

Quality Assurance

Programme Specification: Postgraduate

Information for students: the programme specification is the definitive document summarising the structure and content of your degree programme. It is reviewed and updated every year. The document aims to clarify to potential and current students what you can expect from the study of the subject over the course of your programme.

Name of programme: Professional Doctorate in Pharmacy

Name of award: Doctor of Pharmacy (DPharm)

Intermediate awards available: Diploma/MSc in Advanced Practice

Mode of study: Part time

Duration of programme: 4 -7 years

1. What is the Philosophy of the Programme?

The Doctor of Pharmacy programme is designed to meet the needs of a practising pharmacist wishing to attain the highest level of professional and academic achievement. The programme of taught modules combined with the research component allows pharmacists to undertake study and research that is clearly relevant to their professional practice, will support them to contribute to professional knowledge in their field of practice, and will enable their career development.

A professional doctorate provides a rigorous programme of advanced study and research, equally rigorous to the purely research oriented PhD. The taught modules aim to develop practitioners' skills and knowledge in the key areas of advanced practice needed for career development whilst the research component builds research skills and other transferable skills such as project management, problem solving, information management and academic writing.

The DPharm utilises the expertise of the postgraduate team at Keele School of Pharmacy (CPD4ALL) who have been delivering Advanced Practice programmes and supporting postgraduate research, scholarship and evaluation since 2007. The DPharm will provide the opportunity for pharmacists to achieve the highest academic qualification that is directly related to their professional practice and career development.

Within the DPharm course structure, students may also choose to exit at key points (e.g. Postgraduate Diploma or MSc) prior to completing the professional doctorate. This design is intended to provide flexibility for professionals studying whilst working in practice.

Educational Aims

Keele's Professional Doctorate in Pharmacy (DPharm) Programme aims to:

- Enable you to acquire and apply the clinical and professional knowledge base and skills that you have identified as necessary to develop your role as an advanced/consultant level practitioner.
- Enable you to develop and use research skills to become an independent, reflective and competent researcher capable of undertaking doctoral research relevant to your area of professional practice.
- Enable you to conceptualise, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding.
- Develop your ability to make informed judgments on complex issues in your specialist field and adopt an innovative approach to tackling and solving problems.
- Provide you with a structured learning programme that will enable you to understand and evaluate critically advanced academic work, and that meets your personal professional development needs for career enhancement.
- Enable you to further develop the self-discipline of private study, self-directed learning and reflective practice that will be continued beyond Keele's Programme in your Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do if you make full use of the opportunities for learning that we provide to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, and skills. In addition, by completing the DPharm you will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility, leadership and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations in professional environments.

By studying on Keele's Professional Doctorate in Pharmacy Programme you should be able to:

After completing Part 1 (Years 1 and 2) -

1. Critically discuss the concept of advanced and specialist practice in relation to your professional discipline and individual area of practice.
2. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of competency frameworks and their use in developing advanced and specialist professional practice and apply the Advanced Pharmacy Framework (APF) to inform your professional development.
3. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the practice and theory of building working relationships within and across professional boundaries through reflection on your own professional context.
4. Describe your critical awareness of current challenges in health and social care at a local and wider level.
5. Evaluate current research, advanced scholarship and methodologies in healthcare leadership, develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses.
6. Show originality in the application of leadership knowledge and theory to effect change in your workplace.
7. Demonstrate a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.
8. Make a judicious choice of research designs and methods, including sampling and analysis, in respect of a particular research question/hypothesis.
9. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of research ethics and governance.
10. Develop a robust research proposal that shows you have the general ability to conceptualise and design a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of your discipline.
11. Conduct an initial study that shows you have the general ability to implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of your discipline, and critically reflect on the outcomes to inform your doctoral research in Years 3 and 4 of the programme.
12. Provide a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that you are achieving the competencies required for advanced practice, as described in the Advanced Pharmacy Framework (APF), and in relation to the requirements for Part 1 of the DPharm programme.

On completing Part 2 of the DPharm programme (Years 3 and 4) you should be able to -

13. Demonstrate that you have developed a comprehensive understanding and critical awareness of a chosen field of your professional practice, through research, enquiry and critical reflection, and created and interpreted new knowledge, principally through the production of your thesis, which is good enough to satisfy peer review, to extend the forefront of your discipline, and to merit publication.
14. Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements and offer authoritative solutions, in the absence of complete data, and communicate your conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
15. Provide a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that you have achieved the competencies required for advanced practice in Research and Evaluation, as described in the Advanced Pharmacy Framework (APF), and in relation to the requirements for Part 2 of the DPharm programme.

2. How is the Programme taught?

Part 1 – Years 1 and 2

Part 1 is the 'taught' element of the programme where you will achieve the key learning outcomes/competencies required for the DPharm programme in relation to advanced professional practice in your chosen area of expert professional practice, leadership, management and professional relationships, and research and evaluation. Part 1 will conclude with a thesis proposal that will inform your doctoral research for Part 2 (Years 3 and 4) of the programme.

During Part 1, you will study using a variety of learning media and tools, mainly at a distance from the University in your home and workplace. These will include: (i) face-to-face seminar at the beginning of Part 1 as part of your induction onto the programme, and also at various times during the 2-year period of Part 1 to participate in workshops, share progress with other students and staff through group work and presentations, and for formative assessment; (ii) distance learning (DL) modules (electronic and paper-based) produced by the School of Pharmacy. These modules have been carefully designed to incorporate activities that will develop your understanding of particular issues and concepts, application of knowledge to practice, and help you to reflect on your current practice. The Advanced Practice Development (APD) portfolio is a learning and assessment tool that runs throughout both years of Part 1 and into Part 2. You will be assigned a personal tutor(s) who will provide direction and support for the APD module and Year 2 of the programme including the Initial Study and Thesis Proposal.

Part 2 – Years 3 and 4

Once you have successfully completed Part 1 you will undertake research in Part 2 to produce your doctoral thesis for the DPharm (65,000-75,000 words (exception to University regulation 2C within the Pharmacy Postgraduate course regulations. You will be supported by a supervisory team, in accordance with the University's Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees <https://www.keele.ac.uk/research/currentpgrstudents/pgrcodeofpractice/> (accessed 24/04/18)

Members of the Team will have completed the University's training requirements for supervisors of research projects and further training within the School specific to professional doctorates. You will be assigned to a member of academic staff, according to the general thematic area of your research, who will be your principal supervisor; this may or may not be the individual who was your tutor for Part 1. As well as receiving personal support from your supervisor, which will mostly be via email and telephone, you will be able to share and discuss your work with other students and tutors during occasional face-to-face seminars and tutorials at Keele. In addition, you will be given access to additional postgraduate research methods training modules (on an 'attendance only' basis) where you and your supervisor have identified that you have a specific methodology training need.

Programme Duration

In accordance with University Regulation 2C, a part-time student has, if required, up to a maximum of 8 years to submit their thesis for examination from initial registration on a professional doctorate programme. For a DPharm student, a

minimum of 48 months (4 years) will have elapsed from initial registration before they can submit their thesis for examination. It is anticipated that a DPharm student will, normally, submit their final thesis for examination between the period 48-60 months of initial registration on the programme. A student will attend the University for oral examination (*viva voce*), normally within 3-6 months of submitting their thesis.

3. What is the Structure of the Programme?

The modules that form **Part 1** of the DPharm programme are shown in **Table 1** that follows below. All the modules are compulsory/core and total 180 credits; 105 credits at level 7 and 75 credits at level 8

Table 1: DPharm Part 1 Modules

PART 1	Credits and Level
<i>Year 1 Modules</i>	
Advanced Leadership and Change Management	30 M (level 7)
Introduction to Research Methods	15 M (level 7)
<i>Year 1 and 2 Module</i>	
Advanced Practice Development (60)	60 M (level 7)
<i>Year 2 Modules</i>	
Applying Research Methods in Practice	15 D (level 8)
DPharm Initial Study	30 D (level 8)
Thesis Proposal	30 D (level 8)

Years 3 and 4

Independent, supervised research study and production of thesis for DPharm award. Also completion of a reflective portfolio relating to the Research and Evaluation competency cluster of the APF ('Advanced Stage II' level). Part 2 equates to 360 credits at Level 8.

Table 2 provides a mapping of how the learning outcomes are delivered and assessed over the entire programme.

Table 2: Learning Outcomes – Delivery and Assessment

Learning Outcomes	Modules in which this is delivered	Principal forms of assessment (of the Learning Outcomes) used. All assessment is summative unless otherwise stated.
1 Critically discuss the concept of advanced and specialist practice in relation to your professional discipline and individual area of practice.	Advanced Practice Development (60 M level (level 7) credits)	

<p>2 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of competency frameworks and their use in developing advanced and specialist professional practice and apply the Advanced Pharmacy Framework (APF) to inform your professional development.</p>		<p>Reflective portfolio</p> <p>Coursework - mapping</p>
<p>3 Demonstrate a critical understanding of the practice and theory of building working relationships within and across professional boundaries through reflection on your own professional context.</p> <p>4 Demonstrate your critical awareness of current challenges in health and social care at a local and wider level.</p> <p>5 Evaluate current research, advanced scholarship and methodologies in healthcare leadership, develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses.</p> <p>6 Show originality in the application of leadership knowledge and theory to effect change in your workplace.</p>	<p>Advanced Leadership and Change Management (30 M level (level 7) credits)</p>	<p>Reflective Essay</p>
<p>7 Demonstrate a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.</p> <p>8 Make a judicious choice of research designs and methods, including sampling and analysis, in respect of a particular research question/hypothesis.</p> <p>9 Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of research ethics and governance.</p> <p>10 Develop a robust research framework that shows you have the general ability to conceptualise and design a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of your discipline.</p>	<p>Introduction to Research Methods (15 M level (level 7) credits)</p> <p>Applying Research Methods in Practice (15 D level (level 8) credits)</p> <p>Thesis Proposal (30 D Level (level 8) credits)</p>	<p>Reflective Essays</p> <p>Thesis Proposal</p> <p>Viva Voce</p>
<p>11 Conduct an initial study that shows you have the general ability to implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of your discipline, and critically reflect on the outcomes to inform your doctoral research in Years 3 and 4 of the programme.</p>	<p>DPharm Initial Study (30 D level (level 8) credits)</p>	<p>Initial Study Report</p>

12 Provide a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that you are achieving the competencies required for advanced practice, as described in the Advanced Pharmacy Framework (APF), and in relation to the requirements for Part 1 of the DPharm programme.	Advanced Practice Development (60) (60 M level (level 7) credits)	Reflective portfolio
13 Demonstrate that you have developed a comprehensive understanding and critical awareness of a chosen field of your professional practice, through research, enquiry and critical reflection, and created and interpreted new knowledge, principally through the production of your thesis, which is good enough to satisfy peer review, to extend the forefront of your discipline, and to merit publication.	Part 2 (Years 3 and 4) Research	DPharm Thesis <i>Viva voce</i>
14 Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements and offer authoritative solutions, in the absence of complete data, and communicate your conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences	Part 2 (Years 3 and 4) Research	DPharm Thesis
15 Provide a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that you have achieved the competencies required for advanced practice, as described in the Advanced Pharmacy Framework (APF), and in relation to the requirements for Part 2 of the DPharm programme.	Part 2 (Years 3 and 4) Research	Reflective portfolio (formative assessment) relating to agreed elements of the Research and Evaluation competency cluster of the APF (ASII level).

Intermediate award – Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Advanced Practice

Students who do not achieve the standard required (see separate Course Regulations) to proceed to Part 2 of the programme and who have successfully completed 120 academic credits can be awarded the postgraduate *Diploma in Advanced Practice*. Students may also have the option to complete a further 60 credits using the [Professional](#) MSc year for the award of *MSc in Advanced Practice*. In this event, students will have up to 5 years from initial registration on Part 1 to complete the MSc.

Students who have successfully completed the 180 credits in Part 1 but choose, for personal reasons, not to proceed to Part 2, can be awarded the *MSc in Advanced Practice*.

4. How is the Programme assessed?

A variety of formative and summative assessment methods are used in Part 1 including reflective essays, project proposal, project report and viva voce. These relate to the learning outcomes as shown in **Table 2** (see paragraph 3 above).

The Reflective Portfolio that spans Years 1 and 2 of the programme is key to assessing your ability to relate theory to practice, and self-evaluation of, and reflection on, your own performance and CPD needs.

Each of the modes of assessment in Part 1 contributes to the overall development of the cognitive, intellectual and practical skills that you will require to pursue a doctoral thesis in Part 2. In accordance with University Regulations, you will attend a *viva voce* as part of the formal examination of your final thesis.

Each method of assessment is supported by clear criteria for marking; these are explained in the relevant Course Handbooks. The minimum pass mark is 50% for all modules part 1. The Course regulations require that you pass all modules in part 1 to be able to progress to Part 2. In addition, students who have been required to resubmit in modules to the value of more than 45 credits in Part 1 will not normally be able to progress to Part 2.

The summative assessment is supported by a variety of formative assessment activities that include on-line discussions, formative feedback on elements of the Reflective Portfolio, contributions to study days and feedback on draft proposals. You will also receive feedback on the formative, but compulsory, Progress Reports for Part 2 that you are required to submit to your supervisor.

Thesis

The overall outcome of the DPharm is for candidates to produce an account of their research in the form of a thesis in the range of 65 000 to 75 000 words (exception to University Regulation 2C [within the Pharmacy Postgraduate Course Regulations](#)). The final thesis should form a contribution to knowledge and/or professional practice in a subject of relevance to the profession of Pharmacy and show evidence of originality, either by including the discovery of new evidence and/or by the exercise of independent critical analysis applied to the practice of pharmacy in the candidate's area of research. The University's Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees provides further information about study and examination procedures: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/research/currentpgrstudents/codeofpractice/> (accessed 24/04/18)

5. What are the typical admission requirements for the programme?

Candidates for the DPharm programme must be pharmacists or pharmacy technicians who are registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), or equivalent for applicants working overseas, and working full or part-time in an appropriate organisation where they are permitted to conduct work-based research and evaluation. In addition, candidates must have a:

- Postgraduate Master's degree in a relevant subject, *or*
- MPharm, minimum 2:1, and a postgraduate pharmacy diploma, *or*
- Postgraduate pharmacy diploma and evidence of experience of professional practice research or evaluation (e.g. Postgraduate Certificate in Research and Evaluation, published papers), at the discretion of the Programme Manager* *or*
- Senior practitioner with evidence of an advanced practice role and/or evidence of experience of pharmacy practice research or evaluation (e.g. Postgraduate Certificate in Research and Evaluation, published papers), at the discretion of the Programme Manager*.
- Students for whom English is not their first language, must either:
Hold a degree from an institution where English was the language of instruction. This must have been obtained in the two year period prior to starting the course.

OR

Pass the Academic IELTS - an average of 7.0 with a minimum of 6.5 in all sub-tests is required

Please note that the IELTS exam must be no more than two years old at the start of the course for which you have applied.

*Candidates unable to provide evidence will normally be able to complete relevant research and advanced practice development modules to be eligible for entry if necessary. In any case, please contact the Programme Manager or Programme Co-ordinator/Administrator to discuss your options.

Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL)

Under very exceptional circumstances, the Programme Manager will consider cases for APCL in relation to modules for Part 1.

Candidates who have achieved membership of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Faculty at a minimum of Advanced Stage II will be awarded 30 credits and will be exempted from studying the Advanced Practice Development (60) 60 credit module; they will be required to complete and Advanced Practice Development (30) 30 credit module instead.

6. How are students supported on the programme?

- You will be provided with key information and guidance on structure, content and assessment, including dates for submission of your assessments for your modules, and the dates you have to come to study days at Keele or participate online if relevant. You will also be provided with general guidance on some study skills.
- You will be supported by an Academic Tutor and an Independent Advisor in line with University Postgraduate Taught Student Support Guidance.
- You will have access to the Programme Manager, Course/Module Tutors and Programme Co-ordinator/Administrator by telephone and e-mail during normal office hours on weekdays.
- You will have access to the Programme Manager and Course/Module Tutors and other Students during study days and online workshops, where applicable.
- You will be supervised in Years 3 and 4 of the programme by a member of academic staff who has been approved by the University's Research Degrees Committee
- You will have access to Keele's Library Information Services on campus and online.
- You will have access to support for IT from School of Pharmacy IT support staff and via Central Services.

7. Learning Resources

You will study most elements of the programme at a distance, in your workplace or at home. Most modules for Part 1 are delivered through self-study, open and distance learning materials which comprise both traditional text based resources and a range of electronic resources that can be accessed through Keele Learning Environment (KLE). KLE is also used to enhance student support during the course and provide a forum for exchange of ideas and discussion of issues that arise. You will have access to support in using KLE from the Pharmacy IT support staff. Keele University Library may also have additional resources for your subject, both on campus and on-line. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/library/> (accessed 24/4/18)

You should also find out about library services that are available to you in your work and home localities.

8. Other learning opportunities

The Keele Approach to Education

Engagement with our postgraduate programme the DPharm will enable you to further develop your intellectual, personal and professional capabilities. At Keele, we call these our Graduate Attributes and they are:

- 1 Opening and questioning approach to ideas, demonstrating curiosity, independence of thought and the ability to appreciate a range of perspectives on the natural and social worlds.
- 2 Appreciation of the development and value of your chosen subjects of study, awareness of their contexts, the links between them, and awareness of the provisional and dynamic nature of knowledge.
- 3 Information literacy: the ability to locate, evaluate and synthesise large amounts of frequently conflicting information, ideas and data.
- 4 Ability creatively to solve problems using a range of different approaches and techniques, and to determine which techniques are appropriate for the issue at hand.
- 5 Appreciation of the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and other activities, including recognition of any ethical implications.
- 6 Ability to communicate clearly and effectively in written and verbal forms for different purposes and to a variety of audiences.
- 7 Knowledge, skills, self-confidence and self-awareness actively to pursue your future goals.
- 8 Ability and motivation to participate responsibly and collaboratively as an active citizen in the communities in which you live and work.
- 9 Professional and reflective approach, including qualities of leadership, responsibility, personal integrity, empathy, care and respect for others, accountability and self-regulation.
- 10 Flexibility to thrive in rapidly changing and uncertain external environments and to update skills and knowledge as circumstances require.

Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help you to develop further as a well-rounded postgraduate who is capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life you engage in during and after your studies at Keele. Further information about Keele's Approach to Education is available at:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/> (accessed 24/4/18)

9. Quality management and enhancement

The Programme Manager is responsible for the day to day management of the programme. The Programme Manager is supported by other members of the Keele-based DPharm team and a network of external tutors.

To ensure that the DPharm programme maintains the highest possible standards and ensures the effective management and continuous enhancement of the quality of learning and teaching, the programme employs the following procedures:

- DPharm and Advanced Professional Practice programmes Course Committee - twice each year
- DPharm and Advanced Professional Practice programmes Exam Board - annual
- External Examiner Reports – annual
- Programme Managers' Meeting - every 6-8 weeks
- Education and Quality Assurance Team Meeting - every 6-8 weeks
- Course Manager/Module Leader Meetings – when required
- Module Evaluation Questionnaires - annual for each Module

- Study Day Evaluation Questionnaires – after each study day/f2f seminar
- Evaluation of online activities – after each delivery
- School of Pharmacy Learning and Teaching Committee – each month
- Keele Institute for Innovation and Teaching Excellence (KIITE) Academic Development programme
- University Staff Development for supervisors of research students

The DPharm also comes under Keele's Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees which provides the regulatory framework for Stage 2:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/research/currentpgrstudents/pgrcodeofpractice/> (accessed 24/4/18)

The Research Degrees Committee will have the key role in relation to the approval of supervisors, the approval and appointment of examiners and acts as the awarding board for Stage 2.

10. The principles of programme design

The DPharm programme has been designed with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in the following documents:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2008. <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=3244#.Wt8gim4vypo> (accessed 24/4/18)
- Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education. Section 2: Collaborative Provision and Flexible and Distributed Learning (including e-learning). Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education, 2004 and 2010. <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/code-of-practice/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed 24/4/18)

11. Date on which programme specification was written: February 2012

Approved by FHLTC April 2012

Final Approval by University Scrutiny Panel June 2012

Revised June 2013 to include BWR (30)

Revise June 2015 to bring in line with the QAA Higher Education Credit Framework for England

Revised April 2018 to include Introduction to Research Methods 15c and Applying Research Methods in Practice 15c, remove Developing Advanced Practice 15c and REP 15c, and change of title of BWR module to Advanced Leadership and Change, change APP title to AP and increase thesis length