

University College London, 5-year Master of
Pharmacy degree (MPharm) with integrated
foundation training, Step 4 accreditation event
report - January 2025



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Event summary and conclusions	
Provider	University College London
Course	5-year Master of Pharmacy degree (MPharm) with integrated foundation training
Event type	Accreditation
Step	4 - Part 1
Event date	29 January 2025
Accreditation period	Until the end of academic year 2024/2025
Relevant standards	<u>Future pharmacists Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists, May 2011</u>
Outcome	<p>Full accreditation confirmed</p> <p>The accreditation team agreed to recommend to the Registrar of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) that the University College London be fully accredited as a provider of a 5-year Master of Pharmacy degree (MPharm) with integrated foundation training for the current students on the programme, to the 2011 IETP standards, via the agreed teach out arrangements. It is expected that the last student will graduate on this programme in 2024/25. The University College London is not permitted to enrol any further students on this programme iteration. This accreditation is on the basis of a satisfactory outcome of a Step 4 Part 2 event, where if satisfactory, University College London 5-year MPharm degree graduates will be permitted to apply to the GPhC pharmacist register subject to passing the registration assessment and meeting other registration requirements.</p>
Conditions	There were no conditions.
Standing conditions	The standing conditions of accreditation can be found here .
Recommendations	No recommendations were made.
Registrar decision	<p>The Registrar of the GPhC has reviewed the accreditation report and considered the accreditation team's recommendation.</p> <p>The Registrar confirms that UCL is permitted to progress from Step 4 Part 1, to full accreditation status, subject to a satisfactory Step 4 Part 2 event of the accreditation process for the new 5-year Master of Pharmacy degree (MPharm) with integrated foundation training, for the current students on the programme. This accreditation is against the Standards</p>

	<p>for the initial education and training of pharmacists, May 2011. The Registrar notes that there were no conditions associated with this event.</p> <p>The Registrar confirms that UCL 5-year MPharm degree graduates will be permitted to apply to the GPhC pharmacist register subject to passing the registration assessment and meeting other registration requirements. UCL is not permitted to enrol any further students onto this programme, and it is expected that the last student will graduate on this programme in 2024/25.</p>
Key contact (provider)	Professor Cate Whittlesea, 5-Year MPharm Programme Director and Divisional Director
Accreditation team	<p>Professor Ruth Edwards (Team leader), Professor of Pharmacy Education, University of Wolverhampton *</p> <p>Professor Lyn Hanning (team member - academic) Professor of Pharmacy Education and Head of the Bath MPharm, University of Plymouth</p> <p>Dr Marisa van der Merwe (team member - academic) Associate Dean (Academic) Faculty of Science and Health, University of Portsmouth</p> <p>Mairead Conlon (team member – pharmacist) Foundation Training Year Lead at the Northern Ireland Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development and part-time Community Pharmacist</p> <p>Ausaf Khan (team member – pharmacist newly qualified) Advanced Pharmacist – Neurosciences, Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Fiona Barber (team member – lay) Independent Member, Standards Committee, Leicester City Council</p>
GPhC representative	Chris McKendrick, Senior Quality Assurance Officer (Education) *
Rapporteur	Jane Smith, Chief Executive Officer, European Association for Cancer Research
Observer/s	Lisa Gilbert, Specialist Foundation Training Advisor, General Pharmaceutical Council

* Attended the pre-event meeting

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 GPhC is responsible for setting standards and approving education and training courses which form part of the pathway towards registration for pharmacists. The UK qualification required as part of the

pathway to registration as a pharmacist is a GPhC-accredited Master of Pharmacy degree course (MPharm). This accreditation event was carried out in accordance with the GPhC's 2011 MPharm Accreditation Methodology and the course was reviewed against the GPhC's 2011 education standards 'Future Pharmacists: Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists'.

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/uksi/2010/231/contents/made>

Background

The University College London (UCL) MPharm programme is delivered by the School of Pharmacy, which is a specialist institution within the Faculty of Life Sciences. Originally, the 5-year integrated iteration of the MPharm programme, to the 2011 IETP Standards, was targeted at international students following changes in UK visa rules which reduced opportunities for overseas MPharm graduates to remain in the UK to undertake pre-registration (foundation) training. The 5-year programme integrates foundation training with academic study and thus allows students to remain in the country on student visas.

The process for accrediting a five-year integrated degree is built upon the established accredited four-year programme, and comprises of four steps. A Step 1 event took place in June 2019 at which the accreditation team agreed to recommend to the GPhC's Registrar that UCL's 5-year MPharm degree should be accredited provisionally without any conditions or recommendations. This meant that UCL could progress from Step 1 to Step 2 of the process and accordingly, in September 2020, 16 students enrolled as the first cohort of the 5-year Integrated MPharm. A combined Steps 2 and 3 event took place in July 2021. Following that event, the Registrar of the GPhC accepted the accreditation team's recommendation that the MPharm degree should move to Step 4 without any conditions or recommendations.

In the meantime, the 2021 IETP Standards were introduced by the GPhC and UCL successfully completed Part 1 of accreditation to these standards for its 4-year degree in 2023/24. At the same event, the team repeated Step 2 for the 5-year MPharm degree with integrated foundation training to the 2021 standards. Therefore, only one cohort of students was recruited to the 5-year MPharm with integrated foundation training to the 2011 IETP Standards. The students from this cohort are due to graduate in 2024/25. The Step process for the 5-year MPharm degree with integrated foundation training, accredited to the 2011 standards, must therefore be completed for this cohort of students. The Step 4 event was arranged for January 2025, and this is the report of that event. The completion of Step 4 also requires GPhC representatives to attend the examination board at the end of the academic year.

Future UCL cohorts will graduate to the 2021 IETP Standards and those courses are the subject of a separate accreditation process and reports.

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.

Pre-event

In advance of the main event, a pre-event meeting took place via videoconference on 10 January 2025. The purpose of the pre-event meeting was to prepare for the event, allow the GPhC and the university to ask any questions or seek clarification, and to finalise arrangements for the event.

The event

The event was held onsite on 29 January 2025 and comprised a series of meetings with staff and students of the university and with foundation training providers.

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Schedule

29 January 2025

08:30 – 10:00	Private meeting of the accreditation team
10:00 – 12:00	Welcome and introductions, and progress review, update and questions
12:00 – 12:45	Lunch
12:45 – 13:45	Meeting with students (5-yr 2011 standards)
13:45 – 14:00	Break
14:00 – 14:30	Meeting with stakeholders and professional placement providers (2011 standards) – <i>remote session</i>
14:30– 14:45	Private meeting of accreditation team
14:45 – 15:45	Learning outcomes testing session with focus on integration and preparedness for GPhC registration assessment (2011 standards)
15:45 – 17:00	Private meeting of accreditation team
17:00	Deliver outcome to provider (2011 standards)

Attendees

Course provider

The accreditation team met with the following representatives of the provider:

Name	Designation at the time of accreditation event
Anika Ahmad	Lecturer, Department of Practice and Policy, Module Co-Lead PHAY0005
Bukky Ali	Green Light Pharmacy - Community Pharmacist
Haroon Amin Pharmacist	Green Light Pharmacy, Shepherds Bush
Laurence Briggs	Pharmacist, Green Light Pharmacy, Euston
Louise Brown *	Professor of Pharmacy Education, Clinical Pharmacy Lead for MPharm programme, Module Lead PHAY0058
Nadia Bukhari	Associate Professor, Department of Policy and Practice, Admissions Tutor, Module Lead PHAY0001
Dr Navila Chaudhry	Lecturer, Department of Practice and Policy, Module Lead PHAY0072.
Jen Cockerell	Associate Professor, Department of Practice and Policy, School of Pharmacy, Careers Lead

Chris Eaton	Principal Pharmacist for Education & Workforce Development, Guys and St Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust
Claire Grant	Teacher Practitioner, Day Lewis Pharmacy
Professor Rebecca Lever *	Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Associate Director (Education), Year 4 Lead
Clare Linkins	Teacher Practitioner Frimley Health NHS Trust
Dr John Malkinson *	Associate Professor, Department of Pharmaceutical and Biological Chemistry, MPharm Programme Director, Year 1 Lead, Module Lead PHAY0002
Enrico Mandello	Pharmacist, Day Lewis Pharmacy, Stockwell
Dr Audrey Mercer	Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Deputy MPharm Programme Director, Senior MPharm Academic Tutor, Year 2 Lead, Module Lead PHAY0007
Terry Ng	Associate Professor, Department of Practice and Policy, Year 3 Lead, Module Lead PHAY0010
Ade Olayide	Lecturer, Department of Policy & Practice, Module Co-Lead PHAY0005
Rebekah Nichols	Partnerships & Placements Manager, School of Pharmacy
Adam Phillips	Digital Education Manager, School of Pharmacy
Oksana Pyzik	Lecturer, Department of Practice and Policy, Module Lead PHAY0059
Minal Shivaanand	Lead Pharmacist – Education, Training and Workforce Development, Whittington Health NHS Trust
Professor Cate Whittlesea *	Professor, Director School of Pharmacy

* attended the pre-event meeting, along with Kirsty Martin, Teaching & Learning Manager

The team also met a group of 5 students, on the fifth year of the course. These students were volunteers who had responded to an e-mail asking for student availability on the dates of the visit.

Key findings

Standard 1: Patient and public safety

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

The team asked if there had been any changes to the tasks that students are required to do during their foundation training since the Step 2/3 visit and also asked how the provider ensures that students only undertake tasks for which they are competent. The provider explained that the integrated foundation training programme had been designed in collaboration with the organisational partners, so the tasks had been identified early with their involvement and there had been no significant changes. A learning contract is agreed between the students, provider and foundation training supervisor before the student starts their placement. This refers to the GPhC interim learning outcomes and helps to identify any areas where the student needs additional support. Patient safety is maintained by ensuring effective and appropriate levels of supervision.

During the first anchor day, students are reminded that they must work within their areas of competence.

Now that the processes for supervisor review and e-portfolio evidence review are finalised, the team asked the provider to describe how students who may pose a risk to patients or the public are identified and managed. The provider said that placement providers can raise concerns through clear process and procedures and can withdraw students immediately if they think they are a risk. This has not happened to date. At the tripartite review meetings between the student, provider and Designated Supervisor (DS) the student's e-portfolio is reviewed and any concerns are discussed.

The team asked the provider what qualification will be awarded if a student fails the programme during Year 5 and was told that this will be the MSci Pharmaceutical Studies. Any students needing to repeat elements of Year 5 to the 2011 standards due to extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Additional placement hours will be secured for these students if needed.

Standard 2: Monitoring, review and evaluation of initial education and training

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

The team noted that meetings with foundation training providers had continued since the training module started in July 2024, allowing the provider to review progress against plans. The team asked if any issues or concerns had been raised in these meetings and was told that, as far as possible, the course was designed in collaboration with training hosts, so that their comments were addressed at the planning stage. Foundation training providers confirmed in their meeting with the team that they had been, and continued to be, involved in the course development as well as delivery. Some minor changes to the rotations planned in hospital placements had been suggested and these had been discussed and responded to.

The team asked what information the DSs have access to about roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability specifically in respect of the 2011 standards and was told that the standards were addressed on the DS Training Day held in-person in the School. A DS Guide is emailed to supervisors after this event. For those supervisors not taking students until the second 26-week placement, the provider recognises the time lag between the training and the student being onsite so contacts the DS again immediately before the student starts, to provide updates and to answer any queries. Supervisors have access to their student's e-portfolio so they are able to review their progress as the foundation training progresses.

The team went on to ask how the provider assures itself of consistency of supervision across the range of foundation training placements. The provider stated that, in advance of a placement, an annual review form is completed, gathering up to date information about the site and making sure that the DS meets the eligibility requirements. This review also looks at the wider team involved in supporting trainee pharmacists. Supervisors are asked to verify that the person who has assessed specific activities during the placement is competent and appropriate to do that. This provider gave an example of a student who was supervised by someone deemed not to be appropriate. This was picked up and the student was required to repeat the activity with someone at the right level. The provider also asks students themselves for feedback on their supervision, and triangulates this

feedback with the 13-week review meetings and with evidence the student uploads to their portfolio.

The team asked the provider to talk through how students are supported to transition from an academic environment to the experiential learning in year 5. The provider explained that year 4 is focused on preparing students for the transition. There is a lecture on the first day of the second term of year 4 reminding students of their placement learning from earlier in the course and giving them information about what to expect in year 5. After the year 4 exams, there is a workshop day to talk through the foundation training programme in more detail, addressing issues such as patients' expectations, how to behave in the workplace, the differences between an academic tutor and a designated supervisor and how to accept feedback.

Throughout year 4, students are encouraged to work on further developing their self-directed learning and reflection skills. Students have the same personal tutor in year 5 as in year 4 to ensure some continuity.

The team requested an update on the fifth year so far, and, in particular, on the transition from the first placement to the second. The provider explained that there are formal tripartite review points every 13 weeks, so the 26-week review takes place as the student moves from one placement to the next. The provider stated that the hand-over documentation is completed by the student and their first designated supervisor. This identifies the training completed, learning outcomes met to date and gaps to be filled, and documents any additional support that the student might need in the second placement.

The team asked what feedback has been received from students so far and was told that students had enjoyed being able to meet their designated supervisor at the training day in advance of the placement, but felt this would have been even more beneficial earlier; it had therefore been moved forward. Students also asked for earlier access to the Student Learning Agreement so they could complete it in advance of the supervisor training day. This too has been actioned.

The provider confirmed that one external examiner, the Pharmacy Practice examiner, is responsible for review of the fifth year.

Standard 3: Equality, diversity and fairness

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

This standard was not explored at the event as the team was satisfied with the evidence from previous step visits and the updated information in the submission for this event.

Standard 4: Selection of students and trainees

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

This standard was not relevant to this event as there will be no further recruitment of students to the programme.

Standard 5: Curriculum delivery and student experience

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

The team had noted from the submission that all students except one had been allocated their first choice of placement. However, two students had experienced difficulties accessing their placement due to resignations and sickness. The team asked how this had been managed and was told that the provider had worked closely with the placement organisation to identify alternative acceptable sites and designated supervisors. The students had been given options from which to select.

The team noted that there are three summative assessments associated with the fifth year:

- e-portfolio
- OSCE
- Portfolio viva

The provider also ensures that each student has met the requirement for 52 weeks of foundation training in practice.

The team asked how the individual elements of the e-portfolio are assessed and was told that the provider checks and marks each individual assessment. All components must be evidenced and mapped across the GPhC learning outcomes to be passed. Student progress is reviewed throughout the year at the 13-week meetings and is signed off when enough evidence has been demonstrated against a learning outcome. If a student is unable to meet a learning outcome, then this will be discussed with the student and supervisor. If it cannot be addressed during the planned training, then time is built into the end of the programme for additional evidence to be collected. Students have a second attempt if they have not met the learning outcomes at the end of this period. If the second attempt is failed, then the provider confirmed that the student will fail the module.

The students that the team met said that they found the regular meetings with the provider and their DS helpful and supportive. They also found the anchor days and webinars useful for advice on tasks and assessments. In terms of assessment, the students reported some over-reliance on reflections in the e-portfolio, which the provider may wish to consider for the MPharm accredited to the 2021 IETP Standards. Students felt that their unique position working to the 2011 IETP Standards was sometimes not clearly understood by their supervisors. This made their transition difficult to start with, but they now felt settled and happy with their foundation training experience.

Standard 6: Support and development for students and trainees

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

This standard was not explored at the event as the team was satisfied with the evidence from previous step visits and the updated information in the submission for this event.

Standard 7: Support and development for academic staff and pre-registration tutors

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

This standard was not explored at the event as the team was satisfied with the evidence from previous step visits and the updated information in the submission for this event.

Standard 8: Management of initial education and training

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

This standard was not explored at the event as the team was satisfied with the evidence from previous step visits and the updated information in the submission for this event.

Standard 9: Resources and capacity

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

There are six students on the course, and each student has two designated supervisors. In some cases, the supervisor will have one student in the first placement period and one in the second.

To support the delivery of the year 5 module to these students, another member of the School has joined the 5-year MPharm programme team (0.2 FTE) to cover the delivery of anchor days, updating materials, and supporting formative and summative assessments.

Not all the designated supervisors supporting the programme are pharmacists within the partner organisations that have been members of the Employer Working Group. This meant additional support was required for these four designated supervisors, which was provided by the year 5 team.

Standard 10: Outcomes

Standard met? Yes ☒ No ☐

The team was satisfied that all 58 outcomes relating to Standard 10 are delivered at the appropriate level.

Six learning outcomes were tested at the event, with a focus on the transition from year 4 to 5 and ensuring the learning outcomes are met at the appropriate level by the end of year 5. The outcomes tested were:

- 10.1.h Engage in multidisciplinary team working (moving from Knows How to Does in year 5)
- 10.2.1.c Use the evidence base to review current practice (moving from Shows How to Does in year 5)
- 10.2.2.a Identify and employ the appropriate diagnostic or physiological testing techniques in order to promote health (moving from Knows How to Shows How in year 5)
- 10.2.2.c Instruct patients in the safe and effective use of their medicines and devices (moving from Shows How to Does in year 5)
- 10.2.2.h Optimise treatment for individual patient needs in collaboration with the prescriber (moving from Shows How to Does in year 5)
- 10.2.4.a Establish and maintain patient relationships while identifying patients' desired health outcomes and priorities (moving from Shows How to Does in year 5)

Indicative syllabus

The team was satisfied with the School's use of the Indicative Syllabus to inform its curriculum

The team agreed that the MPharm degree met the requirements of Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications for the initial education and training of pharmacists.

