

# Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

## University of Huddersfield Master of Pharmacy [MPharm]

### Report of Step 5 event towards degree accreditation

#### 1. Introduction

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain [RPSGB] is currently the statutory regulator for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. It is also the accrediting body for pharmacy education in Great Britain. Currently, the RPSGB is in the process of splitting into two bodies. One will be the professional leadership body and the second will be a regulatory body, the latter being known as the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). The Council will become responsible for accrediting pharmacy education some time in 2010, although the date is not yet finalised.

This is the final report of an accreditation visit to the University of Huddersfield, which has reached step 5 of the accreditation process for a new MPharm (Master of Pharmacy) programme. All pharmacy degrees in the UK are at master's level. The accreditation process is described in some detail in Appendix 1 of this report. To determine if a university can move from one step of the process to the next, an accreditation team, made up of practising pharmacists from hospital and high street pharmacy, as well as from industry and other universities, together with lay people, visits the university, makes recommendations and prepares a report, which the University is able to comment upon to ensure that it is factually accurate. Currently the team's recommendations are submitted to the Education Committee of the RPSGB for approval but will eventually go to the General Pharmaceutical Council.

The MPharm at the University of Huddersfield is delivered by the Division of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, one of 5 divisions in the Department of Chemical and Biological Sciences within the School of Applied Sciences. The successful completion of steps 1-3, as of January 2008, allowed the University to recruit the first students in 2008 and then in 2009; these students are now, respectively, in their first and second years of the four year course. Successful completion of Step 4, as of May 2009, resulted in an accreditation team visiting the University on March 9<sup>th</sup> 2010, as part of Step 5 of the accreditation process.

#### 2. The accreditation team

The accreditation team comprised:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Designation at the time of visit</u>
Linda Stone	Pharmacy Consultant, former President of the RPSGB, Team Leader
Brenda Costall	Formerly Head of School University of Bradford
Larry Gifford	Professor of Pharmacy Education, University of Keele
Bill Dawson	Bionet Ltd
Alan Hindle	Teacher-practitioner, University of Wolverhampton, Secondary Care pharmacist
Sylvia Hikins	Management Consultant and Lay member of Council, RPSGB
Ian Smith	Boots Teacher/practitioner, University of Manchester

The team was accompanied by

Joanne Martin	Accreditation and Recognition Manager, RPSGB
Brian Furman	Emeritus Professor of Pharmacology, University of Strathclyde,
Rapporteur	

Additionally, Ms Linda Stewart and Professor Dorothy Whittington (Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, PSNI) attended the visit as part of their induction as new members of the PSNI accreditation team. They acted entirely as observers and did not participate in the discussion or decision making, either during the meetings with university representatives, or in the team's private meetings.

### 3. The accreditation event

A preliminary meeting between Linda Stone (team leader), Damian Day (Head of Education and Quality Assurance, RPSGB), together with Joanne Martin (Accreditation and Recognition manager, RPSGB) and university representatives had taken place on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2010, when the meetings' schedule and documentation requirements were agreed. The accreditation event itself comprised a series of meetings between the team and senior academic staff from the Division of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, academic and other staff concerned with the delivery of the curriculum and senior management of the University, including the Vice-Chancellor. The team also met representatives of first and second year MPharm students.

### 4. Commentary

The team based its conclusions on whether or not the accreditation criteria described in Appendix 2 are likely to be met, on the documentation provided by the University before and during the visit, as well as on detailed discussions with the various university representatives. The documentation comprised primarily a review of progress in appointing academic and other staff to support the MPharm programme, a description of how the University believed it met the accreditation criteria, together with a description of the content of the curriculum and an account of how the curriculum would deliver the Society's indicative syllabus.

Prerequisites, including admissions [criteria 1-6 see Appendix 2]	The accreditation team was satisfied that criteria 1-6 were likely to be met. In relation to criterion 5 (Appendix 2), the Huddersfield MPharm degree programme is unusual, although not unique, in that the research projects are undertaken by the students in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> year, rather than in the 4 <sup>th</sup> year of the course. However, significant research-based teaching is delivered in year 4, in order to place the programme at master's level.
Outcomes: the graduate... [criteria 7-23 – see Appendix 2]	The accreditation team was satisfied that criteria 7-23 were likely to be met.
Processes: the student... [criteria 24-31 – see Appendix 2]	The accreditation team was satisfied that criteria 24-31 were likely to be met. In relation to criterion 25, the accreditation team was impressed by the placement scheme, whereby students spend time in pharmacies in hospital and on the high street, as well as working with other healthcare practitioners, such as nurses. These were clearly enjoyed by the students and the team commended the University on the range and number of placements across all 4 years.
Processes: the degree course... [criteria 32-39 – see Appendix 2]	The accreditation team was satisfied that criteria 32-39 were likely to be met.
Structures [criteria 40-50 – see Appendix 2]	The accreditation team was satisfied that criterion 40 and criteria 43-50 were likely to be met. However, the team had a number of anxieties about the meeting of criteria 41 and 42 and concluded that these were not yet met. Although equipment, library resources and accommodation were of a high standard and while all aspects of the course were running very well and, currently, were well supported by academic, administrative and technical staff, the load on staff members

	<p>will increase as the present students move into years 2 and 3 and, in 2011/12 into year 4 and new students are recruited into year 1. The team's main concerns were in three areas. First, the current number of academic staff and the breadth of their experience was viewed as inadequate to deliver the third year of the course, especially with its very demanding research project module and its content of pharmacology. Therefore, the accreditation team imposed a condition (<i>See condition 1</i>) that, ahead of teaching in the 2010/2011 academic year, there must be in place a suitably qualified person to teach pharmacology to ensure the safe delivery of year 3. Second, the Head of Pharmacy carries a very heavy workload and the team's view was that there were insufficient academic staff who have the seniority and experience required to support him. Therefore a condition was imposed (<i>See condition 2</i>) that a mechanism must be identified to appoint senior, experienced academic staff to provide support for the Head of Pharmacy. This support must be achieved, at least in an interim way, in advance of teaching year 3. Third, the accreditation team regarded the current and planned administrative support to be inadequate for Huddersfield's ambitious placement programme and for the admissions process. The team therefore made it a condition (<i>See condition 3</i>) that the School must reassess its administrative support, in order to ensure that members of academic staff are not spending unnecessary time on administration for admissions and placements. The accreditation team recommended that the University should consider applying resources in novel ways to resolve the academic staffing issues. In making this recommendation, the team welcomed the strong support from the University's Vice-Chancellor, who stated that he would provide all the resource required to ensure the success of the MPharm degree programme.</p>
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#### 4. Conclusions and recommendations

As a result of the visit, the accreditation team agreed to recommend to the Education Committee of the Society that the University be permitted to proceed to Step 6 of its accreditation process for the approval of new MPharm programmes.

<p><i>Conditions</i></p>
<p>1. Ahead of teaching in semester 2 of the 2010/2011 academic year, there must be in place a suitably qualified pharmacologist. The accreditation team heard that the staff could "cope" with delivering the curriculum until Christmas. This is not considered to be sufficient for safe delivery of year 3.</p>
<p>2. A mechanism must be identified to provide sufficient support for the Head of Pharmacy. The team wished to ensure that there was sufficient breadth and depth, not just to deliver the taught elements of the programme but also, specifically, to provide seniority and experience in relation to research, curriculum development and leadership. This support must be achieved, at least in an interim way, in advance of teaching year 3.</p>
<p>3. While noting that some further increase in administrative support was planned, the accreditation team considers that this will be still insufficient. The School needs to</p>

reassess this administrative support, especially with the increased load from placements and admissions that will accompany recruitment of two more cohorts, in order to ensure that members of academic staff are not spending unnecessary time in these two areas.

*Recommendation*

Additionally, the recommendation is: :

The application of resource in novel ways should be considered to resolve the academic staffing issues.

## **Appendix 1: Overview of the MPharm accreditation process**

### *The accreditation process*

*Initial education and training:* The initial education and training of pharmacists in Great Britain is determined by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. The European Communities (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations 2007 build into UK law European requirements for mutual recognition of pharmacy qualifications within the European Union. One of the requirements is that the initial education and training of pharmacists is at least five years full time (or part-time) equivalent. The only routes to registration as a pharmacist for students in the UK are:

1. A four-year accredited MPharm plus one year pharmacist pre-registration training and the Society's Registration Examination = five years; or
2. A two-year accredited Foundation Degree in Pharmacy plus years Two-Four of an MPharm plus one year pharmacist pre-registration training and the Society's Registration Examination = six years.

The accreditation process for new schools has seven steps:

- Step 1 [intake minus three years]: An initial meeting between a university and the Society at the Society's headquarters. A brief report is written but it is not formally approved by the Society's Education Committee.
- Step 2 [intake minus two years]: Consideration of the business plan, outline syllabus and draft prospectus entry. A formal report is written, as is the case for all subsequent steps.
- Step 3 [intake minus one year]: Consideration of the syllabus. Successful completion of step 3 permits an institution to admit students onto a provisionally accredited course.
- Step 4 [first year of teaching]: Consideration of year one & plans for year two and reviewing progress towards meeting the accreditation criteria & teaching the syllabus.
- Step 5 [second year of teaching]: Consideration of year two & plans for year three and reviewing progress towards meeting the accreditation criteria & teaching the syllabus.
- Step 6 [third year of teaching]: Consideration of year three & plans for year four and reviewing progress towards meeting the accreditation criteria & teaching the syllabus.
- Step 7 [fourth year of teaching]:

Existing schools are reaccredited every five years, normally for a period of five years.

Accreditation teams are drawn from a wider accreditation panel. The members of the accreditation panel are on the Society's website.

### *1.2 Outcomes of accreditation*

#### *New Schools*

At each step event a school can be permitted to progress to the next step or not. The next step event will be in the following academic year.

#### *Existing schools*

The outcomes are:

1. Reaccreditation for five years (a full period);
2. Reaccreditation for a shorter period;
3. Imposing probationary status if serious concerns are raised;

#### 4. Withdrawal of accreditation.

Withdrawal of accreditation can be appealed.

##### *Extraordinary events*

The Society reserves the right to investigate a concern at a school of pharmacy at any point.

## Appendix 2: MPharm accreditation criteria

### (1) Prerequisites

1. The student undertakes at least 3,000 hours of directed study of pharmaceutically-relevant subjects within a full-time degree course of four years' duration.
2. The greater part of the curriculum and not less than 50% of the final year of the degree course is core content, i.e. common to all students.
3. Those components of the degree course which collectively deal with the actions and uses of drugs and medicines occupy no less than 35% of the curriculum, irrespective of the extent of specialisation in the final year.
4. At least 35% of those parts of the degree course common to all students involve the student in preparing for, undertaking and analysing the outcomes of experiments, exercises or observations wherein s/he reaches his/her own findings or conclusions.
5. The degree course includes a significant research project of three to six months duration, but not necessarily with all curriculum time during this period being devoted to this activity alone. The student must undertake the project alone or as his/her individual contribution to a team endeavour. The project must address a research question or problem, must involve a critique of research methodology employed, and must include an analysis of results generated directly by the student or indirectly by others as primary researchers.
6. All pharmacy degree course entrants must have achieved GCSE at Grades A to C, or equivalent qualifications, in English Language and Mathematics.

### (2) Outcomes: the graduate...

7. takes personal responsibility for his/her learning, developing a foundation for subsequent continuing professional development,
8. can communicate effectively, orally and in writing, with his/her teachers and peers, as a sound basis for future interaction with patients, carers and other healthcare professionals,
9. can undertake structured problem-solving,
10. is able to recognise ethical dilemmas in healthcare and science, and understands ways in which these might be managed by healthcare professionals, whilst taking account of relevant law,
11. appreciates and has an understanding of main sources of drugs; ways in which drugs are purified, characterised and analysed; their physico-chemical properties; and properties drugs display as biologically active molecules in living systems,
12. has an understanding of the design, manufacture and performance of drug dosage forms and is able critically to appreciate the inter-relationship between formulation, drug delivery and therapeutic effectiveness,
13. understands how medicines are developed, manufactured and brought to the market place,
14. has proved him/herself capable of performing pharmaceutical calculations accurately,
15. has the capability to prepare extemporaneously any medicine for which this would be regarded as the normal means of provision, including by aseptic technique,
16. is able to interpret and evaluate, for safety, quality, efficacy and economy, prescriptions and other orders for medicines, and to advise patients and other healthcare professionals about medicines and their usage,
17. is aware of and understands systems for the quality assurance of products and pharmaceutical services. This includes the management of risk,
18. is able to design, improve, and operate within standard operating procedures, including Patient Group Directions,
19. is able to supply medicines in accordance with legal and professional requirements,
20. can undertake critical appraisal of information or conjecture in all forms of presentation,
21. can apply appropriate research approaches and methods to manage scientific and practice problems,
22. has a foundation of knowledge, understanding and skills for promoting good health; diagnosing disease; and prescribing medicines,
23. understands and can explain concepts of medicines management and pharmaceutical care.

### (3) Processes: the student...

24. is inculcated with a concern for the patient, normally above other considerations,
25. gains first-hand structured experience of practice, including contact with patients and practitioners of other healthcare professions,
26. is required to communicate with individuals and audiences,
27. is instructed in the use of, and required to apply, library and other information resources,
28. is required to apply routinely, word-processing, spreadsheet, database, e-mail and information retrieval computer applications,
29. has brought to his/her attention the continuing professional development opportunities open to practising pharmacists,
30. is made aware of the advantages of, and encouraged to undertake, employment or attachment for vacation experience in pharmacy practice,
31. is encouraged both to be a participating member of the British Pharmaceutical Students' Association and to attend local RPSGB branch or regional meetings, or equivalent meetings in Northern Ireland.

(4) Processes: the degree course...

32. is planned with reference to the indicative syllabus at Appendix 2 and as an integrated programme. This means that the inter-relationships of its component parts are considered and made explicit,
33. seeks to develop students' skills of self-management, teamworking and peer assessment,
34. has the features of positioning knowledge, understanding and skills in a pharmaceutical context and with reference to pharmacy practice,
35. in the processes of curriculum review and development, benefits from the academic staff properly taking account of major advances and developments potentially impacting on pharmacy,
36. features a variety of approaches to achieving and assessing learning appropriate to its stated objectives, including lectures, practical classes, seminars, workshops, tutorials, computer-based/aided learning, clinical visits, problem-solving exercises, essays, projects, dissertations and other assignments, and examinations,
37. includes significant staff-led or supervised time devoted to the topics of pharmacy law and professional requirements, and their applications in practice, this being in addition to the assimilation of legal and professional requirements into a substantial proportion of a dispensing practical course,
38. where appropriate and possible, has the student taught and learning alongside and together with students of other healthcare professions,
39. has pharmacy undergraduate teaching taking place alongside and with reference to research and other postgraduate activities.

(5) Structures

40. For its proper ethos, quality assurance, and scientific and professional leadership, the degree course is within the control of, and predominantly delivered by, an autonomous school or department of pharmacy,
41. accommodation, human, equipment, and other resources available to the school or department of pharmacy are sufficient for the effective delivery of the planned degree course to the numbers of students in each year of the degree course, and overall; properly taking account of the teaching, research and other commitments of the unit,
42. the school or department of pharmacy has an appropriately expert academic staff, including such in the practice of pharmacy,
43. the school or department of pharmacy has within its academic staff at least one pharmacist who is a professor or of equivalent authority in the institution,
44. teacher-practitioners and visiting lecturers from all of community, hospital and industrial pharmacy practice, and appropriate persons from other healthcare professions are involved in teaching/support for learning and assessment,
45. the student has access to a personal tutor or tutors for academic guidance and pastoral care,
46. there is an active staff-student consultative committee,
47. pharmacy law, professional requirements and practice are taught - predominantly by pharmacists - from within the identifiable organisational unit which provides the bulk of teaching and other support for learning for the degree course,

48. there is assessment of competence in dispensing by either one examination at the end of the dispensing course, taken under full examination conditions with an external examiner present; or a series of tests taken under examination conditions, with an external examiner having the right to attend any of the practical tests and attending some part of the assessment every year. The external examiner is associated with the overall assessment,

49. there is a requirement for achievement of a satisfactorily high standard in assessments of both dispensing practice, and pharmacy law and professional requirements, irrespective of the student's performance in other subjects. Compensation of marks for these subjects is not allowed and success in these subjects is either a condition for entry into the final year or, if undertaken in the final year, for the award of the degree,

50. during the final year, the student is required to pass an assessment of any important recent changes in pharmacy law and/or professional requirements.

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