General Pharmaceutical Council

University of Worcester, Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree and MPharm degree with preparatory year Step 2 accreditation event report, March 2026



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Event summary and conclusions

Proposed programme provider: University of Worcester

Programmes: Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree and Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree with Preparatory Year

Event type: Step 2 accreditation

Event date: 4-5 March 2026

Approval period: Working towards accreditation

Relevant requirements: **Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists, January 2021**

Outcome: Approval to progress to next step, subject to a condition

The accreditation team agreed to recommend to the Registrar of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) that the proposed new MPharm degree and MPharm degree with preparatory year to be delivered by the University of Worcester should be permitted to move from step 2 to step 3 of the accreditation process for new MPharm degrees, subject to one condition.

Condition:

1. The staffing strategy must be revised to include additional academic staff resource, including pharmacists, within the pharmacy staff team. The staffing strategy must demonstrate that there will be sufficient staff resource to deliver the programme from 2028/29 onwards and to provide academic support and professional role modelling to students. This is because the team has concerns that the planned staff complement is insufficient to support programme delivery and to provide the academic personal tutor support described. This is to meet criterion 3.2.

   Evidence of how the condition has been addressed must be sent to the GPhC by 1 September 2026.

Standing conditions: Find here **the Standing conditions of accreditation**.

Recommendation:

1. That the placement strategy and the entry criteria are developed further and agreed before the programme is advertised, so that accurate information is provided to potential applicants so that they can make informed decisions. This is specifically in relation to:

   a. The proposal for students to retain the same placements throughout the programme and for all students to have a Year 4 placement in their foundation training year setting.

   b. Work experience requirements as a selection criterion for interview.

   This relates to criteria 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5.

   A response to the recommendation must be sent to the GPhC for review by the accreditation team by 1 September 2026 and before the programme is advertised.

Registrar[1] decision: The Registrar[1] of the GPhC reviewed the accreditation report and accepted the accreditation team's recommendation. The Registrar[1] was satisfied that the University of Worcester has met the requirements to proceed to the next step of the accreditation process for new MPharm degrees against the Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists, January 2021, subject to meeting the condition.

Key contact (University): Professor Peter Seville, Head of the School of Science and the Environment*

Accreditation team:

Professor Steve Howard (Team leader), Independent Healthcare Consultant *

Professor Cate Whittlesea (team member – academic), Professor of Pharmacy Practice, and Director, UCL School of Pharmacy, University College London

Dr Gemma Quinn (team member – academic), Head of School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences, University of Bradford

Professor Luigi Martini (team member – pharmacist), CEO Precision Health Technology Accelerator (PHTA) for University of Birmingham and Birmingham Health Partners

Dr Anum Iqbal (team member – pharmacist, recently-registered), Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Clinical Fellow, NHS England

Hannah Poulton (team member – lay), Independent Panel Member and Fractional Chief Marketing Officer (did not attend the event but provided questions and comments in advance)

GPhC representative: Philippa McSimpson, Quality Assurance Manager*

Rapporteur: Jane Smith, Chief Executive Officer, European Association for Cancer Research

Observer: Fiona Erasmus, Education Review Consultant, General Pharmaceutical Council

***also attended the pre-event meeting on 20 February 2026

[1] Registrar or appointed delegate

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 programmes 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 programme (MPharm).

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' programmes by appointing 'visitors' (accreditation and recognitional panel members) 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 the Legislation page on our website**.

The GPhC's process for initial accreditation of a UK MPharm degree involves seven steps, each of which are normally completed in consecutive academic years. Step 1 involves an initial engagement meeting by an application institution to share their proposal and no formal decision on accreditation is made. For steps 2 to 7, the process requires a formal evaluation of the programme and the University's progress towards meeting the **Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists, January 2021**. Step accreditation events are held on-site at the University's proposed delivery location and involve a full accreditation team.

Following successful completion of step 3, the MPharm degree is provisionally accredited and students may be accepted on to year 1 of the new programme. Each accreditation step must be passed successfully in order to progress to the next. An MPharm degree holds provisional accreditation status until the University has completed all seven steps successfully.

Background

MPharm degree

The University of Worcester approached the GPhC to confirm its intention to begin the process for the accreditation of a new Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree and a 5-year MPharm degree with preparatory year. A step 1 event was held on 15 July 2025 and comprised a presentation by representatives of University of Worcester followed by questions and advisory comments from the accreditation team leader and GPhC representative, as well as confirmation of GPhC accreditation process and timings. The event took place remotely by videoconference.

The University offers several programmes allied to healthcare including Nursing, Midwifery, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Paramedic Science, Physician Associates and Biomedical Science. The University has also established the Three Counties Medical School.

The demand for the opening of an MPharm degree has largely been driven by the NHS and local community practice partners. The aim is to train and retain local applicants to address pharmacist shortages in the region.

The University subsequently confirmed that it wished to progress to a Step 2 event. This report details the outcome of that visit.

In advance of the Step 2 event, the University confirmed that it wished to postpone Step 3 of the process to the 2027/28 academic year to ensure sufficient time to develop the programme. This proposal was accepted, and the accreditation team took these updated timings in to consideration when reaching their conclusions.

MPharm degree with preparatory year

The GPhC began accrediting MPharm degrees with a preparatory year as a separate programme to the MPharm degree in 2020/21. Prior to this, the accreditation of the MPharm degree component of the programme was accepted to allow students entry to pre-registration training.

An MPharm degree with preparatory year is a single programme that leads to a Master of Pharmacy award. It is recruited to separately from the accredited 4-year MPharm degree and is assigned a different UCAS code. For most schools this will be a 5-year programme which includes a preparatory year followed by four further taught years that mirror that of the accredited MPharm degree.

An MPharm with preparatory year must meet all of the GPhC's initial education and training standards for pharmacists in all years of the programme. All teaching and assessment of the learning outcomes is expected to take place in taught years 2-5, with the first taught year being set aside for foundation learning only. For the purpose of accreditation, it is assumed that the programme content for the four taught years following the preparatory year will be identical for students on the MPharm degree and the MPharm degree with preparatory year.

The University of Worcester already offers a Science Foundation Year, successful completion of which guarantees entry to some of its science and healthcare undergraduate degrees. The University intends to offer a version of this programme as the first year of a five-year MPharm degree with preparatory year. One of the four 30-credit modules in the Preparatory Year will be a new pharmacy-specific module delivered by pharmacy staff. The other three modules will be shared with the Foundation Year students and will provide foundation-level science knowledge and communication skills.

Since the Step 1 event, the University had reconsidered its planned student numbers and revised the initial intake numbers. It now proposed to admit students to both programmes from 2028/29, starting with 15 Students into the MPharm with Preparatory Year and 24 students into the MPharm Year 1 in that year. By 2031-32, the University planned to take 15 students into the MPharm with Preparatory Year and 84 into the MPharm Year 1, including those progressing from the Preparatory Year.

Documentation

Prior to the event, the University submitted documentation to the GPhC in line with the agreed timescales. The documentation was reviewed by the accreditation team 'the 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 20 February 2026.

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 University was advised of areas that were likely to be explored further by the accreditation team during the event.

The event

The event was held on site on 4-5 March 2026 and comprised of a series of meetings between the GPhC accreditation team and representatives of the proposed MPharm programme.

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest**.**

Event meetings

1. Strategic and business case for the MPharm degree
2. Facilities for the MPharm degree
3. Recruitment and selection
4. Teaching, learning, support and assessment
5. Deliver outcome to University programme representative

Attendees

University programme representatives

The accreditation team met with the following representatives of the proposed programmes.

Table 1: Programme representatives

Name	Designation at the time of accreditation event
Professor Peter Seville *	Head of the School of Science and the Environment and Pharmacy Lead
Professor Sally Moyle *	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
Professor John-Paul Wilson	Pro Vice Chancellor Research
Kevin Pickess	Pro Vice Chancellor Students and Academic Registrar
Dr Kerry Whitehouse	Director of Learning and Teaching
Valeria Arzenton	Director of Quality and Educational Development
Dr Darren Cooper	Interim Deputy Head for the School of Science and the Environment, University Lead for Continuous Professional Development in Teaching and Learning and Principal Lecturer in Sports Therapy
Clare Dawson	Director of Student Services
Kerry Findlater	Director of Finance
Jonathan Henry	Finance Manager (Projects)
Carolyn Moir	Head of Performance and Insight

Name	Designation at the time of accreditation event
Val Yates	Director of Access and Inclusion
Gill Slater	Head of Organisational Development
Jen Zandbeek	Head of Practice Learning and Business Development in the Health Professions
Leanne Clews	Workforce, Training & Education Directorate, NHSE Midlands
Rose Atkins	Pharmacy Training Programme Facilitator, NHSE Midlands
Dr Anne Sinnott	Head of the School of Science and the Environment Laboratories
Katrina Ramsden	Head of Simulation and Skills Based Education
Alice Kitt	Principal Lecturer in Clinical Skills and Simulation-Based Education
Jane Britton	Pro Vice Chancellor Communications and External Affairs
Jo Olsen	Head of Admissions
Andrew Jones	Director of Digital Communications and Insight
Huw Pritchard	Schools and Colleges Manager
Dr Jo Rouse	Interim Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery
Dr Heather Barrett	Principal Lecturer in Geography and Quality Coordinator
Shona Raymond	Academic Liaison Librarian

* also attended the pre-event meeting on 20 February 2026, along with Jenny Tansell, PA to Professor Peter Seville

Key findings - Part 1 Learning outcomes

The accreditation team will review the proposed teaching and assessment of individual learning outcomes from step 3 of the accreditation process onwards. During the Step 2 event, the team sought assurance from the University's curriculum overview, delivery plans and staffing resource that the MPharm degree being proposed had the potential to deliver a programme to the required learning outcomes.

Key findings - Part 2 Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists

Standard 1: Selection and admission

Students must be selected for and admitted onto MPharm degrees on the basis that they are being prepared to practise as a pharmacist

Table 2: Standard 1 - assessment decision for each of the criteria. Criterion 1.1 to 1.9

Criteria	Met	Likely to be met	Not met
Criterion 1.1	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 1.2	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 1.3	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 1.4	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 1.5	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 1.6	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 1.7	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 1.8	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 1.9	✓	☐	☐

The proposed new MPharm programmes aim to address pharmacy workforce shortages in the Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire region. The team asked the University representatives ('the University') to describe its strategies for attracting local students and those who will move to the area and stay on after graduation. It was explained that the University recruits strongly from the local area and 70% of all Worcester students stay on in the region after completing their programme. Geo-targeted digital marketing will be used to reach potential local applicants. This will be coupled with school outreach activities aimed at Year 10 and 11 pupils so that they make informed post-16 study choices. The University is also part of a widening access scheme that funds transport for students to bring them on campus for taster days. Beyond the local area, virtual taster days will be offered to potential applicants using UCAS pre-applicant data filtered by programme and region.

The University has a centrally managed contextual offer scheme which makes offers one grade (or 8 tariff points) below the standard offer to those from low socio-economic backgrounds or from areas with a low rate of progression to higher education.

The team noted that the proposed entry tariff (48 points in any subjects) for the MPharm with preparatory year is at the bottom end of the sector, and well below the proposed academic requirements for direct entry to the 4-year MPharm. It asked the University how it had decided on these requirements. The University stated that the proposed entry tariff for the MPharm with Preparatory Year is slightly higher than that required for the other science foundation programmes. These programmes have good progression rates to undergraduate degrees. Progression thresholds are based on an A-H grading system. D- is the minimum pass threshold, but for the MPharm with Preparatory Year grades of at least B- in each of the four modules will be required for progression to Year 1. Students who do not achieve these grades will be offered the opportunity to transfer to one of the other undergraduate science programmes.

As well as meeting academic entry requirements, applicants for both MPharm programmes will be required to have had some work experience in a healthcare setting in order to meet the requirements to receive an invite to interview. The University expects that the MPharm with preparatory year route might appeal to those working as pharmacy technicians or dispensers who may not meet the academic entry requirements for direct entry to the 4-year programme.

The team heard that the University did not intend to set a minimum time period for the work experience, instead a judgement would be made on whether it was sufficient to meet the threshold for an invite to interview. Staff would then explore the learning gained from that experience during the interview stage. The team considered whether mandating work experience was a reasonable requirement for all applicants. If the University wished to move forward with this proposal, the team had some concerns that not having clear criteria on the accepted threshold could lead to a lack of clarity to applicants and the potential for inconsistent selection decisions.

The team **recommended** that, before advertising the programme, the University should carefully consider its intention to ask for relevant work experience as a criterion for selection for interview. Similarly, the University should further consider the feasibility of its intention to allocate every student to a single placement provider in each setting for the duration of their studies as well as to a Year 4 placement with their foundation training year provider (see Standard 5). The team considered that this might not be achievable nor equitable, and should not be promised in recruitment information if it is not confirmed.

The University will interview all applicants who meet the published entry criteria for both the MPharm degree and the MPharm degree with Preparatory Year. Interviews will be held online, for cost, inclusivity and environmental reasons. Two members of staff will interview each applicant and there will be an identification check, such as a piece of photo ID being shown to camera, as part of the process. Interviews will include situational judgement questions on healthcare scenarios, as well as questions on the applicant's motivation for, and understanding of, a career in pharmacy. Applicants will be encouraged to disclose any support needs in advance so that reasonable adjustments can be made if needed. Staff involved in the interviews must provide written justification for their admissions decisions, and this will be used to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates. All staff involved in recruitment will have some training and mock applications will be made available before interviews start to ensure consistency of decision-making.

Satisfactory good character checks for students on both programme variants will be required before students are admitted. Health check requirements will also be clearly articulated to applicants in advance. It will be a requirement of all offers that health checks are met. Once applicants meet their offer, they will be invited by an external company to complete an occupational health questionnaire. Before students are admitted, the University will be given the outcome of the process and any concerns will be reviewed by the Head of School and programme leader.

Admissions data will be monitored by protected characteristics, and the Head of School will be responsible for taking action if the data show that the admissions processes may be disadvantaging particular groups of students.

Criteria 1.1 to 1.8 were deemed 'likely to be met', rather than 'met', for both programme variants, as plans have not yet been finalised nor implemented. These criteria will be reviewed again during the Step 3 of the accreditation process and before recruitment and selection activities may take place.

Standard 2: Equality, diversity and fairness

MPharm degrees must be based on, and promote, the principles of equality, diversity and fairness; meet all relevant legal requirements; and be delivered in such a way that the diverse needs of all students are met.

Table 3: Standard 2 - assessment decision for each of the criteria. Criterion 2.1 to 2.6

Criteria	Met	Likely to be met	Not met
Criterion 2.1	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 2.2	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 2.3	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 2.4	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 2.5	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 2.6	☐	✓	☐

There is a high-level institutional commitment to equality and diversity. All staff undertake mandatory training on diversity and inclusion in higher education and on supporting neurodiverse students. There is an aspiration for all placement supervisors to also undertake this training, but that will be reviewed as plans develop.

Students will undertake mandatory equality and diversity training early in the programme and before their first practice placement. Curriculum and assessment design is based on inclusive principles with an inclusive practice checklist available to all staff. Ongoing curriculum review processes ensure that programmes are updated according to good practice.

Reasonable Adjustment Plans (RAPs) will be agreed with students who disclose the need for additional support at any point will be. These plans will be shared with academic staff. For placements, Personalised Placement Advice Plans (PPAPs) are developed in discussion with the practice supervisor. I was confirmed that learning outcomes will not be adjusted for any students.

The team asked about the processes that will be in place to ensure that staff delivering the programme have an understanding of the diversity of students and was told that a suite of reports is available, with new analytic reporting following the student journey having just being introduced. This will go beyond measuring performance against protected characteristics and will, for example, track changes in students' level of engagement. Personal academic tutors (PATs) will be able to see the data for their students and consider additional support they might need to succeed.

All criteria in this Standard were deemed 'likely to be met', rather than 'met', for both programme variants, as plans have not yet been finalised nor implemented. These criteria will be reviewed again during the next step event.

Standard 3: Resources and capacity

Resources and capacity must be sufficient to deliver the learning outcomes in these standards.

Table 4: Standard 3 - assessment decision for each of the criteria. Criterion 3.1 to 3.3

Criteria	Met	Likely to be met	Not met
Criterion 3.1	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 3.2	☐	☐	✓
Criterion 3.3	☐	✓	☐

There is commitment to both variants of the new programme at a senior level within the University and full support from external stakeholders in the region. The University is abreast of developments in pharmacy education and aware of new MPharm programmes coming on-stream but is confident that demand for both Worcester programmes will be strong.

The team noted the risk register for the programmes and, as placement capacity is identified as the highest risk, asked the University how this was being managed. The University explained that the Senior Management Team's (SMT) meetings are structured around the risk register; it is very much a living document. From here, operational issues that are not on track are cascaded down to the Senior Leadership Team for action. The risk register is updated every six months and feeds into the University-level risk register. Specifically with regard to placements, SMT receives monthly reports on placement capacity as well as on progress with agreements to host students.

The business plan identified the need for two full-time academic staff to be in post by July 2026 in addition to the 0.4 FTE Professor of Pharmacy already in post. A Professor of Clinical Pharmacy has been recruited and will start by July. A Principal Lecturer in Pharmaceutics post was advertised but an appointment was not made. The post will shortly be readvertised as an Associate Professor in Pharmaceutics post and this role-holder will lead the development of the science curriculum. A series of other appointments are scheduled from January 2027 onwards, as the programme rolls out and student numbers increase. The decision to delay the first year of teaching to 2028/29 was made partly due to the recognition that more time was needed to recruit the most suitably qualified and experienced staff.

The team asked if all posts within the staffing plan and business plan have been approved at University-level, or whether each role will need separate approval. The University explained that the entire staffing plan has been approved. There is a process of authorisation to recruit that will need to be followed for

each post, but this is about managing the job description and advertisement process rather than securing financial approval. If it becomes apparent that the approved plan is no longer adequate, then the School has authority to budget for additional staff and can also use Visiting Lecturers or can call on appropriate staff in other Schools.

The team asked which of the planned roles will be the programme leads for the MPharm and for the MPharm with Preparatory Year and was told that this had not yet been decided. There is a programme lead for the Foundation Year who will also be responsible for the students in Year 0, but there will also be module lead for the pharmacy-specific module who will support the pharmacy students.

Several of the planned posts in pharmaceutics, pharmacology and medicinal chemistry are 0.5 FTE and the team asked whether the University envisaged difficulties in recruiting part-time science posts. The University thought that there would be suitable candidates but was prepared to be flexible if needed.

The staffing plan includes recruitment of several pharmacists and the University confirmed that they would be looking for GPhC or PSNI-registered pharmacists. It will be a desired criterion that at least some post-holders are pharmacist prescribers or are prepared to work towards that qualification.

The team noted that the proposed ratio of students to academic staff (SSR) seems high when at steady state and asked the University for its rationale for this level of staffing. The University stated that the SSR takes placement activity into account. It is also intended that the programme will not rely heavily on didactic or laboratory-based teaching but will offer a more authentic learning experience, allowing for more efficient delivery. This will be monitored as the programme is rolled out, including taking student feedback into account.

The team was not satisfied that the planned level of staffing was appropriate for the delivery of the programme from 2028/29 onwards and to provide academic support and professional role modelling to students. It will therefore be a **condition** of moving to Step 3 of the accreditation process that the staffing strategy is revised to include additional academic staff resource, including pharmacists, within the pharmacy staff team. This is to meet criterion 3.2.

The team toured some of the facilities to be used for the delivery of the MPharm programme, including laboratories and clinical simulation suites. £1 million provision has been made for laboratory refurbishment and consideration is being given to which pharmacy-specific resources will be needed. Two immersive simulation rooms were being developed, one on each of the campuses that will be used by MPharm students. These, along with most other facilities, will be shared with students on other healthcare programmes, and some planning about how facilities will be shared has already begun, especially as there is an aspiration for MPharm students to be on campus for only three days each week.

The team asked where students will undertake dispensing and accuracy-checking training and was told that this will largely be done during community pharmacy placements. MyDispense will be used on campus for simulation activities. Dispensing will be assessed via Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and by Direct Observation of Practice (DOPs) on placement.

Criteria 3.1 and 3.3 were deemed ‘likely to be met’, rather than ‘met’, for both programme variants, as plans have not yet been finalised nor implemented. These criteria will be reviewed again during the next step event.

Standard 4: Managing, developing and evaluating MPharm degrees

The quality of the MPharm degree must be managed, developed and evaluated in a systematic way.

Table 5: Standard 4 - assessment decision for each of the criteria. Criterion 4.1 to 4.6

Criteria	Met	Likely to be met	Not met
Criterion 4.1	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 4.2	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 4.3	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 4.4	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 4.5	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 4.6	☐	✓	☐

The University has frameworks in place to manage the development and delivery of programmes, including systems and policies for experiential and interprofessional learning.

The team asked about the University's engagement to date with patients and the public to inform the design of the programme. The University stated that, to date, consultation with stakeholders has focused on perceived demand for the programme. Programme design is in the very early stages. As it develops, the input of the University's patient and public stakeholder group, IMPACT, will be sought, along with input from placement providers and the wider professional pharmacy community.

The team asked what assurances have been given that sufficient placement capacity exists within the region to support the programme as student numbers increase. This had been discussed at the regional Pharmacy Faculty. It is planned for 3rd and 1st year students to be on placement at the same time, and for 2nd and 4th years to also be paired. The intention is that senior students can support their more junior colleagues, and that they will develop their peer mentoring, leadership and management skills as well as reducing the burden on providers.

Students will spend two weeks in community pharmacy and two weeks in hospital pharmacy in each of the four years of the MPharm, as well as two weeks in a GP practice in years 3 or 4 (or both, if capacity allowed). However, the team noted that no community pharmacy or GP placement providers had been identified as yet and asked for an update on securing agreements for students to visit these settings. The University explained that this is another reason for delaying the first-year intake to 2028/29, acknowledging that they have not made as much progress as was needed for an earlier start.

The team heard that there is a well-resourced centralised placement team at the University that will support the setting up of agreements as well as the auditing of sites, payment processing and monitoring of placements. Any academic concerns raised by students or placement hosts will be directed to the School for action. Despite this centralised support, discussions with potential community pharmacy placement providers would be expedited to ensure arrangements are secured for Year 1.

Once the programme is running, there will be a process of Annual Programme Evaluation to ensure that any issues are addressed against an agreed timeframe. A programme evaluation report will be written

by the programme lead and will feed into the School Enhancement Plan. It will also be considered by the Staff Student Liaison Committee and progress against plans reviewed by the School Leadership Team at the end of each academic year.

The team deemed all criteria in this Standard to be 'likely to be met', rather than 'met', as plans have not yet been finalised nor implemented. These criteria will be reviewed again during the next step event.

Standard 5: Curriculum design and delivery

The MPharm degree curriculum must use a coherent teaching and learning strategy to develop the required skills, knowledge, understanding and professional behaviours to meet the outcomes in part 1 of these standards. The design and delivery of MPharm degrees must ensure that student pharmacists practise safely and effectively.

Table6: Standard 5 - assessment decision for each of the criteria. Criterion 5.1 to 5.13

Criteria	Met	Likely to be met	Not met
Criterion 5.1	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.2	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.3	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.5	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.5	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.6	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.7	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.8	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.9	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.10	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.11	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.12	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 5.13	☐	✓	☐

There is a high-level teaching and learning strategy which sets out broad plans for the MPharm curriculum:

- Year 0 (preparatory year) will provide students on the 5-year programme variant with the necessary science foundation knowledge and communication skills
- Year1 will focus on single body systems, communication and consultation skills, and understanding teams

- Year 2 will bring in integrated systems, medicines reconciliation and adverse drug reaction recognition, along with team collaboration
- Year 3 will move on to more complex care and multimorbidity, also looking at service improvement and public health, and team leadership
- Year 4 will focus on independent academic performance, mentoring and teaching others, and on preparing students for foundation training

Simulation and interprofessional learning activities will be mapped throughout the programme and will be related directly to programme content.

The University has chosen to have four 30-credit modules in each year, but modules will not be delivered in isolation and science will be taught in a clinical context throughout.

The intention is for students to visit the same hospital and community pharmacy settings for each of their placements so that they are embedded in those environments and can contribute effectively. The team had some concerns that this might not be achievable, and might not offer students a broad range of patients and settings or an equitable experience (see recommendation at Standard 1). It is also intended that students will spend two weeks on placement in their final year with their foundation training provider. Again, the team questioned whether this will be achievable for all students. The University stated that this was the intention, but the practicality of these arrangements were still being explored. Alternative placements would be offered to those who did not yet have a foundation training place, or who could not be accommodated by their training provider.

The team asked how the University plans to engage with practice partners in curriculum design. They were told about the collaborative and multi-layered approach taken in Nursing, with quarterly meetings with practice partners, more operational-level meetings with placement hosts, and feedback from students all being taken into account. The intention is to replicate this for pharmacy. The curriculum plans have already been shared with the Pharmacy Faculty and, in time, sub-groups of stakeholders will be established to look at different aspects of programme design. However, it was acknowledged that there is no tariff funding for pharmacy stakeholders at the moment, and this makes engaging with community pharmacists more difficult. Financial incentives such as covering locum costs will be considered if needed.

The team asked for details of the planned timescale for developing the interprofessional learning (IPL) strategy. The University's IPL strategy expired in September 2025 and the Practice Learning and IPL Group had decided to delay work on the new strategy as new CAIPE definitions and standards were due. These were published in December 2025 and a new IPL team was being formed. Pharmacy will be involved in the review work.

The team asked about the review process undertaken to ensure that Year 0 of the MPharm with Preparatory Year will offer an appropriate preparation for pharmacy. The University explained that the year will consist of four 30-credit modules, three shared with the current Foundation Year and one new pharmacy-specific module which will relate the programme material directly to pharmacy and will also introduce the professional and fitness to practice elements.

The University confirmed that both programme variants will have an exemption from the standard University regulation which allows students to trail 30 credits of failed modules.

The accreditation deemed all criteria in this Standard to be 'likely to be met', rather than 'met', for both programme variants, as plans have not yet been finalised nor implemented. These criteria will be reviewed again during the next step event.

Standard 6: Assessment

Higher-education institutions must demonstrate that they have a coherent assessment strategy which assesses the required skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviours to meet the learning outcomes in part 1 of these standards. The assessment strategy must assess whether a student pharmacist's practice is safe.

Table7: Standard 6 - assessment decision for each of the criteria. Criterion 6.1 to 6.14

Criteria	Met	Likely to be met	Not met
Criterion 6.1	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.2	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.3	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.4	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.5	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.6	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.7	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.8	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.9	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.10	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.11	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.12	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.13	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 6.14	☐	✓	☐

An assessment blueprint maps modules to GPhC learning outcomes and to Miller's Triangle. In general assessments in the early years will test knowledge via written exams. Then students will move to Showing, Showing How and Doing as the programme progresses.

A range of Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) will be identified in consultation with placement providers and these will be assessed on placement via DOPs, Mini-CEX, and on campus via case-based discussions, a portfolio and multi-source feedback. The University acknowledged that consideration still needs to be given to standard setting and quality assuring the placement-based assessments. Students will not have to pass all EPAs at the same time; the focus and activities on later placements will be adjusted according to the student's progress to date and the EPAs still to be achieved.

The University still needs to finalise plans for the for summative assessment of prescribing skills, but the final year OSCE will include a full consultation including prescribing.

Angoff will be used for standard-setting the OSCEs and the University is considering how to standard-set the calculations assessments, recognising that Angoff can be problematic with small cohorts.

In Year 0 of the MPharm with Preparatory Year, the Pharmacy-specific module will be assessed via portfolio, poster and a mini-OSCE.

The accreditation team deemed all criteria in this Standard to be 'likely to be met', rather than 'met', for both programme variants, as plans have not yet been finalised nor implemented. These criteria will be reviewed again during the next step event.

Standard 7: Support and development for student pharmacists and everyone involved in the delivery of the MPharm degree

Student pharmacists must be supported in all learning and training environments to develop as learners and professionals during their MPharm degrees. Everyone involved in the delivery of the MPharm degree should be supported to develop in their professional role.

Support for student pharmacists

Table 8: Standard 7 - assessment decision for each of the criteria. Criterion 7.1 to 7.4 - Support for student pharmacists.

Criteria	Met	Likely to be met	Not met
Criterion 7.1	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 7.2	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 7.3	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 7.4	☐	✓	☐

The University confirmed that there will be a comprehensive induction for all students, including University-wide and pharmacy-specific information and signposting to support and study skills.

All students, including those in the Preparatory Year, will have a pharmacy-based Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) and will meet with them regularly. The University confirmed that there will be an open-door policy and the team asked how this will apply to part-time staff, who will be less available to their tutees than full-time staff. Students will be given clear information about when their PAT is available and part-time staff will have fewer tutees than their full-time colleagues. Academic practitioners who typically work on campus for one day a week will not be allocated any tutees.

Non-academic support is accessed through 'firstpoint' a helpdesk for current and prospective students giving access to student services such as careers advice, student support and wellbeing, counselling, money advice, disability and dyslexia support.

There are clear routes for students to raise concerns, including about placements via a Practice and Placement Concerns process.

Financial support will be available to students to fund their travel to placements.

Support for everyone involved in the delivery of the MPharm degree

Table 9: Standard 7 - assessment decision for each of the criteria. Criterion 7.5 to 7.8 - Support for everyone involved in the delivery of the MPharm degree.

Criteria	Met	Likely to be met	Not met
Criterion 7.5	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 7.6	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 7.7	☐	✓	☐
Criterion 7.8	☐	✓	☐

Staff new to the University have a comprehensive induction plan which includes a series of workshops, with dedicated sessions for those new to teaching in higher education, and the allocation of a trained mentor for the first 12 months. All new staff are required to undertake the PG Cert LTHE (2 years, part-time) or successfully achieve Advance HE Fellowship. This is a requirement of probation. Non-pharmacist staff will be paired with registered pharmacist staff to give them an understanding of the current role of pharmacists and the pharmacy context.

A Practice Placement Handbook will be developed for placement providers, and on-campus will be provided on giving feedback to students, training to assess students, and training to fail students, which is important for patient safety. The University is evaluating the NHSE e-lfh Pharmacy Practice and Educational Supervisor Training e-learning modules with a view to offering these to placement providers.

The team deemed all criteria in this Standard to be ‘likely to be met’, rather than ‘met’, for both programme variants, as plans have not yet been finalised nor implemented. These criteria will be reviewed again during the next step event.

Annex A: Decision descriptors

Table 10: Decision making descriptors

Decision	Descriptor
Met	The accreditation team is assured after reviewing the available evidence that this criterion/learning outcome is met (or will be met at the point of delivery).
Likely to be met	The progress to date, and any plans that have been set out, provide confidence that this criterion/learning outcome is likely to be met by step 7. However, the accreditation team does not have assurance after reviewing the available evidence that it is met at this point (or will be met at the point of delivery).
Not met	The accreditation team does not have assurance after reviewing the available evidence that this criterion or learning outcome is met. The evidence presented does not demonstrate sufficient progress towards meeting this criterion/outcome. Any plans presented either do not appear realistic or achievable or they lack detail or sufficient clarity to provide confidence that it will be met by step 7 without remedial measures (condition/s).



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