

AQH-B2-3b Postgraduate Programme Specification: MSc Clinical Pharmacy

April 2016

Postgraduate Programme Specification Template

SECTION A: CORE INFORMATION

1. Name of programme

Clinical Pharmacy

2. Award title

Master of Science

Postgraduate Diploma

Postgraduate Certificate

3. Programme linkage

Is this part of a group of linked programmes between which students can transfer at agreed points? (eg a group of programmes with a common set of taught modules)

No

4. Is the programme a top-up only?

No

5. Level of award: (Level 7 only)

7

6. Awarding body:

University of Sunderland

7. Which department is it in?

Pharmacy, Health and Wellbeing

8. Programme Studies Board:
Postgraduate Clinical Pharmacy

9. Programme Leader(s):
Dr Paul Franklin
Mr Alan Green

10. How and where can I study the programme?

At Sunderland:	
Full-time on campus	No
Part-time on campus	Yes
As work-based learning full-time	No
As work-based learning part-time	Yes
As a full-time sandwich course	No
As a part-time sandwich course	No
By distance learning	Yes

At the University of Sunderland London campus:	
Full-time on campus	No
Part-time on campus	No
As work-based learning full-time	No
As work-based learning part-time	No
As a full-time sandwich course	No
As a part-time sandwich course	No
By distance learning	No

At a partner college:	
Full-time in the UK	No
Part-time in the UK	No
Full-time overseas	No
Part-time overseas	Yes
By distance learning	Yes
As a full-time sandwich course in the UK	No
As a part-time sandwich course in the UK	No
As a full-time sandwich course overseas	No
As a part-time sandwich course overseas	No
As work-based learning full-time in the UK	No
As work-based learning part-time	Yes

overseas	
Other (please specify)	

Partner College

Continuation of the current collaborative model with Hong Kong University (HKU SPACE) is planned. Much of the course material is designed to be delivered as distance learning that will be made available in the same manner as for those students based at Sunderland University. Supplementary support by visiting university staff will be provided during the course's study days. The course remains under the management of the Postgraduate Clinical Pharmacy Board at Sunderland liaising with the tutor at HKU SPACE for local course-delivery requirements.

11. How long does the programme take?

	Min number of years / months	Max number of years / months
Full-time		
Part-time	3 years	9 years
Distance learning		
Work-based learning		

For start-dates please see the current edition of the Prospectus or contact the relevant department at the University. For start-dates for programmes delivered in a partner college, please contact the college.

SECTION B – FURTHER CORE INFORMATION

Use Outline Programme Proposal Form for ADC ([AQH-B2-2](#)), for questions 12 to 22

23. Learning and teaching strategy.

Overview of teaching and learning strategies

Teaching and Learning

To meet the ever changing landscape of pharmacy the design of the course is to provide as much flexibility in the approach to learning and meet the needs of the students. Its format recognises that those undertaking the course are predominantly in professional practice and are often working full-time in their early years of professional development. Indeed, for the independent prescribing (IP) element of the course the professional regulatory body (General Pharmaceutical Council, GPhC) requires that they must have been working in a patient-facing capacity for a minimum of 2 years before enrolment can be considered. Because of this, teaching delivery is predominantly through distance learning supplemented with in-work mentorship and tutoring within the students current employment.

Implicit in the course design, though, is the expectation for students to be active rather than passive learners and to be able to identify learning from their daily clinical practice.

To actively support students 'learning conferences' (Weekend residential, conference-style teaching sessions) will be utilised where students will encounter a variety of teaching, learning and assessment methodologies to enhance and complement the distance learning aspect of the course. For example, students will have the opportunity to learn from advanced healthcare practitioners in a series of 'master classes', there will be the opportunity for students to share learning through poster and oral presentations and novel learning technologies such as 'Sim-man' and so forth will be utilised. The conferences will also act as a focus for certain specific assessments that cannot be achieved through work-based mentors, coursework or more traditional tests, these will include Objective Structure Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), team and problem-based learning.

For those choosing to undertake the Pharmacist Independent Prescribing module there are 9 additional study days at the University. The study days are aimed at readying students for their role as independent prescribers. These study days provide students with an opportunity to further enhance their clinical skills, diagnostic ability and disease management through a variety of case-based learning and practical skills teaching.

As the course aims to teach the applied knowledge and skills required to practice as an advanced clinical professional, the teaching modalities have been chosen to both facilitate this and also encourage continuing development of independent and autonomous learning informed by higher education research. Consequently, the course has adopted a case-based approach to learning as this is considered to have greater professional resonance for students; it also embeds clinical principles in simulated situations that are encountered in daily practice.

Most practitioners now work in extended clinical teams whether in hospital or primary care the course will also embrace learning activities that promotes team approaches, for example, with the adoption of problem-based learning and team-based learning strategies. Both of these have been observed to be successful within undergraduate student cohorts and it is therefore logical to judiciously apply these techniques to post-registration courses.

The curriculum reflects the most relevant topics contemporary to clinical pharmacy practice helping pharmacists acquire, interpret and apply relevant knowledge and skills to clinical practice. To ensure this is delivered appropriately a range of teaching and learning strategies will be applied across the programme. The use of technology to enhance learning will be embraced to deliver teaching materials flexibly for individual modules. A virtual learning platform will be used as a hub for all relevant programme information. It will contain the programme outline, module descriptors, assessment methods, learning materials and sessional information. In addition to the use of electronic simulation, audio and video recordings, where appropriate, will be used to help learners reinforce knowledge acquisition. Applied and work based learning will allow the student to develop throughout the MSc in Clinical Pharmacy where they will transition into advanced practitioners.

Assessment

Assessments will be appropriate to specified learning outcomes and are considered part of the learning strategy of the programme. This will depend on the specifics within a module but typically the types of assessments within the programme will include:

- **Work based competencies**

Work based competencies will be utilised across a number of optional modules relevant to clinical practice. It will act as a reflective record of both experiential activities, including the acquisition of factual knowledge, and as a focus for competency-based evaluation. Work based competencies will need to be organised by the individual student with their mentor demonstrating organisational, time management and critical skills.

Work based competencies will encompass tasks that evidence competence against the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Foundation Pharmacy Framework and for those opting for Independent Prescribing, the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence's Single Competency Framework for Prescribers.

Students will be able to reflect on their own practice and will allow students to evaluate and question their own practice encouraging a more disciplined approach to experiential learning to identify and improve their own learning needs. The competency frameworks reflect the professional and regulatory bodies' guidance of the requirements of early career pharmacists before evidencing advanced practice as outlined in their advanced practice framework.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society Faculty, which awards levels of advanced practice to individual pharmacists, requires evidence in a portfolio style which work based competencies would be an important element. Thus facilitating the individual pharmacist's credentialing by their professional body.

- **Poster/oral presentations**

Posters and oral presentations demonstrate an individual's ability to assimilate and organise complex information and present their findings in a timely manner in a controlled environment.

- **Multiple choice question examinations**

These are used widely in the testing of the acquisition of factual and can test the theoretical application of factual knowledge to clinical scenarios

- **Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)**

The OSCE will assess a student's knowledge, clinical reasoning, clinical problem-solving and effective interpersonal skills in a simulated clinical environment against set assessment criteria, which will be based upon the pre-validated pharmacy undergraduate OSCE criteria template.

It is envisaged that, as with content, assessments will adapt to best reflect and assess the necessary skills and knowledge that are driven by innovations in clinical pharmacy practice. Furthermore, as

research provides alternative methods of assessments which have been validated as appropriate these will be incorporated where possible into the evaluation of student performance.

No compensation will be allowed between modules or with elements within a module. The pass mark must be attained for all elements and modules (University regulation 4.2.3)

Word and time limits will be applied to the relevant assessments with a +/- of 10% accepted based upon University regulation documentation (AQH-F14 & F15).

Moderation

The quality assurance of tutor-conducted marking and evaluation is to be achieved through an internal moderation process; assessments marked by academic staff will be moderated utilising standard university procedures:

- Assessment and moderation of student work is carried out by staff at the University of Sunderland according to the current regulations.
- MSc research dissertations / theses are double marked by academic staff.
- All student work is assessed by University of Sunderland staff. The assessment boards operate at Sunderland for all modules and all students.
- Verification of assessments is carried out by an external examiner who shall receive a representative sample of student work from each module. External examiners are appointed to oversee and advise on the assessment of the programme. They verify the comparability of the standards of the programme with the standards of similar programmes elsewhere in the UK and the quality of the assessment process.

24. Retention strategy.

The challenges faced by students who are in full-time professional employment are not underestimated; the design of the course has been explicitly with this in mind. The course's flexible structure is a direct result of retention considerations. Moreover, the approach of local employers to their support of postgraduate clinical programmes differs. The course structure is such that employers can choose from a suite of options that fulfils their requirements whilst providing students with a variety of modules that will promote professional development throughout the MSc.

The integration of the Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists course is a novel approach to delivering the MSc in Clinical pharmacy and aims to help improve student performance. Anecdotal evidence indicates that certain groups of pharmacists are more likely to struggle with the IP course (predominantly community pharmacists) and at least part of the reason for this is their lack of clinical experience/knowledge, by associating the diploma with the IP course it is envisaged that community pharmacists would pre-prepare for the IP module by completing prior modules in the MSc.

As the programme matures and a greater number of optional modules become available the University aims to offer these as individual (stand-alone) continuing professional development (CPD) modules. It is

hoped that students may return after the completion of the MSc to complete individual modules according to their professional interests and needs.

To further support students and enhance their experience the course has been designed with the intention of embedding the principle of work-based mentors in many of clinical modules. Mentors will be required to be part of the established clinical workforce in the student's working environment with a minimum of 5 years practice experience. Hong Kong students will have an academic mentor allocated to them if work-based mentorship is not feasible, and in the UK in exceptional cases. Academic staff will discuss with all work based mentors their role in the students learning and any issues in the requirement will be discussed in full to ensure they have the knowledge to carry out their roles as mentors. A mentor training pack along with examples of the competencies with levels accepted will be provided to ensure that the level of assessment across the students is the same. Each mentor will have an academic contact if there are any issues with the programme, student or competencies so that matters can be dealt with appropriately in a timely manner.

25. Any other information

A 6 monthly meeting is to be arranged with regional employers to discuss developmental issues and to ensure the programme continues to meet the requirements of the contemporary pharmacist workforce. Meetings will be arranged during visits to Hong Kong in December and June with programme leads at HKU SPACE, as well as, frequent updates across the year.

SECTION C – TEACHING AND LEARNING

26. What is the programme about?

The programme is designed to extend and consolidate pharmacist practitioners' contemporary clinical knowledge and skills. Integration of Independent Prescribing allows a single post-graduate course that matches the needs of 'early years' practitioners with employer expectations.

The programme aims to:

- enhance the development of practitioners as independent and autonomous learners promoting safe and effective management of patients;
- enhance practitioner knowledge and skills in pharmaceutical care, professional practice, personal practice, as well as, management and organisation;
- encourage and develop research skills, including clinical self-audit;

- help practitioners acquire appropriate knowledge, critically interpret information and apply this to patient care; and
- ensure practitioners understand the level of clinical practice expected following completion of the programme.

27. What will I know or be able to do at the end of the programme?

The student will be able to apply the skills and knowledge gained to solving highly complex cases through synthesising the data and determining the most appropriate course of action. Students will demonstrate their competence against the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Foundation Framework and thereby the programme will aid their transition into autonomous practitioners.

Practitioners will be able to impart the skills and knowledge acquired throughout the MSc to their daily practice to deliver excellence in patient care through critically interpreting arising situations in the work place and formulating appropriate solutions as a competent pharmacist.

Additional to these generic principles are some specific learning outcomes associated with each level of award:

Learning Outcomes Postgraduate Certificate – Skills

By the end of this part of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

- search, identify, acquire and critically appraise clinical information (S1);
- integrate recommendations derived from accepted evidence-based guidance taking into account the individual patient needs, characteristics, therapeutic endpoints and economic factors; access and synthesise from reputable sources relevant findings from outwith clinical guidelines and apply that in the context of a patient (S2).

Learning Outcomes Postgraduate Certificate – Knowledge

By the end of this part of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

- Evaluate common conditions encountered in routine practice, appreciate their epidemiology, pathophysiology, natural history and prognosis whilst being able to objectively discuss the rationale underpinning safe and effective treatment (K1);
- assess and evaluate routine diagnostic and clinical investigations in the individual context of a patient (K2)

Learning Outcomes Postgraduate Diploma – Skills

By the end of this part of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

As for certificate level plus:

- Effectively justify and apply the responsibilities of a safe clinical practitioner to patients and public (S3);
- Develop interpersonal relationships to effectively communicate with patients, carers, prescribers and wider healthcare and social care teams (S4)
- Collate and integrate relevant health and social care information to formulate an informed decision that provides objective benefits to the patient, their family or to a wider patient population (S5)

Learning Outcomes Postgraduate Diploma – Knowledge

By the end of this part of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

As for certificate level plus:

- Be able to articulate and summarise the fundamental principles of therapeutic optimisation through evaluation and consideration of various determinants affecting treatment strategy (K3)

Learning Outcomes Masters – Skills

By the end of this part of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

As for certificate and diploma levels plus:

- Formulate and justify their actions as an autonomous competent clinical and/or research practitioner (S6)
- Propose and defend an in-depth critical evaluation of the various types of clinical, social and scientific evidence and other clinical information in independent patient management and/or research (S7)

Learning Outcomes Masters – Knowledge

By the end of this part of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

As for certificate and diploma levels plus:

- Integrate an in-depth knowledge and critical understanding into constructing qualitative and/or quantitative research methods, and evaluate the ethical, theoretical and logistical considerations associated with the design and interpretation of research studies or have the depth of synthesised clinical knowledge commensurate with safe decision-making and therapeutic justification in an autonomous practitioner (K4)

28. What will the programme consist of?

Taught postgraduate programmes generally consist of a number of taught modules leading to the award of a Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits) or Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits). A Masters qualification (180 credits) usually culminates in a major piece of independent work such as a project or dissertation. All modules are at postgraduate level (level 7 in the UK's national scheme). The summary below describes briefly what is contained in the programme. The programme structure, including a detailed list of modules, can be found in the [programme regulations](#).

The programme comprises of optional modules which will be offered at different years and times of study. Each year a total of 60 credits must be chosen with the required level of attainment to be achieved to move on to the next year of study. The modules are set out to be as flexible as possible to allow the students a choice in the options most appropriate for their development in their sector of pharmacy. Many of the modules will carry a mentor based competency assessments in the work place where students will be expected to demonstrate they meet the required level of attainment.

The flexibility of the programme allows a number of pathways to be taken. All students will be offered guidance to ensure they have considered their options carefully and that all modules taken are relevant to their practice. All students will have a personal tutor who they can discuss the programme modules with before deciding on their choices and in addition can discuss this with the programme lead(s).

The modules are offered in sequential blocks of study with different modules being available at predetermined times within the year. Optional modules will be subject to availability and students will be made aware of the options available.

Example pathway for a pharmacist aspiring to be an Independent Prescribing Pharmacist

Year One: Clinical Decision Making and Stages of Care (20 credits), Patient Safety (20 credits), Clinical Skills 1 (10 credits), Clinical Investigations and Diagnostics (10 credits)

Year Two: The Acute Patient (20 credits), The Chronic Patient (20 credits), Evidence Based Medicine (10 credits), Clinical Skills 2 (10 credits)

Year Three: Independent Prescribing (45 credits), Clinical Audit (15 credits)

Example Pathway for a Community Pharmacist

Year One: Clinical Decision Making and Stages of Care (20 credits), Patient Safety (20 credits), Evidence Based Medicine (10 credits), Healthcare systems and service provisions (10 credits)

Year Two: The Acute Patient (20 credits), The Chronic Patient (20 credits), Clinical Skills 1 (10 credits), Population Healthcare (10 credits)

Year Three: Independent Prescribing (45 credits), Clinical Audit (15 credits)

Example Pathway for a Primary Care Pharmacist

Year One: Clinical Decision Making and Stages of Care (20 credits), Patient Safety (20 credits), Primary Care and Social Pharmacy (10 credits), Clinical Investigations and Diagnostics (10 credits)

Year Two: The Acute Patient (20 credits), The Chronic Patient (20 credits), Evidence Based Medicine (10 credits), Population Healthcare (10 credits)

Year Three: Independent Prescribing (45 credits), Clinical Audit (15 credits)

Example Pathway for a Consultant Pharmacist

Year One: Clinical Decision Making and Stages of Care (20 credits), Patient Safety (20 credits), Clinical Skills 1, Evidence Based Medicine (10 credits)

Year Two: Independent Prescribing (45 credits), Clinical Audit (15 credits)

Year Three: Research Methods (30 credits), Research Project (30 credits)

Example Pathway for a Research Pharmacist

Year One: Clinical Decision Making and Stages of Care (20 credits), Patient Safety (20 credits), Clinical Skills 1 (10 credits), Clinical Investigations and Diagnostics (10 credits)

Year Two: The Acute Patient (20 credits), The Chronic Patient (20 credits), Evidence Based Medicine (10 credits),

Year Three: Research Methods (30 credits), Research Project (30 credits)

	Block 1 (Oct-Dec)	Block 2 (Jan - Mar)	Block 3 (Mar - June)
Year 1 (60 credits)	Clinical Decision Making & Stages of Care (20 credits)	Evidence Based Medicine	Healthcare Systems & Service Provisions
	Patient Safety (20 credits)	Personalised Healthcare	Primary Care & Social Pharmacy
	The Acute Patient (20 credits)	Population Healthcare	Clinical Investigations and Diagnostics
	The Chronic Patient (20 credits)	Clinical Skills 1	
Year 2 (60 credits)	The Acute Patient (20 credits)	Evidence Based Medicine	Healthcare Systems & Service Provisions
	The Chronic Patient (20 credits)	Personalised Healthcare	Primary Care & Social Pharmacy
		Population Healthcare	Clinical Investigations and Diagnostics
		Clinical Skills 1	Clinical Skills 2 [†]
	Independent Prescribing (45 credits)*		
	Clinical Audit (15 credits)		
Year 3 (60 credits)	Independent Prescribing (45 credits)*		
	Clinical Audit (15 credits)		
	Research Methods (30 credits)		
	Research Project (30 credits)		

* Pre-requisite that they have 2 years patient orientated pharmacist practice prior to starting IP as per GPhC regulations

[†]Pre-requisite that Clinical Skills 1 has been completed in the previous year of study

10 credit modules

Year 1 offers the choice of four 20 credit optional modules running from October to March and seven 10 credit optional modules running from March to June subject to availability. As the programme matures it is expected that additional optional modules will be offered. These will be responsive to changes in the profession and developments within medicine more generally. For certain optional modules there is a prerequisite that they must have completed the introductory module to then undertake the further module.

Year 2 will offer optional modules either spanning semester 1 and 2, semester 3 only or semester 1,2 & 3. Optional module credits vary, from 10 credits to 45 credits, depending on the module chosen.

Year 3 will offer optional modules which span the whole of the academic year, for example, 30 credits for research methods and 30 credit module for a research project.

There is a 45 credit Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists module available from year 2 of study. This is a pre-validated stand-alone module and in itself will carry the award of postgraduate Certificate of Achievement: Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists. This module is currently validated by the University and is accredited by the pharmacy regulator, the GPhC. To be eligible for this module pharmacists must be UK registered and have at least two year's experience in a patient-facing capacity, they must also have the agreement of Designated Medical Practitioner to mentor them and assess their competence in a range of prescribing skills as detailed by NICE's Single Competency Framework for Prescribers. Unlike the other modules in the course the Independent Prescribing module is regulated by the GPhC and therefore subject to their accreditation policies. Due to the requirement of completing 60 credits by the end of each year, the clinical audit module accounting for 15 credits will be required to be taken alongside the Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists module.

The module titles focus either on a skill requirement or key topic area required of clinical pharmacists. Content of each module will be embedded in contemporary clinical pharmaceutical knowledge and practice. For example, clinical decision making and stages of care allow for alteration to content based on the current position of pharmacists and healthcare at the time of delivery as it focuses on the most commonly seen conditions which may change over time and thus the programme content must reflect these changes.

Several therapeutic strands run through many of the modules. These strands recognise a number of key agendas within therapeutics and good patient care. For example, each module (where appropriate) will be expected to address issues relating to antimicrobial stewardship and patient safety even though these may not be either explicitly or implicitly mentioned in the module titles.

To attain a post graduate certificate in clinical pharmacy 60 credits must be completed from one of the stages of the programme. To attain a postgraduate diploma in clinical pharmacy 120 credits must be completed from two of the stages of the programme, with 60 credits from each stage. To attain a postgraduate Masters in clinical pharmacy 180 credits must be completed from the three stages of the programme, with 60 credits at each stage of the programme.

29. How will I be taught?

Scheduled teaching activities	Yes
Independent study	Yes
Placement	No

Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma:

Teaching and Learning Modes

- Learning is guided through directed study using open and distance-learning materials; primarily learning will be focussed using predominantly clinical case-based learning rather than abstract, didactic approaches.
- Keynote lectures, seminars, workshops, master classes and practical clinical skills training will be available through the learning conferences and the standard contact days that are a requirement of the Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists module.
- E-learning via the virtual learning environment (VLE); this will include: completion of online tasks, the use of embedded educational resources such as video lectures, audiocasts and tests.
- Guided clinical exercises where mentor-guided assessment feedback is intended to be an informative and integrated element of learning.

Examples of acquired knowledge and understanding via various teaching and learning modes

Module: Clinical Decision Making and Stages of Care

- The key elements for making safe affective clinical decisions will be explored through consideration of a patient's presenting complaint, diagnosis, prognosis and natural history taking into account clinical, social and psychological factors. This will be achieved using case-based learning allowing students to acquire knowledge set against a practical clinical problem. The use of simulation will explore the potential impact, both positive and negative, of decisions on a patient's clinical outcomes. Students will also be expected to utilise their clinical experience, working with their clinical tutor, to acquire knowledge and derive understanding of that knowledge in a practical setting.
- The use of medicines optimisation is explored through the foundation of applied evidence-based medicine (population-based) and personalised therapy (individual-based) in the context of safe, appropriate and effective prescribing concordant with patient and practitioner outcome expectations.
- Work-based practice and assessment is an important element of learning across a number of modules where there will be repetition of set tasks until standards are met within the year of study to the required level and demonstrated on more than one occasion.
- Workshop-style teaching, seminars and master classes will supplement directed knowledge acquisition but will be directed toward more specific or defined therapeutic topics delivered at the conference events.

Module: Patient Safety

Patient safety will be approached from the perspective of individual risks that may compromise the wellbeing of patients, for example, risks associated with so-called 'high-risk' medicines, variation in patients resulting in individualised risk together with systemic (institutional, cultural, professional and psychological) issues that impede safety.

- Theoretical and practice-based approaches will show the underpinning aspects to patient safety and risk minimisation. Recommended reading, task-based work and reflective practice recording will be required.
- High-risk medicines and therapeutic monitoring requirements of medicines will be explored through relevant literature and scenario-based tasks.

Module: Clinical Investigations and Diagnostics

- Students are introduced to complex investigations, clinical tests and imaging. Case-based scenarios, clinical mentor assessments and reflective practice in addition to workshop discussions at the learning conference will be used to direct and consolidate knowledge acquisition.

Module: The acute patient

- The acute patient modules will focus on understanding the approach to managing the most common conditions presented in an acute clinical setting through case-based studies and tasks. Management of patient cases including diagnosis, pharmacological management, surgical or procedural intervention, management of complications of therapy, monitoring and supportive therapies.
- Cases are designed to reflect scenarios that pharmacists will see in their working practice with several related topics taught through the integrated case packages.

Postgraduate Master of Science

Modules: Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists and Research module

Both the Independent Prescribing (IP) and Research modules are designed to demonstrate a student's transition from dependency to independent learning and application. For IP this takes the form of a transition to independent competencies based on their assessment in practice through a Designated Medical Practitioner as laid down in the regulations and curriculum published by the GPhC. For the research module students will be expected to conduct a substantial piece of research demonstrating their independent academic development.

Teaching and Learning Modes (IP)

- Unlike most of the other elements of the course, the module is regulated by the GPhC who accredit the curriculum, learning outcomes, and course delivery. The current accredited iteration has nine study days at the University which employs a variety of teaching and learning modes including: case-based seminars, case-study presentations, physical examination principles and skills and lectures. Students have to spend time (at least 90 hours) with work based clinical mentors to support the completion of a portfolio of evidence (Learning needs assessment, CPD record, competency log, reflective practice log, and a specialist therapeutic narrative together with other specific, defined elements). In this way the portfolio is both an assessment and learning tool for students.
- In addition, there is directed study time relating to clinical skills, coursework, data collection and presentation, preparation of clinical protocols and clinical management plans.
- Reading and awareness of relevant papers, texts and local and national evidence-based guidelines.

Examples of acquired knowledge and understanding via various teaching and learning modes (IP)

- The consultation, decision making, assessment and review are considered in the context of becoming an independent prescriber. To acquire this knowledge and understanding the first study day at the University focuses on autonomous working, understanding own limitations and clinical skills sessions on taking assessments and consultations led by specialists in this area. Competency in these areas need to be demonstrated through the log with the work based mentor and demonstrated in the OSCE examination.

Modules: Research Methods and Research Project

Teaching and Learning Modes (Research)

- The focus shifts towards research in the field of clinical pharmacy. Students are taught the concepts of good study design and high-quality research methodology through the first module in class-based activities, e-learning resources and coursework preparation.
- Students then get the opportunity to apply their new skills and knowledge by conducting their own project in the subsequent module.

Examples of acquired knowledge and understanding via various teaching and learning modes (Research)

Modules: Research Methods and Research Project

- Gaining critical understanding of ethical, theoretical and logistical considerations associated with the design of studies through taught methods and self-directed learning.
- Completion of a research project in practice allows students to gain first-hand experience of running a study within the specialty of their choosing.

A list of the modules in the programme can be found in the [Programme Regulations](#).

- A summary of the types of teaching, learning and assessment in each module of the programme can be found in the [Matrix of Modes of Teaching](#).

30. How will I be assessed and given feedback?

Written examinations	Yes
Coursework	Yes
Practical assessments	Yes

A summary of the types of teaching, learning and assessment in each module of the programme can be found in the [Matrix of Modes of Teaching](#).

The generic assessment criteria which we use can be found [here](#). Some programmes use subject-specific assessment criteria which are based on the generic ones.

This programme uses the Generic University Assessment Criteria	Yes	
This programme uses the Subject Specific Assessment Criteria	Yes	

The University regulations can be found [here](#).

The programme adopts a variety of assessment methods, although not all modules will use all the available assessment methodologies. A number of modules require the completion of clinical exercises that are to be accomplished with in-work mentor guidance. Students, for instance, may be asked to identify a patient from practice and to complete a certain activity (completion and assessment of a medical history, for instance). The quality, depth and effectiveness of the interaction would be assessed by the student's mentor and record of both the exercise, the tutor evaluation would be recorded to be submitted as evidence of achievement.

Examples of other assessments include:

- Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE); these are controlled clinical assessments that utilise highly defined clinical scenarios and are designed to test a specific element of clinical knowledge or a clinical skill or the integration of clinical skills and knowledge within a simulated clinical setting.
- Problem-based learning (PBL); this is a form of student-led learning that uses a clinical problem to emphasise learning needs and knowledge/understanding needs. Generally these are group based activities and are dependent on the mutual sharing of information and peer to peer learning; the solution to the problem being assessed.
- Critical evaluation of contemporary evidence.
- Clinical case study or clinical audit poster and oral presentations.
- Research design, implementation, analysis and report writing.

At a Master's level, students would be expected to demonstrate independence of work through competence assessment within either the IP module or independent research achieved within the research modules.

Feedback

The student will be provided feedback, formative and summative, through a number of different mediums. Written feedback will be provided for the relevant pieces of coursework and mentor based assessments. Formative feedback based on in module assessments designed for feedback of current progress. Module leaders and personal tutors will provide feedback through one to one meetings if necessary or via telephone or e-mail, depending on the circumstances.

31. [Teaching, learning and assessment matrix](#)

32. How does research influence the programme?

Contemporary clinical practice is, by its nature, research informed; the principles of modern medicine are embedded in the use of evidence-based approaches. The design of the course recognises the importance of practitioners to appreciate the derivation of such evidence-based techniques and will support students in their application of hierarchical clinical evidence into their routine practice.

Many of the staff who are module leaders or content editors have embedded posts associated with local health providers (foundation trusts, clinical commissioning groups, and community pharmacies). Part of their remit is to provide 'consultancy'-based assistance to these providers. Furthermore, these practitioners are all engaged with practice-based clinical or practice research that informs their particular speciality.

Year 3 of study offers optional modules that introduce practical research and research-informed clinical audit or modules that introduce students to the principles and practice of applied clinical research, research methodologies, and analysis. Supervisors for the research project will be allocated to students from a pool of academic staff who have experience in research and research supervision.

SECTION D EMPLOYABILITY

33. How will the programme prepare me for employment?

The programme gives you the opportunity to develop advanced skills and knowledge which you can use in the future. Some postgraduate programmes are associated with a particular career path but most skills can be applied to a range of employment situations. The skills which this programme is designed to develop are listed below.

The clinical diploma is intended to support postgraduate students develop and enhance their clinical careers. There is a more obvious requirement, in all forms of the profession, for practitioners to possess advanced clinical knowledge supported by defined postgraduate education for which this programme is designed. In addition, if pharmacists wish to register as Independent Prescribers they must complete a recognised accredited prescribing course. Hence the clinical diploma offers the possibility of a prescribing exit award that allows annotation of their registration with the GPhC; this provides an opportunity to the practitioner for career progression that would otherwise be denied.

The programme is designed particularly with the needs of practitioners either in the early stages of their clinical careers (i.e. within the first 5 years of registration), for more experienced practitioners embarking on a career change or for those wanting to supplement and develop their clinical knowledge and skills in a formalised manner. In response to student and employer demands the current structure of postgraduate clinical pharmacy programmes and short courses has been consolidated in to one streamlined programme. There has been a deliberate effort to design flexibility in to the programme allowing students to choose from a range of options not only in terms of modules but also in terms of exit routes. Importantly for early years practitioner the programme has incorporated the Independent Prescribing module. This regulated qualification is considered to be essential for most clinical practitioners and many employers are insisting that students possess this qualification prior to engagement or as an essential element of their portfolio prior to professional advancement. Increasingly, the ability of pharmacists to prescribe is becoming an essential skill for those working in primary care. By integrating Independent Prescribing in to the Clinical Pharmacy MSc students will be supported in a structured manner that will enhance the likelihood of successful course completion.

For information about other opportunities available to our students who study on campus, click [here](#).

Additional opportunities to develop your experiences more widely will vary if you study at one of our partner colleges. For information about the extra-curricular activities available in any of our colleges please contact the college direct.

34. Particular features of the qualification. (optional)

Completion of the programme that includes the Cluster Three module Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists allows for annotation of their General Pharmaceutical Council registration as Pharmacist Independent Prescribers.

35. Professional statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) accreditation.

PSRB accreditation is not relevant to this programme	
PSRB accreditation is currently being sought for this programme	
This programme currently has PSRB accreditation	No

In the proposed programme The Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists module is accredited with the GPhC. It is a requirement of this accreditation that the module remains 'stand-alone'; allowing access to the module for students not necessarily enrolled on the clinical diploma / MSc.

The module is currently accredited until:
January 2017

The relevant PSRB(s) is/are:
General Pharmaceutical Council

The terms of the accreditation are as follows:

Accreditation of the module is for a period of three years and must be 'stand-alone'; i.e. appropriately qualified pharmacists must be able to access the module from outwith the Clinical Pharmacy diploma/MSc programme. Practitioners eligible for the course are those that have been registered with the GPhC and have worked in a patient-facing capacity for at least two years post-registration.

The programme is recognised as:

Fulfilling the academic requirements for annotation as an independent pharmacist prescriber with the General Pharmaceutical Council.

The programme is accredited dependent on General Pharmaceutical Council accreditation processes.

Accreditation gives graduates Annotation of their registration that allows independent prescribing.

This depends upon successful completion of PHMM50 (Postgraduate Certificate of Achievement: Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists).

There are programme-specific regulations relating to the following. Details are given in the programme regulations:

The modules to be studied	Yes
Pass-marks for some or all modules and/or parts (elements) of modules	Yes
Placement requirements	Yes
Attendance requirements	Yes
Professional practice requirements	Yes
Final or overall mark for the award	No
Other	

SECTION E PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REGULATIONS

Use [Programme Regulations Form](#), for questions 36 and 37

SECTION F ADMISSIONS, LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORT

38. What are the admissions requirements?

State the admissions requirements for each entry point (eg for the start of the Masters programme but also, if applicable, entry to the dissertation phase ('stage' or 'part') only, where particular entry routes are required).

The University's standard admissions requirements can be found in the [university regulations](#). Programme-specific requirements which are in addition to those regulations are given below. Students must be registered pharmacists with the General Pharmaceutical Council of Great Britain with a minimum of lower second class honours degree in Pharmacy, this is a requirement for entry to any of the offered modules. For those wishing to opt to undertake the Independent Prescribing module the student will need to comply with the most recent regulations set by the General Pharmaceutical Council for the accredited module (<https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/education/pharmacist-independent-prescriber>).

To study at Hong Kong:

- Minimum of a lower second class honours degree in pharmacy from an institution recognised by the Pharmaceutical Society of Hong Kong.
- Or any other experiential learning deemed to be equivalent by the programme board
- Where the applicant's first language is not English they must provide evidence of competence in English. This would normally be a TOEFL score of 550 or IELTS grade 6.

Can students enter with advanced standing?	Yes	
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If yes, to which Stages?

Level 1	
Level 2	
Level 3	X

If yes, with what qualifications?

Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy for entry to the Masters qualification consisting of research methods (30 credits) and research project (30 credits).

Students studying in the UK or Hong Kong who currently hold a Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy from Sunderland University or another UK-based university are eligible to enter the MSc research methods and research project modules of the programme with advanced standing. Applications for direct entry to level 3 of the programme for those students holding a non-UK-based postgraduate diploma would not normally be accepted with advanced standing.

The University has a process by which applicants whose experience to date already covers one or more modules of the programme they are applying for may seek Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). Full details can be found [here](#) but if you think that this may be relevant to you, please contact the department which offers the programme you are interested in.

39. What kind of support and help will there be? in the department: describe the student support in place in the department/ faculty

Personal tutors

The programme team recognises that robust and effective student support is vital in the successful delivery of distance learning programmes. To this end, student support will be aimed at providing access to staff at reasonable times. All students will receive a University e-mail address and will have on-line access to the University library resources.

Each student will have access to a member of University staff for pastoral care and basic academic problems. Contact between students and tutors will be by telephone, e-mail or post. All students will be in regular contact with the Programme Leader and have access to appropriate programme staff.

The Programme Tutor will be responsible for all matters of overall support for students on this programme. This might include, for example:

- General study and support advice for students
- Discussions and advice for students' employers and work-based mentors
- Guidance on how the study fits in with workplace
- Personal problems affecting the students' studies
- General advice on case study selection

For the modules which involve a taught element, the Module Leader will be responsible for student support and guidance on all the module material. This might include, for example:

- Academic support of learning material
- Advice on directed reading
- Advice on work based study and assignment

Studies Advice

Students on this programme are all graduates. Therefore, advice on study skills is less likely to be required. However, the programme team are aware that students from different academic experiences, or those who have had a substantial break from formalised learning, may have some initial difficulty in adapting to postgraduate study. These students will be provided with separate information on study skills and will be encouraged to liaise with the programme team closely throughout their studies.

Appropriate support for students who fail module assessments will be provided by the module leader. Advice on answering questions and undertaking individual assignments will be provided in the module guides. However, students will have access to staff for further advice as and when needed.

a. in the university as a whole:

The University provides a range of professional support services including [health and well-being](#), [counselling](#), [disability support](#), and a [Chaplaincy](#). Click on the links for further information.

40. What resources will I have access to?

On campus	In a partner college	By distance learning

On campus

Tick all that apply

General Teaching and Learning Space	✓
IT	✓
Library	✓
VLE	✓
Laboratory	
Studio	
Performance space	
Other specialist	✓
Technical resources	

Text for details listed above:

The majority of the course's content will be delivered by a combination of distance learning and student directed learning supported by in-work mentors. To enhance the student experience there will be the opportunity to participate in two 'learning conferences' per academic year. These will be organised as

weekend events, where students will be offered a series of master classes, seminars and workshops. The conferences are also intended to allow an opportunity for assessment. For example, the newly refurbished clinical simulation areas in Fleming building will be used for OSCE assessments.

Information about the University's facilities can be found [here](#).

Please see the relevant college prospectus or website for details of college learning resources if you are planning to study in one of our partner colleges.

41. Are there any additional costs on top of the fees?

No, but all students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials.	✓
Yes (optional) All students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials. In addition there are some are additional costs for optional activities associated with the programme (see below)	
Yes (essential) All students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials. In addition there are some are essential additional costs associated with the programme (see below)	

42. How are student views represented?

All taught programmes in the University have student representatives for each programme who meet in a Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) where they can raise students' views and concerns. The Students' Union and the faculties together provide training for student representatives. SSLCs and focus groups are also used to obtain student feedback on plans for developing existing programmes and designing new ones. Feedback on your programme is obtained every year through module questionnaires and informs the annual review of your programme. Student representatives are also invited to attend Programme and Module Studies Boards which manage the delivery and development of programmes and modules. Various Faculty committees, particularly Faculty Student Success Committee, Academic Development Committee and Quality Management Sub-Committee also have student representation. This allows students to be involved in higher-level plans for teaching and learning. There is a parallel structure at university level on which students are represented by sabbatical officers who are the elected leaders of the Students' Union.

The University's student representation and feedback policy can be found [here](#).

For distance learning operated from Sunderland: if you are studying by distance learning you will have slightly different arrangements from those used on campus. In particular you are likely to have virtual rather than physical meetings and discussions. However these arrangements should provide comparable opportunities for you to give feedback. Details are given below.

A virtual environment will be made available for students to comment on aspects of the programme. There will be two conferences held each academic year where students will have the

opportunity to provide feedback to academic tutors. Module leaders and programme leads will request student input and raise issues at the academic board. A student representative of each cohort will have the option of attending the academic board to feedback their views of the programme.

SECTION G QUALITY MANAGEMENT

43. National subject benchmarks

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education publishes benchmark statements which give guidance as to the skills and knowledge which graduates in various subjects and in certain types of degree are expected to have. They do not cover all subjects at postgraduate level but those which exist can be found at [here](#).

Are there any benchmark statements for this programme?		NO
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The QAA also publishes a Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) which defines the generic skills and abilities expected of students who have achieved awards at a given level and with which our programmes align. The FHEQ can be found [here](#).

44. How are the quality and standards of the programme assured?

The programme is managed and quality assured through the University's standard processes. Programmes are overseen by Module and Programme Studies Boards which include student representatives. Each year each module leader provides a brief report on the delivery of the module, identifying strengths and areas for development, and the programme team reviews the programme as a whole. The purpose of this is to ensure that the programme is coherent and up-to-date, with suitable progression through the programme, and a good fit (alignment) between what is taught and how students learn and are assessed - the learning outcomes, content and types of teaching, learning and assessment. Student achievement, including progress through the programme and the way in which the final award is made, is kept under review. The programme review report is sent to the Faculty Quality Management Sub-Committee which in turn reports issues to the University's Quality Management Sub-Committee (QMSC) and Academic Development Committee (ADC).

External examiners are appointed to oversee and advise on the assessment of the programme. They ensure that the standards of the programme are comparable with those of similar programmes elsewhere in the UK and are also involved in the assessment process to make sure that it is fair. They are invited to comment on proposed developments to the programme. Their reports are sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) as well as to the Faculty so that issues of concern can be addressed.

All programmes are reviewed by the University on a six-yearly cycle to identify good practice and areas for enhancement. Programmes are revalidated through this review process. These reviews include at least one academic specialist in the subject area concerned from another UK university.

The University is subject to external review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education on a six-year cycle. Their review reports for Sunderland can be found at [here](#).

Further information about our quality processes can be found [here](#).

Please also complete the [SITS form](#).