

University of Bolton independent prescribing course reaccreditation report – November 2020



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Event summary and conclusions

Provider	University of Bolton
Course	Independent prescribing course
Event type	Reaccreditation
Event date	17 November 2020
Reaccreditation period	January 2021 – January 2024
Relevant standards	GPhC education and training standards for pharmacist independent prescribers, January 2019
Outcome	The accreditation team agreed to recommend to the Registrar of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) that pharmacist independent prescribing course provided by the University of Bolton should be reaccredited for a further period of three years, subject to one recommendation.
Conditions	There were no conditions.
Standing conditions	The standing conditions of accreditation can be found here .
Recommendations	The Northwest Universities Non-Medial Prescribing Collaboration should discuss a modification to the DPP section (3e) of the application form so that the prospective DPP can provide evidence of how they meet the criteria as detailed in criterion 9.2.
Minor amendments	<p>Criterion 7.5: Appendix 10 (Portfolio for Pharmacists) p11, refers to Practice Assessor and Practice Supervisor; this must be changed to DPP.</p> <p>Criterion 8.1: Appendix 9 (Handbook for Pharmacists) p2, refers to NMC; this must be changed to GPhC.</p> <p>Also, Appendix 9 p7, refers to major failure being a GPhC referral criterion; this is not the case.</p> <p>In Appendix 9 p24, the reference to pharmacists requiring to be registered with the GPhC within five years must be deleted.</p> <p>Criterion 9.3: Appendix 13 (DPP Handbook) pp11 and 12, refer to the NMC Standards Framework; this must be changed to the relevant GPhC document.</p>
Maximum number of all students per cohort:	45

Number of pharmacist students per cohort:	30
Number of cohorts per academic year:	9
Approved to use non-medical DPPs:	Yes
Registrar decision	Following the event, the Registrar of the GPhC accepted the team's recommendation and approved the reaccreditation of the course for a further period of three years.
Key contact (provider)	Gilly Keogh, Programme Lead - Non Medical Prescribing
Accreditation team	Professor Angela Alexander (event Chair), Professor Emerita of Pharmacy Education, University of Reading Mike Pettit, Retired Senior Lecturer, Pharmacy Practice and Hospital Pharmacy Manager Susan Bradford, Adjudicator, Social Work England
Observers	Liz Harlaar, Independent Business Consultant
GPhC representative	Chris McKendrick, Quality Assurance Officer, GPhC
Rapporteur	Dr Ian Marshall, Proprietor, Caldarvan Research (Educational and Writing Services); Emeritus Professor of Pharmacology, University of Strathclyde
Provider representatives	Jane Howarth, Dean of Faculty Trish Houghton, Head of School (for feedback only) Gilly Keogh, Programme Lead, Non-Medical Prescribing Karen Bennett, Lecturer in Pharmacology and Prescribing Maya Nair, AC SELE (Nursing and Midwifery)

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

reaccreditation process is based on the GPhC's standards for the education and training of pharmacist independent prescribers January 2019.

The GPhC's right to check the standards of pharmacy qualifications leading to annotation as a pharmacist independent prescriber 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/uksi/2010/231/contents/made>

Background

The University of Bolton was accredited initially by the GPhC in 2011 to provide a programme to train pharmacist independent prescribers, for a period of 3 years. The programme was reaccredited in 2014 for a further period of 3 years subject to one condition and one recommendation. It was then reaccredited in 2017 for a further period of 3 years with no conditions or recommendations. In line with the standards for the education and training of pharmacist independent prescribers January 2019, an event was scheduled on 17 November 2020 to review the course's suitability for reaccreditation.

The Non-Medical Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Pharmacists Level 7 programme has a current maximum of 15 pharmacists in cohorts of a maximum size of 45 students, to include students of nursing, midwifery, podiatry, physiotherapy, paramedics, with a plan to increase the number of pharmacists per cohort to 30. There are nine cohorts per year. The current programme duration is five and a half months with 12 course-led face-to-face contact days, with a nurse programme leader.

Documentation

Prior to the event, the provider submitted documentation to the GPhC in line with the agreed timescales. The documentation was reviewed by the reaccreditation team and it was deemed to be satisfactory to provide a basis for discussion. Nevertheless, the team agreed that the submission would have benefitted from a thorough proof-reading to minimise any errors.

The event

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the GPhC modified the structure of the event so that it could be held remotely. The event was held via videoconference between the University of Bolton and the GPhC on 17 November 2020 and comprised of meetings between the GPhC reaccreditation team and representatives of the University of Bolton prescribing course.

Students who were currently undertaking the course, or who had completed it in the last three years, contributed to the event by completing a qualitative survey, responses to which were reviewed by the GPhC accreditation team.

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Schedule

The event

Meeting number	Meeting	Time
1.	Private meeting of accreditation team and GPhC representatives	09:30 – 10:30
2.	Meeting with course provider representatives	11:00 – 13:00
3.	Lunch	13:00 – 14:00
4.	Learning outcomes testing session	14:00 – 14:30
5.	Private meeting of the accreditation team and GPhC representatives	14:30 – 15:30
6.	Feedback to course provider representatives	15:30 – 15:45

Key findings

Part 1 - Learning outcomes

During the event the team reviewed all 32 learning outcomes relating to the independent prescribing course. To gain additional assurance the team also tested a sample of **5** learning outcomes during a separate meeting with the provider and was satisfied that **all 32 learning outcomes will be met** to a level as required by the GPhC standards.

The following learning outcomes were tested at the event: **2, 5, 12, 23, 25**

Domain - Person centred care (outcomes 1-6)

Learning outcomes met? Yes No

Domain - Professionalism (outcomes 7-15)

Learning outcomes met? Yes No

Domain - Professional knowledge and skills (outcomes 16-20)

Learning outcomes met? Yes No

Domain - Collaboration (outcomes 27-32)

Learning outcomes met? Yes No

Part 2 - Standards for pharmacist independent prescribing course providers

Standards 1 - Selection and entry requirements

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied that all six criteria relating to the selection and entry requirements will be met (See Appendix 3 for criteria).

Pharmacist applicants must have at least 2 years' patient-orientated experience in a UK practice setting relevant to their intended scope of prescribing practice and be in good standing with the GPhC/PSNI. All applications are scrutinised by the Programme Lead and discussed with applicants by the team pharmacist lecturer.

Standard 2 - Equality, diversity and inclusion

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied that all five criteria relating to the equality, diversity and inclusion will be met.

The programme takes an inclusive approach to the design and delivery of the curriculum content, assessment and feedback as the programme attracts a diverse range of students. This includes adjustments for theory and practice-based learning and assessments for individual students. Knowledge of legal responsibilities under equality and human rights legislation is included in the learning outcomes and curriculum content. The team was told that due to its person-centred approach there had been no specific concerns in this respect on the programme.

Standard 3 - Management, resources and capacity

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied that all six criteria relating to the management, resources and capacity will be met.

Programme team members, four nurses and one pharmacist, have designated roles and responsibilities in relation to curriculum design, delivery and assessment. The declaration by the Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP) provides a signed agreement of their role in practice learning and assessment, including their involvement in regular tripartite tutorials. Students normally have access to the University Clinical Simulation Suite for clinical examination skills sessions which are taught within the University, but which are taught currently online. There has been an increase in the number of cohorts delivered to support NHS Trusts; there are 9 planned cohorts for 2020/21. The team learned that there is no fixed number of pharmacists per 45-student cohort. The programme is delivered normally at the University, Manchester Foundation Trust, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Greater Manchester Mental

Health along with Pennines Trust. There are normally 12 days of face-to-face delivery in the 26-day programme.

Standard 4 - Monitoring, review and evaluation

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied that all six criteria relating to the monitoring, review and evaluation will be met.

The programme was validated by the University on 13 November 2020 to take account of the new GPhC Standards. Module evaluations are completed at the end of every cohort by students, reported through the Staff and Student Liaison Committee and fed into Programme Plans. There is internal and external moderation of all assessments. The external examiner reviews assessments prior to use and provides feedback via annual reports. All members of teaching teams are subject to annual peer review of teaching. The programme team works collaboratively with stakeholders to develop the content to reflect current practice. The team learned that extra face-to-face sessions have been arranged in response to feedback by student representatives. A survey of a small number of past and present students illustrated their positive experience of the programme.

Standard 5 - Course design and delivery

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied that all ten criteria relating to the course design and delivery will be met.

Students complete a competency assessment document to identify their individual learning needs and to formulate a learning action plan; the DPP supports the student to address these learning needs in practice. Learning methods include keynote lectures, workshops, small group work, critical analysis and reflection and discourse, self-directed learning, problem-based learning, e-learning, tutorials and work-based learning. A full-time pharmacist is involved in the design and delivery of the course, taking the lead on pharmacist-related issues. The DPP assesses and verifies that, by the end of the programme, the student is competent to assume the prescribing role. The programme is subject to University regulations and regulators' requirements. A fitness to practise policy was described, although the team was informed that it had not been required to date.

Standard 6 - Learning in practice

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied that all five criteria relating to the learning in practice will be met.

The minimum of 90 hours within a practice learning setting are logged and confirmed by the DPP along with a confirmation of competencies within the competency assessment document

with a minimum of 45 hours to be completed directly with the DPP. The details of the DPP including professional registration are included on the application form with registration status verified and clinical area of practice considered before approval (see also commentary to Standard 9).

Standard 7 - Assessment

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied all eleven criteria relating to the assessment will be met. For one criterion (7.5) minor amendment to documentation is required.

Assessment includes an assessment of practice by the DPP, MCQ/short answer questions, a numeracy assessment, OSCE and portfolio. Where the requirements for safe practice are not met a pass mark is not awarded. Formal joint monitoring is in place at the initial, midpoint and final points in the programme for both the practice and academic learning. Staff members carry out the assessments, and the DPP's level of competence in assessment is reviewed against the DPP competency framework (see also commentary to Standard 9). The team was told that the DPP assessment of the OSCE is recorded and reviewed against the OSCE paperwork with all such assessments being moderated by University staff members. Students are required to pass all theoretical and practice assessments at the designated level; there is no compensation. The team was told that students are informed of the GPhC learning outcomes at the outset of the programme. The course learning outcomes are mapped to the GPhC outcomes but will in future be added into programme documentation and made clearer to students.

Standard 8 - Support and the learning experience

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied that all four criteria relating the support and the learning experience will be met. For one criterion (8.1) minor amendments to documentation are required.

There is a one-day induction session and students are allocated an academic supervisor and have their first group supervision on week 2 with timetabled sessions and information about support. There is a midpoint review and final sign-off of tutorial paperwork with the DPP, academic assessor and student. Students are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have, with an action plan put in place. The team was told that the provider's team is aware of the GPhC guidance on tutoring of pharmacists which it intends to discuss with DPPs although it does form part of the DPP resource on the HE Co-operative website.

Standard 9 - Designated prescribing practitioners

Standard met? Yes No (accreditation team use only)

The team was satisfied that all five criteria relating to the designated prescribing practitioners will be met. For one criterion (9.3) a minor amendment to documentation is required and one recommendation was made.

The DPP is a suitably qualified professional who is required to have three years clinical experience prescribing in the area of practice relevant to the student's intended scope of

prescribing practice, with their level of competency including the appropriate clinical and diagnostic skills. DPPs are required to attend training before approval or to be able to evidence that they have previously accessed training. The team was told that the provider would be robust in terms of assessing the prospective DPP should they not be medically qualified. The team noted that the Northwest HE Co-operative application form represented a self-declaration which did not include experience of assessment. As a result, it will be a **recommendation** that the Northwest Universities Non-Medical Prescribing Collaboration should discuss a modification to the DPP section (3e) of the application form so that the prospective DPP can provide evidence of how they meet the criteria as detailed in criterion 9.2. Feedback is provided to DPPs through the moderation of their assessments in practice and by the moderation of OSCEs.

