduate students for further study in
Pharmaceutics/Drug Delivery**

Purpose of document:

To specify the process and timelines for candidates wishing to apply for further study in Pharmaceutics/Drug Delivery.

Date of approval:

The procedures and timelines communicated herewith, were agreed upon and formalised at a quorated meeting of Sub-Programme: Drug Delivery held on 11 February 2021 at 11:30.

Point of Departure:

- The core business of the North-West University (hereafter NWU) is centred around teaching and learning together with research and innovation. While the teaching strategy of the NWU is primarily defined by and structured according to institutional frameworks, research activities are, due to the numerous categorical differences between the various sciences, approached from different perspectives.
- The Subject Group, Pharmaceutics, performs its research as part of the Centre of Excellence for Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacem[™]), within the Faculty of Health Sciences, NWU, organisationally identified as Sub-Programme: 'Drug Delivery'.
- Our core research platform is founded on three research groups, i.e. Solid-state Pharmaceutical Innovation and Nanotechnology (SPIN), Cosmeceutical Research (CR), and Biopharmaceutics and Drug Delivery Systems (BDDS); however, these projects often evolve to include or compliment cell culturing (cytotoxicity studies, *in vitro* wound healing, efficacy testing, etc.); advanced pharmaceutical technologies (i.e. three-dimensional (3D) cell culturing techniques like air-liquid interface (ALI), 3D bioprinting, etc.); specialised drug delivery systems (oral, nasal, pulmonary, topical and transdermal), and claim substantiation.
- Post-graduate studies that are conducted within Drug Delivery/Pharmaceutics are full-time based, labour intensive, intellectually challenging, expensive, and time-consuming.
- However, postgraduate studies conducted within Drug Delivery/Pharmaceutics are also highly rewarding. Indeed, we aim to develop postgraduate students not only as academics and scientists, but also as well-rounded, responsible and competent members of society that will not only strive to explore and study nature in an ethical manner, but that will avail and apply themselves to improve society as we know it.
- Considering that most postgraduate study projects are costly, only a limited number of projects are available.

General guideline for the selection of post-graduate students:

- First and foremost, candidates who wish to join Drug Delivery/Pharmaceutics as MSc-students, PhD-students or postdoctoral fellows should not only be competent, but also be well informed about what the study will require from them and then express their willingness to commit to the programme and its demands. To this extent, undergraduate students studying towards the BPharm degree (of relevance for MSc studies) or graduates (of relevance for PhD studies) should engage with all supervisory members of the Drug Delivery/Pharmaceutics, if they so wish, to be informed of the complete spectrum of projects that are undertaken. When such appointments are made, please cc all correspondence to both the prospective supervisor and Minja.Gerber@nwu.ac.za for purposes of recording.
- Such informal discussions with prospective supervisors should take place prior to **end of June**.
- Prospective applicants are advised that a **minimum average module outcome of 60%** for Pharmaceutics is required for the third and fourth year FMSG modules respectively (FMSG 312, 322 and 412), for applications to be considered.
- **After** discussions with potential supervisors, candidates should as per Faculty guidelines, provide the Research Director's office with a curriculum vitae (CV), an *Internal selection form* (signed by the supervisor), an up-to-date academic record, and an ID copy, that will be administered and processed according to normal faculty processes. The final date by which applications for further studies in Drug Delivery/Pharmaceutics should be sent to the office of the Research Director, is **31 July**. These documents must be emailed to both of the following addresses in a single email: Tebogo.Kgaile@nwu.ac.za and Minja.Gerber@nwu.ac.za. **No applications will be considered if prior discussions with prospective supervisors had not taken place.**
- Prospective candidates can **apply for a position in one Sub-Programme only** during any application round. Second or third options will not be considered.
- Successful candidates will be informed of their selection by the office of the Research Director before or on **31 August**.
- If more applications for M.Sc. studies are received after the internal, but before the institutional closing date, these will be approached on a case-by-case basis, bearing in mind that the financial and administrative capacity of supervisors may change over time to accommodate additional projects. However, this process will be cognisant of and afford consideration to earlier, albeit unsuccessful applicants also.

Prof Minja Gerber

Sub-Programme Leader: Drug Delivery