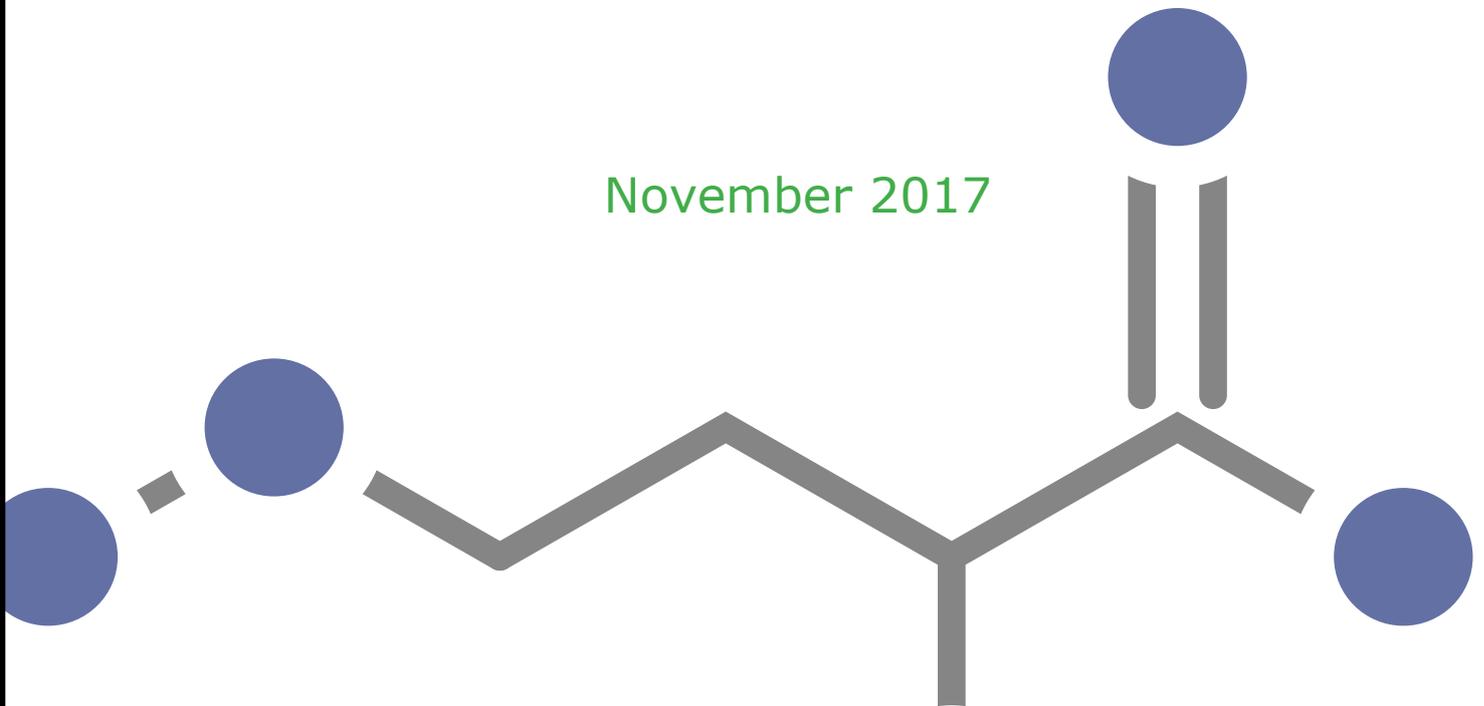
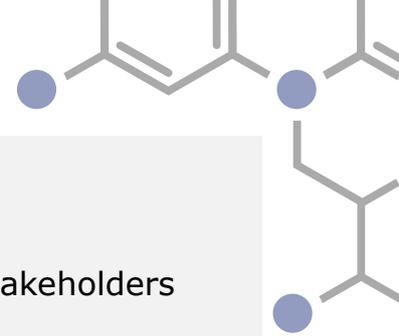


Pharmacy Schools Council

Strategic Plan 2017–2021

November 2017





Executive summary

The Pharmacy Schools Council is seeking to engage with all stakeholders to support and enhance the profession of pharmacy.

The aim of the Council is to build and support the promotion and development of the practice of pharmacy and the associated pharmaceutical sciences together with their application. This is achieved through partnership with stakeholders and other disciplines, and through increased political and international engagement.

The Council wishes to enhance the understanding, in all sectors of the profession (healthcare, industry, research and with the public) of the contribution that the Master's-level education of the pharmacist provides.

It is hoped that through this activity there will be significant benefit to workforce determination, efficiency and enhanced delivery of care to the patient, which in turn benefits the community and UK economy. This can be achieved through world-leading and research-informed education in pharmacy and related sciences.

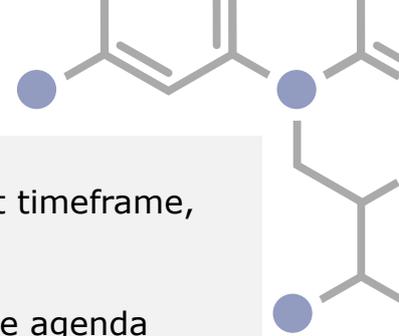
The continued development of the unique knowledge and skills of the pharmacist is key. It is imperative that innovations in pharmacy education continue to reflect the developing science and complexities of medicine research, and enable the pharmacist to lead in delivering the safe and optimal use of medicines in all practice.

This document lays out the Pharmacy Schools Council view on the future roles of the pharmacist, determined by the rapid changes in science, patient need, the needs of the clinical team, demographics, climate and the global economics of health and social care, and the challenges of workforce contribution.

The current strategy topics are student recruitment, curriculum assessment, recognition of the pharmacist, regulatory interaction, and research and industry. A further important consideration is the individual and collective environments that the schools of pharmacy, within higher education institutions, find themselves operating within.

The Pharmacy Schools Council wishes to ensure that the content of Master's-level undergraduate education continues to attract high-calibre individuals. It believes that success will be seen through the delivery of a recognised minimum standard of knowledge and ability at the point of graduation.

The contributions of both postgraduate and undergraduate education to the pharmacist's development, confidence and training, must also be



recognised. The realities of what can be achieved, and in what timeframe, must be clearly articulated.

This strategic plan outlines the Council's approach to the above agenda based upon its collective practical experience of delivering advanced higher and clinical education.

This strategy is designed to trigger and enhance evidence-based discussion to empower the profession.

Professor Nigel T Ratcliffe FRPharmS, FRSB, CBiol, SFHEA
Chair, Pharmacy Schools Council

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Our aim

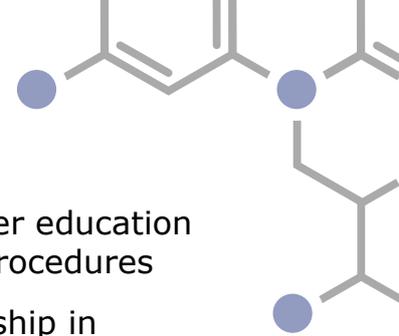
As the collective voice of nationally and internationally recognised UK pharmacy schools, the Pharmacy Schools Council aims to provide foresight, leadership and excellence in education and research for the benefit of patients, society and the UK.

Purpose

- To enhance partnerships and support to the profession of pharmacy
- To lead, advise and deliver in the education of future pharmacists
- To advise on, contribute to and enable continual postgraduate education and professional development
- To enable world-leading research in pharmaceutical science and pharmacy practice
- To leading nationally and internationally in the delivery of innovative, research-informed pharmacy undergraduate and postgraduate education
- To prepare and educate the profession for the independent prescribing, safe delivery and optimisation of the development and use of medicines
- To promote partnerships and ensure informed government, professional, regulatory and stakeholder policy development
- To maintain and develop the differentiated skills of the pharmacist
- To develop a culture of confidence within the profession

Who we are

The Council membership is principally the heads of the UK pharmacy schools and is therefore the informed and authoritative voice on all matters of pharmacy education and the rapidly advancing science behind today's emerging and complex medicines. The Council works to ensure that the pharmacists' roles in all host sectors are recognised, that the unique and differentiating skills within the multi-disciplinary clinical and research teams are fully utilised, and that the delivery of those teams is optimised.



Core values

- Collaborative working, respecting individual objectives of higher education institutions, and encourage creative thinking, processes and procedures
- Seeking to communicate evidence-based guidance and leadership in pharmaceutical education to ensure the successful recognition and contribution of the profession in all sectors
- Placing the patient and recipient of medicines at the centre of education development and delivery
- Valuing international standards, diversity and equality
- Producing work which is evidence-led, based on science, research and best practice
- Encouraging and assisting pharmacists to create a learning culture where all seek to engage with each other in their personal development and sharing of knowledge



The future role of the pharmacist

The pharmacy school perspective

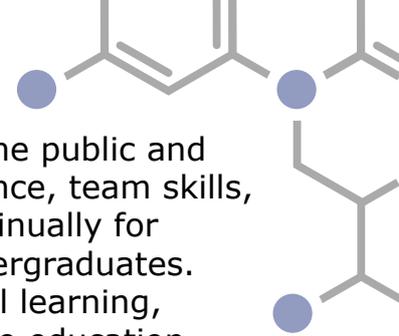
The environment in which the pharmacist operates is changing rapidly. It is influenced and impacted by the science that drives the development and delivery of medicines, world demographics, climate change, the global economics of health and social care and the challenges of workforce contribution. The enhanced role of the pharmacist in the clinic is also influenced by what is contained or indeed not contained within the training of other healthcare professionals. As with other healthcare professionals a pharmacist will be seen in many roles. This will be directly in patient-facing roles (in the community or hospital) or in other important medicine development, healthcare, scientific and leadership positions. The role of the pharmacist, no matter where they work or their specialist area, is person-centred – their role will impact the patient and the public.

The future of a healthy population and effective disease control depends on appropriate use of knowledge, experience, applied research and communication surrounding optimal development and use of medicines. This is where the pharmacist will lead.

It is recognised that the knowledge balance, scope and focus of pharmacists currently varies, though every role centres around the interests of the public and patients. The Pharmacy Schools Council's function is to interpret the changes in the environment of the profession, particularly in the science of medicines and disease, and to take the lead in ensuring the pharmacists of the future have the platform of education to deliver. The Council has a lead role in ensuring dialogue with those who commission the services of the pharmacist about which skills are required and available. This process of informing and leading the discussions and debate between commissioners, regulators and relevant professionals is key to continuing the safe delivery of medicines and the desired outcomes of their use.

The Council strives to ensure that the pharmacist is capable and confident in leading and taking ultimate accountability in the development, selection, prescribing and optimisation in the use of medicines. It wishes to preserve the pharmacist as the medicines scientist within the multidisciplinary clinically focused team, preserving their specialist knowledge and background in pharmaceutical science, medicine development, and exercising evidence-based judgement. The Council wishes to ensure that pharmacists maintain and develop their unique position including managing and often leading the increasingly complex and personalised application of medicines.

The Council recognises the importance of the developing physical and biological science of medicines but also that the pharmacist must possess a set of



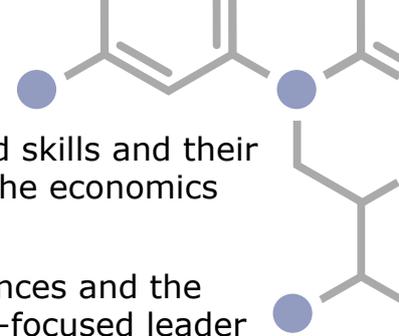
characteristics and skills to achieve the trust and recognition of the public and patients. The pharmacist must have communication skills, resilience, team skills, empathy, integrity and clinical interaction. The Council looks continually for course developments to ensure these skills are developed in undergraduates. The Pharmacy Schools Council is wholly supportive of experiential learning, which is an integral part of Masters level pharmacy undergraduate education.

The Council wishes to engage in discussion with all commissioners and stakeholders, to ensure that the structure and contribution of the entire clinical workforce to the delivery of healthcare is optimised, and to support evaluation of the value and economics of the training and subsequent contribution to healthcare that the pharmacist makes. Patient care plans are an example of where pharmacists will make a measurable difference in clinical practice through the application of their knowledge and skills. The pharmacist's knowledge of science and medicines makes them ideally placed to look at patients holistically and to steer a broader spectrum of wellbeing and health issues.

The Council has an important part to play in bringing the public up to speed with use of medicines through the part the pharmacist plays in delivery of medicines and their outcome. The Council wishes to be public facing, to ensure that there is dissemination and recognition of the education the pharmacist receives and the knowledge that pharmacists have. This is also important in relation to the changing and developing roles of all other healthcare professionals. The pharmacists of tomorrow will look to review paradigms and to seek to understand and to challenge, where appropriately linked to their knowledge and expertise.

The future pharmacist will:

- Provide expert healthcare with a leading role in the clinical interactions with patients and in the decisions surrounding the patient
- Lead the development of new medicines and their approval, distribution and optimisation in use, creating and using the best available evidence
- Be the pharmaceutical and medicines scientist within the multidisciplinary clinical team with the knowledge and skills surrounding medicines and their use, to be the focus for information and evidence in support of decisions surrounding medicines
- Provide a primary care and public health role to reduce referrals to general practice, hospital readmissions and secondary care referrals. This is achieved through their skills, knowledge and expertise in patient consultation, medicines optimisation and their role in the multidisciplinary teams.
- Advise other healthcare professionals including medical doctors in complex cases of diagnosis, in cases of initial medicine failure and when new therapies become available
- Take a leading role in prescribing medicines and in the training of prescribers
- Be recognised for the high level of education (masters) they have received and their ongoing professional development and high degree of digital literacy

- 
- Be recognised in workforce planning for their contributions and skills and their positive and cost-effective impact on healthcare delivery and the economics surrounding medicines
 - Be recognised within the pharmaceutical industry, related sciences and the international regulatory governance of medicines, as a patient-focused leader of pharmaceutical research, drug development and the introduction of new medicines to the patient



Development

The Pharmacy Schools Council recognises the investment internationally in the education of pharmacists.

The future and importance of pharmacy education and pharmaceutical science and practice research is the subject of much discussion with stakeholders and commissioners.

In the period 2017-2021, the Council will continue to exercise the following process in determining and advancing its strategy:

Fact-finding

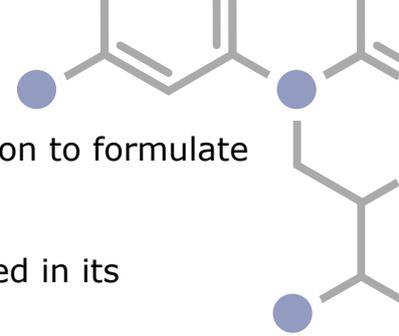
- To seek partnerships with relevant organisations and to meet and share information in order to provide an analysis of the developing education and research needs
- To ascribe tasks to sub-groups of the Council, to provide in-depth analysis of a point of interest or of likely impact

The Pharmacy Schools Council interacts *inter alia* with the following organisations:

- Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain
- General Pharmaceutical Council
- Health Education England
- NHS Education for Scotland
- Department of Health
- British Pharmaceutical Students Association
- National Pharmaceutical Association
- Community Chemists Association
- Others including higher education institutions outside the UK

Assimilating

- To meet at least four times a year as a full Council
- The Executive Committee is to meet at least four times a year

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- To form sub-groups for analysis of information with the intention to formulate a position or information for consideration to the Council

The Pharmacy Schools Council's objective is to be evidenced-based in its contribution to any broad debate.

Communication

- To be recognised as a leading voice in the delivery of pharmacy education and research
- To be seen as a major contributor to the direction of travel surrounding the development and delivery of the profession

Making an impact

- To be recognised as a major contributor to the delivery of healthcare
- To ensure that pharmacy education and pharmaceutical science research reach their full potential with measurable benefit to the UK

Current strategy topics

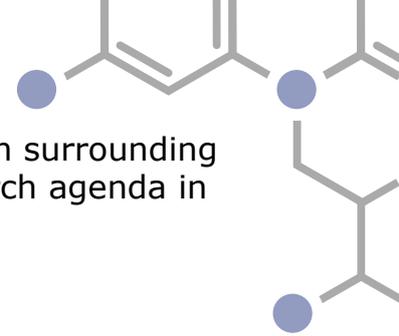
Recruitment

- Ensure that the best applicants are selected to become pharmacists
- Ensure the needs of all the sectors of the profession are recognised in the process
- Ensure all candidates understand the environment they may enter. Deliver on the widening participation agenda

There is a need to agree key messages to be delivered to applicants wishing to enter UK schools of pharmacy. This includes the process and availability for pre-registration experience and discussion surrounding career options. It is also essential to recognise and to be transparent surrounding the individual recruitment needs and processes of higher education institutions. The Pharmacy Schools Council will support and deliver a minimum standard of achievement to graduates across all undergraduate pharmacy courses.

Success will be seen in a shift from emphasis on entry requirement to an absolute assurance of a minimum standard of knowledge and ability at graduation.

The Council seeks to ensure that the UK remains globally competitive in the recruitment of pharmacy students. It will work to ensure that the diversity and cultural mix of schools is maintained and will lobby to ensure appropriate visa provision is available for such students. The Council will also continue to ensure the appropriate portfolio of pharmacy degrees to remain attractive to all



international markets. The Council will lead on the communication surrounding the contribution of international students to the successful research agenda in the pharmaceutical sciences.

Curriculum and assessment

- Ensure that the curriculum standards and assessments are maintained and enhanced where required
- Ensure that content is driven only by the future required contribution of the pharmacist
- Ensure that the contribution of postgraduate education is also understood and the undergraduate education is not diluted by the pursuit of achieving too much in too short a time frame. Pharmacy education is a career continuum.

The Pharmacy Schools Council will work to ensure that the expertise, knowledge and skills required in the ever-developing science of medicines is not compromised by dilution of course content. The Council needs to lead and communicate on course content and ensure that stakeholders and budget holders are aware of the content which influences the day-to-day judgements of the pharmacist.

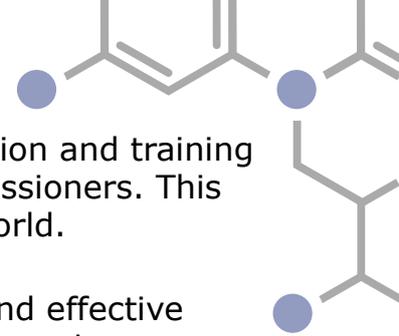
The Council will ensure that a high minimum standard of achievement is required to graduate across all schools of pharmacy. It will ensure that schools can exercise creativity and development in education in response to the rapidly advancing changes in the healthcare and medicines development environment.

The Council will continue to develop and lead in the delivery of experiential learning for pharmacy students. The Pharmacy Schools Council has a firm position that a portfolio of MPharm degrees should be maintained of both a four and five year duration. Each will meet the minimum academic standards at graduation and the learning objective agreed between the Pharmacy Schools Council and the General Pharmaceutical Council.

The Council will seek to lead in discussions with the General Pharmaceutical Council and the profession's stakeholders regarding academic and experiential content of the MPharm degrees.

The value of the pharmacist

- The knowledge, skills and expertise of pharmacists should be recognised alongside their contributions to UK plc. The Pharmacy Schools Council will be a lead in the enhanced recognition of the roles, knowledge and contribution of the pharmacist by the general public.
- The economic contributions available through the expertise and positioning of the pharmacist in healthcare should be a key element of workforce planning. The Council aims to create a culture of confidence and challenge within the profession focused on skills, knowledge and their effective application.



The Pharmacy Schools Council has a need to publicise the education and training that a pharmacist receives to the public, stakeholders and commissioners. This must be set in the context of need for expertise in the modern world.

The contribution of pharmacists and their education to the safe and effective healthcare delivery agenda should be better articulated and evidenced.

The Council will work with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society to deliver recognition of professional achievement and to agree and deliver the provision of an agreed framework.

Regulatory interaction

- To work closely with the General Pharmaceutical Council to support the effective safe delivery of regulation to the profession
- To provide education advice and analysis to assist the General Pharmaceutical Council as it delivers governance to the profession and agrees education standards
- To work to ensure appropriate consistency and fairness within the accreditation processes and to ensure that appropriate flexibility is developed
- To ensure appropriate provision of registration placements and delivery of standards
- To explore excellence and transparency in all aspects of postgraduate pharmacy education provision

The Council wishes to enable the delivery, where required of university led provision of placements. It wishes to develop with the General Pharmaceutical Council equal quality standards and to ensure that state financed placements are equal in standard to university led placements.

The Pharmacy Schools Council will regularly meet with the General Pharmaceutical Council to work to optimise best practice and the sharing of experience.

Research and industry

- Drive for investment growth in UK pharmaceutical science research
- Ensure that UK pharmaceutical research is world-leading and its contribution to UK industry, UK plc and academia is recognised

The Pharmacy Schools Council will seek to enhance engagement with funders and the global industry. It will work to ensure that pharmacists are attractive for employment by industry and to ensure that the undergraduate training meets the needs of the industrial employer and research institutes.

Implementation

The Pharmacy Schools Council will work closely with stakeholders to ensure that pharmaceutical science research and pharmacy education are the key focus in the plans for the future of pharmacy. It is also vital that the diversity of opinion of all pharmacy schools is understood and represented.

The following actions are in place:

- The Pharmacy Schools Council meeting structure has been examined; interactive discussion sessions and round table discussion capturing all opinions and explanations for opinions are the norm.
- Differences in opinions are clearly explored, understood and articulated with recognition of the demands and constraints within individual higher education institutions.
- The Council has enhanced its interactions with stakeholder groups and seeks to be a catalyst to bring opinions together. It is working closely with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the General Pharmaceutical Council and is following a very direct and transparent approach to communication with appreciation of the importance of dialogue in a rapidly changing environment.

The Pharmacy Schools Council has established two Task and Finish groups:

1. One group is responsible for the identification of the core components of the undergraduate MPharm courses. It reflects on the needs, contribution, judgement and skills required in both the current and developing roles. This group will look realistically at what can be achieved in undergraduate education and the developing contribution of postgraduate education and continuing professional development.
2. Another group is responsible for the identification of all ongoing education initiatives targeted at the pharmacy profession. It seeks to determine where such initiatives reside and what their objectives are. This will avoid duplication of work.

The Pharmacy Schools Council will be consulting broadly as it sets its action plan in place to deliver its strategic objectives and will determine and clearly define key success measures and performance indicators.

Contact

The Pharmacy Schools Council welcomes contact and discussion.

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