



Independent  
prescribing  
programme

University of Brighton  
Report of a monitoring event  
October 2016

## Event summary and conclusions

<b>Provider</b>	University of Brighton
<b>Course</b>	Independent prescribing
<b>Event type</b>	Monitoring event
<b>Event date</b>	18 October 2016
<b>Accreditation period</b>	January 2015 – January 2018
<b>Outcome</b>	<p>Full accreditation confirmed with conditions</p> <p>The accreditation team agreed to recommend to the Registrar of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) that the University of Brighton should continue to be accredited as a provider of a pharmacist independent prescribing programme for the remainder of the accreditation period, subject to two conditions.</p>
<b>Conditions</b>	<p>1. The provider must review the staff resource available to the pharmacist independent prescribing programme to ensure efficient and appropriate delivery that meets the needs of pharmacists. The provider must submit an implementation plan of how they will resource the programme to the GPhC for approval by the accreditation team before the next intake of pharmacists.</p> <p>This is to meet criteria 1.2 and 1.3.</p> <p>2. The provider must revise its teaching, learning and support strategies to ensure that pharmacists with different experiences and capabilities are able to build on background knowledge and acquire competency in prescribing. A revised strategy must be submitted to the GPhC for approval by the accreditation team before the next intake of pharmacists.</p> <p>This is to meet criteria 3.3.</p>
<b>Standing conditions</b>	Please refer to Appendix 1.
<b>Recommendations</b>	No recommendations were made.
<b>Registrar decision</b>	<p>Following the event, the provider submitted a response to the conditions of accreditation, and the accreditation team agreed they had been met satisfactorily.</p> <p>The Registrar of the GPhC accepted the team's recommendation and approved full accreditation of the programme for the remainder of the accreditation period.</p>
<b>Key contact (provider)</b>	Mrs Claire May, Programme Lead
<b>Accreditation team</b>	<p>Professor Andy Husband (Chair), Professor of Pharmacy Education, Durham University</p> <p>Professor Angela Alexander, Professor of Pharmacy Education, University of Reading</p>

<b>GPhC representative</b>	Miss Jenny Clapham, Quality Assurance Officer, GPhC
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Miss Jenny Clapham, Quality Assurance Officer, GPhC

## Introduction

### Role of the GPhC

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the statutory regulator for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and is the accrediting body for pharmacy education in Great Britain. The accreditation process is based on the GPhC's 2010 accreditation criteria for Independent Prescribing.

The GPhC's right to check the standards of pharmacy qualifications leading to annotation and registration as a pharmacist is the Pharmacy Order 2010. It requires the GPhC to 'approve' courses by appointing 'visitors' (accreditors) to report to the GPhC's Council on the 'nature, content and quality' of education as well as 'any other matters' the Council may require.

The powers and obligations of the GPhC in relation to the accreditation of pharmacy education are legislated in the Pharmacy Order 2010. For more information, visit:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/231/contents/made>

### Purpose of this event

The purpose of the monitoring event is to review the performance of the programme against the education and training standards with the first cohort of pharmacists and to ensure that delivery is consistent with the GPhC accreditation criteria. The monitoring event utilises student feedback and evaluation together with a review of documentation and a meeting with programme representatives. The accreditation period which was provisionally granted at the initial accreditation event is confirmed after a satisfactory monitoring event has taken place.

### Background

The University of Brighton was reaccredited by the GPhC in January 2015 to provide a programme to train pharmacist independent prescribers, for a further period of three years subject to the following condition:

1. The provider must submit a self-evaluation report including student feedback, evidence from quality assurance committees and a statement of resources in view of the projected growth of the programme. This evaluation report must be submitted to the GPhC after the first cohort of pharmacists has completed the programme.

The self-evaluation report was submitted to the GPhC in January 2016 and was reviewed by the accreditation team. The report provided an analysis of student feedback and detailed a number of changes that would be made to the programme to address the issues identified by the feedback. The teaching of clinical skills was an area that received some negative feedback from the pharmacists on the programme and the provider responded by introducing individual tutorials with the clinical skills lead and a revised structure for clinical skills teaching including a top-to-toe health assessment session for pharmacists. The accreditation team was satisfied with the self-evaluation report and with the proposed changes but due to the number and nature of the changes, the team agreed that the programme would be subject to a monitoring event following the second cohort. In line with the GPhC's process for the accreditation of independent prescribing programmes, an event was scheduled on 18 October 2016 to review the impact of the changes to the programme and to ensure the accreditation criteria continue to be met.

### Documentation

Prior to the event, the provider submitted documentation to the GPhC in line with the agreed timescales. The documentation was reviewed by the accreditation team and it was deemed to be satisfactory to provide a basis for discussion.

## The event

The event was held on 18 October 2016 at the GPhC headquarters, London, and comprised a number of meetings between the GPhC accreditation team and staff and students of the University of Brighton's prescribing programme.

## Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## Key findings

### Section 1: The programme provider

**The team was satisfied that two of the four criteria relating to the programme provider continue to be met, with criteria 1.2 and 1.3 subject to a condition (See Appendix 2 for criteria).**

The independent prescribing programme continues to be offered as a joint programme by the School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences and the School of Health Sciences. The programme is validated until 2019 and the team was satisfied with the university's quality assurance processes and student feedback mechanisms. There is an identified pharmacist who has input into the design and delivery of the programme.

Since the last accreditation event, student numbers have increased due to a successful tender with Health Education Kent, Surrey and Sussex (HEKSS). The programme now runs two cohorts of 30 students in February comprising 20 nurses/allied health professionals and 10 pharmacists and from next year a third cohort of 30 will run in October.

Scrutiny of the programme, including an analysis of student feedback and interviews with pharmacists from the most recent cohort, identified structural and organisational issues with the programme that were symptomatic of insufficient staff resource. The team agreed that the current levels of resourcing were falling short of meeting the needs of the pharmacists on the programme and it will be a **condition of accreditation** that the provider must review the staff resource available to the pharmacist independent prescribing programme to ensure efficient and appropriate delivery that meets the needs of pharmacists (condition 1).

### Section 2: Pre-requisites for entry

**The team was satisfied that all six criteria relating to the pre-requisites for entry continue to be met.**

Applicants to the programme must meet the GPhC's accreditation criteria pre-requisites for entry. The university interviews all applicants to confirm their suitability and to ensure that applicants are fully aware of the commitment and expectations of the programme. The team were satisfied with this approach.

### Section 3: The programme

**The team was satisfied that seven of the eight criteria relating to the programme continue to be met with criterion 3.3 subject to a condition.**

The programme contains 10 days of face-to-face learning activities planned across a five-day block, a 3-

day block and 2 single days, with the remaining 16 days comprised of directed learning. The team concluded that the clinical skills teaching on the programme addressed all the relevant learning outcomes and meets the needs of the pharmacists.

The team explored the level of support available to students together with the feedback mechanisms on their performance and progress. The feedback during the programme was limited and the programme encourages peer support as an aid to learning with little direct support from the course provider. Student feedback described some of the materials, lectures and taught content as being pitched at a level below the needs of pharmacists and the team concluded that the students are not being sufficiently stretched academically and that struggling students are not adequately supported. Consequently it will be a **condition of accreditation** that the provider must revise its teaching, learning and support strategies to ensure that pharmacists with different experiences and capabilities are able to build on background knowledge and acquire competency in prescribing (condition 2).

#### Section 4: Learning in Practice

**The team was satisfied that all five criteria relating to learning in practice are met.**

DMPs are given the DMP handbook and a tripartite meeting takes place between the DMP, the student and the programme lead to discuss expectations and review progress. Student feedback on the period of learning in practice was positive and the team agreed that the learning in practice element of the programme was working well.

#### Section 5: Assessment

**The team was satisfied that all four criteria relating to assessment continue to be met.**

The assessment for the programme include a therapeutic review, a portfolio, a written exam containing MCQs and short answer questions, and a nine station OSCE with four unmanned stations and five manned stations. The team agreed that the assessments and marking criteria were appropriate and tested the learning outcomes for pharmacists.

#### Section 6: Details of Award

**The team was satisfied that both criteria relating to details of the award continue to be met.**

Students are awarded a Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing on successful completion of the programme.

## Appendix 1 - Standing conditions

The following are standing conditions of accreditation and apply to all providers:

1. The record and report include other comments from the team, and providers are required to take all comments into account as part of the accreditation process. The provider must confirm to the GPhC that required amendments have been made.
2. The provider must respond to the definitive version of the record and report within three months of receipt. The summary report, along with the provider's response, will be published on the GPhC's website for the duration of the accreditation period.
3. The provider must seek approval from the GPhC for any substantial change (or proposed change) which is, or has the potential to be, material to the delivery of an accredited course. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. the content, structure or delivery of the accredited programme;
  - b. ownership or management structure of the institution;
  - c. resources and/or funding;
  - d. student numbers and/or admissions policy;
  - e. any existing partnership, licensing or franchise agreement;
  - f. staff associated with the programme.
4. The provider must make students and potential students aware that successful completion of an accredited course is not a guarantee of annotation or of future employment as a pharmacist independent prescriber.
5. The provider must make students and potential students aware of the existence and website address where they can view the GPhC's accreditation reports and the timescales for future accreditations.
6. Whenever required to do so by the GPhC, providers must give such information and assistance as the GPhC may reasonably require in connection with the exercise of its functions. Any information in relation to fulfilment of these standing conditions must be provided in a proactive and timely manner.

## Appendix 2 – Accreditation criteria, learning outcomes and indicative content

GPhC accreditation criteria, learning outcomes and indicative content for pharmacist independent prescribing programmes

The accreditation criteria, learning outcomes and indicative content for pharmacist independent prescribing programmes can be downloaded from the GPhC website at:

<http://www.pharmacyregulation.org/education/approval-courses/accreditation-guidance>