

Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

University of Manchester

Master of Pharmacy [MPharm]

Report of degree reaccreditation review

Academic year 2009-10

1. Introduction

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain [RPSGB] is the current statutory regulator for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. It is also the current accrediting body for pharmacy education in Great Britain.

This is the report of a reaccreditation visit to the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Manchester, to accredit the University's MPharm degree.

2. The accreditation team

The RPSGB accreditation team comprised:

Name	Designation at the time of visit
Linda Stone*	Pharmaceutical Consultant, Past President, RPSGB and team leader
Anthony Smith	Dean, School of Pharmacy, University of London
Brenda Costall	Professor of Neuropharmacology, former Head of Bradford School of Pharmacy
Helen Howe	Chief Pharmacist, Adenbrookes Hospital University Trust**
Jane Nicholson	Industrial Pharmacist
Sheila Phillips	Pharmacy Training and Development Consultant, member of RPSGB Education Committee
Alan Kershaw	Lay member of RPSGB Council
along with:	
Damian Day*	Head of Education and Quality Assurance, RPSGB
Ian Marshall	Rapporteur
Joanne Martin	Accreditation Manager, RPSGB (observer)
Wendy Harris	Deputy Registrar and Director of Regulation, RPSGB (observer)

* Attended previsit

** Unable to attend for personal reasons, but submitted questions.

3. The accreditation event

Following a pre-visit to the University on 21 December 2009 by the team leader and the RPSGB Head of Education and Quality Assurance, the accreditation visit took place on 19-20th January 2010 and comprised a series of meetings and a tour of relevant facilities at the University. The meetings were with student representatives, senior School staff to discuss strategic issues, course staff to discuss the syllabus, the course support team, and senior University officers.

4. Commentary

Prerequisites, including admissions [criteria 1-6 [see Appendix 1]]	On the basis of the documented evidence and discussions with representatives from the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the accreditation team was satisfied that Criteria 1-6 were met.
Outcomes: the graduate... [criteria 7-23]	On the basis of the documented evidence and discussions with representatives from the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the accreditation team was satisfied that Criteria 7-23 were met.
Processes: the student... [criteria 24-31]	On the basis of the documented evidence and discussions with representatives from the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the accreditation team was satisfied that Criteria 24-31 were met.
Processes: the degree course... [criteria 32-39]	On the basis of the documented evidence and discussions with representatives from the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the accreditation team was satisfied that Criteria 32-39 were met. However, Criterion 32, on integration within the programme, generated wide discussion. Students interviewed told the accreditation team that the relevance of much of the material taught in the early years of the programme did not become apparent until Year 3. In this respect, the accreditation team noted the large number of small modules but was assured that the School was aware that such an organisation of the programme militated against integration of subject matter and led to over-assessment of students. The accreditation team was told that the School was undertaking a complete restructuring of the programme that would involve discarding the present programme and redesigning a programme containing fewer and larger modules. The accreditation team welcomed the development of a new curriculum and advised the School to take comments contained in the record of the accreditation event into account as part its review. The accreditation team, being aware that the curriculum changes planned for the 2011 revision of the MPharm were likely to be substantial, indicated to the School that the new programme would need to be accredited in its own right. The team informed the School that it should contact the Society's successor as regulator, the General Pharmaceutical Council, in due course to schedule an accreditation event in advance of the introduction of the redesigned MPharm.
Structures	On the basis of the documented evidence and discussions

[criteria 40-50]	with representatives from the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the accreditation team was satisfied that Criteria 40-50 were likely to be met. However, Criteria 40, 41 and 42, concerning autonomy, resources and staffing required considerable further discussion and clarification and resulted in the imposition of two conditions. The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Human Sciences told the accreditation team that the School's development had been disrupted in the period leading up to and during its relocation to the Stopford Building 2 years ago. The situation had been complicated further by the retirement of several senior members of staff. An external review had been carried out in 2008 with the remit of examining, research and organisational structure. At the time of the previous, interim Society visit in 2007, a condition had been set concerning the release of frozen professorial posts. The Dean opined that it was an indication of the University and Faculty commitment to the School that these posts, although not yet filled, had remained in the Faculty budget since that time. He further told the accreditation team that the University was moving to fill 7 vacant posts (1 appointment has already been made) and was hoping that one of the senior appointees would take on the 3-year rotating Headship of the School. The Dean also told the accreditation team that he did not believe that the anticipated severe higher education sector-wide cuts in financial allocation to universities would impact on the aforementioned posts.
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4. Conclusions and recommendations

The accreditation team agreed to recommend to the Society's Education Committee that the University of Manchester's MPharm should be reaccruited for a full period of five years, subject to two conditions. There were no recommendations. The conditions are shown in the table below.

The above recommendation is subject to the following <i>Conditions</i>		
Condition	Criterion/ Criteria	Deadline
1. that the University inform the Society should the higher education financial climate deteriorate such that pharmacy provision is affected significantly and negatively. The reason for this is that, currently, there is a greater anxiety than usual about future higher education funding. In imposing this condition, the University of Manchester is not being singled out.	42	None
2. that the University inform the Society of changes to the composition of the School's senior team. The reason for this	40, 41 and 42	1 December

condition is that the Dean stated his plans for the future direction of pharmacy included developing the senior team.		2011.

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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