

## PharmCAS Institutional Participation Policy

All AACP U.S. member institutions with precandidate, candidate, accredited with probation, and accredited status with [ACPE](#) are eligible and invited to participate in PharmCAS for free as “full” participants, if they agree to abide by all of the responsibilities for participating institutions. As such, participating schools must require all applicants to the first year of the professional Pharm.D. degree program to apply through PharmCAS and only offer interviews and make admission decisions on applicants with Verified application status in PharmCAS. There are no partial participation options in PharmCAS.

### POLICY RATIONALE

Full participation ensures that the PharmCAS reports reflect comprehensive data on all applicants who applied and advanced to the professional phase of the Pharm.D. curriculum at every participating institution. Complete data allows AACP to accurately monitor and forecast the number, quality, and demographics of the full and accepted applicant pools across cycles, regardless of fluctuations in the early assurance population. It also safeguards the accuracy of the mean GPA and PCAT score data for matriculated students, as sent by PharmCAS and uploaded into Assessment & Accreditation Management System (AAMS) for peer-institution comparisons. Finally, a single application allows schools to have one process and standardized dataset for every entering class, which helps to improve the institution’s experience with PharmCAS and facilitates reporting. AACP staff compares the “Matriculated” decision codes in WebAdMIT to the enrollment data by class in the Profile of Pharmacy Students (PPS) following the end of each admissions cycle in the fall to verify that colleges and schools in PharmCAS are complying with the full participation policy.

### EMERGING PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Emerging Pharm.D. programs that are not yet eligible for AACP Associate institutional membership status may join PharmCAS for a one-time fee of \$32,000, if the following criteria are met:

- 1. Parent institution is regionally accredited (or in progress for stand-alone institutions).**
- 2. Program has approval (if applicable) from the state higher education authority.**
- 3. ACPE pre-candidate application has been submitted and the site visit approved.**

### PARTICIPATION POLICY ENFORCEMENT

Colleges and schools of pharmacy that are not currently in compliance with the PharmCAS full participation policy must require all students advancing to the professional phase of the Pharm.D. curriculum to apply via PharmCAS by the **2022-2023** admissions cycle. The transition period will allow institutions to honor previous commitments made to early assurance and 0-6/7 students who are already enrolled and committed to the Pharm.D. program.

- Institutions are not permitted to create any new PharmCAS exemptions for applicants or students during the transition period.
- Institutions must update all materials to remove any PharmCAS exemptions for applicants or students who will advance to the professional phase of the Pharm.D. curriculum in 2023 or beyond.

Institutions that do not comply with the full participation policy, as described, will not be permitted to participate in PharmCAS for one cycle and until they agree to require all students to complete a PharmCAS application prior to advancing to the first professional year of the Pharm.D. curriculum.

## **PARTICIPATION POLICY TRACKING (new)**

Although the enforcement measures are not yet in place, all schools are expected to follow the policy in good faith. AACP staff will attempt to track any schools that appear to be out of compliance with the full participation policy.

Once the application and matriculation data for the 2020-2021 cycle (2021 entering class) is available from AACP's institutional research team in spring 2022, the AACP Student Affairs team will compare those data to the school's data in WebAdMIT. Staff will then notify any schools that appear to be out of compliance with the full participation policy, so they are aware of these discrepancies, have an opportunity to explain them, and/or can adjust their admission policies and reporting, as needed. This notification will serve as the first "warning" to schools.

Staff will conduct the same data comparison process for the current 2021-2022 cycle (2022 entering class) in spring 2023. This notification will serve as the second "warning" to schools.

Staff will conduct the same data comparison process for the next 2022-2023 cycle (2023 entering class) in spring 2024. This is the first cycle the enforcement policy will be in effect. The 2023-2024 cycle (2024 entering class) will be in-progress at that point. Schools that allowed applicants to apply outside of PharmCAS during the 2022-2023 cycle may **not** be allowed to participate in PharmCAS during the 2024-2025 cycle (2025 entering class).

If one school suspects another school is not in compliance with the participation policy at any time, they can notify AACP staff at [cas@aacp.org](mailto:cas@aacp.org). Staff will investigate potential violations but will not share the results of the investigations with the reporting school. Staff may contact schools directly about any potential issues.

## **ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS (new)**

AACP staff realize that there are multiple reasons why the WebAdMIT and Profile of Pharmacy Students (PPS) numbers may not match, such as timing. Schools will have an opportunity to explain why their numbers differ, and schools that were previously in good standing may be given a warning or probationary period. Staff does not anticipate that schools with minor discrepancies would be excluded from PharmCAS and will work with the AACP leadership in 2023 to determine what those minimum thresholds and allowances for continued PharmCAS participation should be.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Below are new FAQs about the PharmCAS participation policy and related admission practices.

### **1. Can I invite an applicant to an interview before the application is verified by PharmCAS?**

- NO. You must wait to invite the applicant to an interview or make any admission decisions until the application has moved to verified status in WebAdMIT.

**2. Are my early assurance students exempt from the PharmCAS full participation policy?**

- NO. All students who plan to enroll in the first year of the professional Pharm.D. degree program must apply through PharmCAS, regardless of any guaranteed or preferred status in the pre-professional program or articulation agreements with other institutions. Please view the suggestions in the [PharmCAS School Manual](#) on ways your school can potentially minimize the application burden on your early assurance and 0-6 students who apply via PharmCAS.

**3. Our school wants to accept a student who recently started classes at another pharmacy school with an earlier start date for the same entering class, but the student has not applied to our program. Does the student also need to apply to our school via PharmCAS before we can make an offer?**

- YES. All students who wish to advance to the first professional year of the Pharm.D. program must apply to the school via PharmCAS, regardless of whether they have already started classes at another pharmacy school. Schools are not permitted to make decisions on applicants until their applications are verified by PharmCAS. While the practice of accepting applicants, who have started classes elsewhere is not recommended and could be deemed unethical, the current legal landscape prevents AACP and PharmCAS from implementing any policies that would prevent it.

**4. A pharmacy student has completed Pharm.D. courses at another pharmacy school and wishes to transfer to our school with advanced standing. Does the student need to apply via PharmCAS?**

- NO. If a current Pharm.D. student has completed one or more terms at another pharmacy school and would like to transfer to your pharmacy school with advanced standing (e.g., as a P2 student in a 4-year program), then the student is NOT required to apply to the school via PharmCAS, regardless of whether the student previously applied to your school in the past. Instead, the student should follow your school-specific process and policies for students seeking advanced standing in the professional program. Students who are ineligible for advanced standing consideration for any reason must apply to the school via PharmCAS and report the other pharmacy school in the Colleges Attended section.

**5. Our school previously denied a PharmCAS applicant, but would now like to reverse the decision and accept the applicant for the next entering class. The applicant has already started classes at another school with an earlier start date. What are the PharmCAS rules?**

- While the admissions practice is not recommended and could be deemed unethical, the current legal landscape prevents AACP and PharmCAS from implementing any policies that would prevent a school from reversing an admission decision or accepting an applicant who has already enrolled in another program.

**6. Our school previously placed a PharmCAS applicant to our program on the waitlist, but the individual voluntarily withdrew from the school. We now have seats available in the next entering class and would like to accept the formerly waitlisted applicant. What are the PharmCAS rules?**

- There are no AACP or PharmCAS policies that would prevent a school from accepting applicants who previously withdrew from a waitlist.

**7. Can we provisionally accept a PharmCAS applicant now for a FUTURE entering class, if they are not yet qualified for our upcoming entering class?**

- NO. Each PharmCAS application cycle and related reports are tied to a specific entering class. Schools must not encourage applicants to apply prematurely or accept applicants unless they are on track to complete all admission requirements in time to enroll in the next entering class. Please also carefully read the Deferred Decision Code Policy in the [PharmCAS School Manual](#).

**8. A student applied to our program via PharmCAS and started classes, but later withdrew (e.g., due to health or academic reasons). The student now wishes to re-enroll in the program. Does the student need to re-apply via PharmCAS?**

- The following withdrawn students do NOT need to re-apply via PharmCAS:
  - Will re-enroll as P1 students during the same academic year as when they first started classes in the professional program.
  - Were granted a temporary leave of absence by the school before withdrawing from the professional program and are eligible to automatically re-enroll without additional review.
  - Will return to the professional program with advanced standing (e.g., P2 student in a P4 program).
- The following withdrawn students MUST re-apply via PharmCAS:
  - Previously withdrew from the program and now wish to be considered as first-time P1 students with no advanced standing in the professional program.

**9. How will the PharmCAS full participation policy be enforced?**

- AACP staff will compare school-specific application and acceptance data in WebAdMIT to the application and enrollment data captured by AACP's Assessment & Accreditation Management System (AAMS). If there are significant discrepancies in the two datasets, AACP staff will attempt to determine whether the school is accepting applicants outside of PharmCAS and therefore, not complying with the PharmCAS full participation policy.

**10. What will happen if my school does not comply with the full participation policy?**

- Institutions that do not comply with the full participation policy, as described, will not be permitted to participate in PharmCAS for one cycle and until they agree to require all students to complete a PharmCAS application prior to advancing to the first professional year of the Pharm.D. curriculum. Please view the policy for more details.