



Summary Report of the On-Site Compliance Visit to
the Five-Year Integrated Master's Degree Programme
in Pharmacy provided by Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Approved by PSI Council 22 June 2017

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Integrated Master's Degree Programme in Pharmacy provided by
Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

In accordance with Article 7(2) of the Pharmacy Act 2007

and

*Part 3, Rule 8(1) of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (Education and Training)
(Integrated Course) Rules 2014 [S.I. No. 377 of 2014]*

March, 2017

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Glossary of Abbreviated Terms

▪ APPEL	:	Affiliation for Pharmacy Practice Experiential Learning
▪ CCF	:	Core Competency Framework for Pharmacists
▪ DARE	:	Disability Access Route to Education
▪ ECTS	:	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
▪ HEAR	:	Higher Education Access Route
▪ HEI	:	Higher Education Institute
▪ IPL	:	Interprofessional Learning
▪ IPPOSI	:	Irish Platform for Patient Organisations, Science & Industry
▪ KPI	:	Key Performance Indicator
▪ NFQ	:	National Framework of Qualifications
▪ NPIP	:	National Pharmacy Internship Programme
▪ NUI	:	National University of Ireland
▪ OSCE	:	Objective Structured Clinical Examination
▪ PE	:	Practice Educator
▪ PEARs	:	Pharmacy Education and Accreditation Reviews
▪ PRE	:	Professional Registration Examination
▪ PSI	:	Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland
▪ QQI	:	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
▪ TeL	:	Technology-enhanced Learning
▪ TCD	:	Trinity College Dublin
▪ VLE	:	Virtual Learning Environment

i. Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the relevant PSI Accreditation Standards as published on the PSI website at www.psi.ie.

Stemming from the Pharmacy Act 2007 (as amended) and recognised in Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications, the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI), the pharmacy regulator, has responsibility and powers for the approval of the programmes of education and training of pharmacists in Ireland.

The present accreditation exercise concerns the review of the five-year fully integrated Master of Pharmacy degree delivered by the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Trinity College Dublin (TCD) against the relevant PSI Accreditation Standards that were approved by the Council of the PSI on 2 October 2014. Successful completion of the programme leads to the award of the MPharm degree and confirmation by the Higher Education Institute (HEI) that a graduate fully demonstrates the competencies necessary to apply to enter the register of pharmacists kept by the PSI.

ii. Process of Review

A first review of the programme against the PSI Standards was conducted in June 2015. On that basis, at its 17 September, 2015 meeting, the PSI Council approved the recommendations of the accreditation team that the Five-Year Fully Integrated Master's Degree Programme in Pharmacy provided by TCD be recognised and approved for an initial period of two (2) years with a review on-site visit at or towards the end of the first year of delivery.

Subsequently, and in accordance with the PSI Council approval of the programme in 2015, an on-site compliance visit to TCD was undertaken in February 2016. Following this visit, at its 7 July 2016 meeting, the PSI Council approved the recommendation of the accreditation team that the recognition and approval of the Five-Year Fully Integrated Master's Degree Programme in Pharmacy provided by TCD be confirmed for an initial period of two (2) years with a further focused on-site visit during the second year of delivery.

This is the report of the focused on-site visit to TCD in March 2017.

iii. Documentation

The following documents were made available to the accreditation team by TCD in advance of the accreditation visit:

- Item 1 PSI Accreditation March 2017 Stakeholder Contribution
- Item 2 Scanned TCD Registrar Letter to the PSI Registrar (CEO)
- Item 3a APPEL Year 2 Placement Quality Review Framework
- Item 3b Student Handbook Placements
- Item 3c Supervisor Handbook
- Letter from the Head of School, Professor Anne Marie Healy

iv. The Compliance Visit

The accreditation team held a preparatory meeting at PSI House on 13 March 2017, in advance of the on-site visit.

The on-site compliance visit took place in TCD on 14 March 2017.

v. The Accreditation Team

The PSI accreditation team comprised:

Name	Designation at the time of visit
Prof Brenda Costall	Chair, Pharmacy academic with experience of developing and/or accrediting pharmacy degree programmes (international academic)
Dr JJ Keating	Pharmacy academic with experience of developing and/or accrediting pharmacy degree programmes
Dr Aislinn Joy	Healthcare non-pharmacist
Dr Norma Ryan	Quality assurance and regulatory expert
Karen Murphy	Pharmacist practising in Ireland with experience as a tutor supporting experiential learning

along with

Damhnait Gaughan	Head of Education and Registration, PSI
Caroline Mellows	Education Manager, PSI
Siobhán H Fitzgerald	Education Standards Officer, PSI
Dr Matthew Maltby	Rapporteur

There were no declarations of interest.

vi. Meeting the Standards

Standard 1: The Professional Degree Programme Provider and Mission

The Professional Degree Programme Provider must engage in a systematic planning process and have a current strategic plan that facilitates achievement of the Professional Degree Programme Provider's mission, goals and objectives.

Summary of Main Findings and Observations

The School's strategic plan is demonstrably aligned to that of the TCD institution as a whole and was approved in its finalised form by the University authorities in 2016. The strategy documentation clearly shows that TCD maintains a culture of best practice in an environment where excellence is valued.

The School has developed attendant metrics by which progress towards the relevant objectives is tracked and actively monitored; these will support the successful realisation of the School Mission which is to deliver continuous learning in science and the practice of pharmacy, supported by innovative teaching by ensuring that TCD staff and students contribute to society as world class professionals and leaders.

The School is highly committed to developing and implementing an MPharm programme that is forward-looking, purposeful and appropriate to the TCD educational context. The curriculum integrates science and practice, and embeds experiential training in practice as a critical element of appropriate training for pharmacists.

The primacy of patient care is emphasised and the programme is oriented towards the PSI CCF, having taken account of a wide range of stakeholder needs and input in its design and development.

The School continues to develop a highly innovative integrated curriculum which is relevant and appropriate to the TCD scholarly environment. The School is ably supported by the shared APPEL resource, which has made impressive progress during 2016.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The team agreed Standard 1 is met.

Standard 2: Leadership, Organisation and Governance

There must be clear management structures for the Professional Degree Programme with a schedule of roles and responsibilities, and a defined structure and process to show lines of accountability and authority for all those involved in the delivery of the Professional Degree Programme.

Summary of Main Findings and Observations

TCD has clear management structures and the School's escalation and reporting mechanisms are transparent. Patient safety is maintained at the heart of the MPharm programme, with appropriate protocols and measures implemented to allow remedial action to be taken and appropriate support to be provided if necessary.

TCD is highly committed to the development and provision of IPL opportunities and these are not limited to experiential work placement contexts. The IPL Steering Committee is tasked with integrating a wide range of IPL opportunities in a broad range of contexts; the School is supported in this through the recent appointment to the cross-Faculty role of Assistant Professor in Interprofessional Learning. The new IPL Simulation Suite, planned to become operational in September 2017, will provide an innovative and more practice-based view of IPL. This will be of great benefit to the School's students.

TCD demonstrates a clear and productive commitment to the support of the APPEL function as APPEL continues to make impressive progress. Lines of reporting and accountability are clearly delineated and TCD is highly committed to ensuring that the relevant and appropriate levels of support are provided to the APPEL function. TCD's current PE effectively engages available APPEL resources from a perspective of shared learning to leverage knowledge and networks

Conclusions and Recommendations

The team agreed Standard 2 is met.

Standard 3: Resources

The School must have sufficient allocated resources, financial, physical and staff, and have developed and documented contingency plans to cover any deficiencies that may arise in order to ensure the effective delivery of a Professional Degree Programme that continues to meet the 'Accreditation Standards of the five-year fully integrated Master's degree programmes in pharmacy' as approved by the PSI Council from time to time.

Summary of Main Findings and Observations

TCD is a state-funded university and operates within closely monitored financial resources internally and externally to the institution. The accreditation team found the School staff highly committed to successfully delivering the MPharm programme. The School facilities are a modern teaching and research environment which includes a model dispensary and aseptic suite. These are to be complemented by a Faculty of Health Sciences IPL Simulation Suite, planned to become operational in September 2017.

The School staff delivers the majority of the MPharm course content and correspondingly, has developed much of its content within clear and transparent processes for its approval and sign-off. Integrated approaches are becoming increasingly embedded within School teaching and a network of stakeholders external to the School is drawn on to ensure that the provision maintains its modern, forward-looking aspect. Several new teaching posts have been created within the School to support progress towards the successful delivery of the programme.

The motivation to succeed is mirrored in the function of APPEL, within which TCD currently maintains one PE post-holder contributing to the development of the structure of experiential placements. The School is highly supportive of the APPEL functions and its engagement with this innovative shared resource is appropriately productive and collegiate.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The team agreed Standard 3 is met.

Standard 4: Curriculum

The curriculum must be planned to deliver an integrated learning experience that combines and co-ordinates all components in a logical and cohesive manner with clearly articulated linkages between and across units within years and between years. The Professional Degree Programme must be planned as a whole to deliver graduates who have the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to meet the Core Competency Framework for Pharmacists necessary for entry to the profession of pharmacy and to assure the accountability of the profession to society.

Summary of Main Findings and Observations

Since the on-site visit in 2016, the School has made substantial progress towards the development of an innovative and progressive programme of study which aims to develop pharmacists whose practice will maintain and improve patients' health, wellbeing, care and safety by means of a student-centred, patient-focused curriculum. Structured around five overarching themes, the content modules are linked clearly and these points of integration are made explicit in the programme documentation. The curriculum also aligns to the CCF domains and thus ensures that graduates are suitably fit to practise safely on graduation.

Developing reflective practitioners is a further core aspect of the TCD curriculum, with many opportunities for students to reflect, within the taught class-room context and also whilst undertaking experiential placements in a range of practice settings.

The School has developed an innovative conceptualisation of the integrative nature of the MPharm programme; using the tenets of Harden's Integration Ladder, all modules are positioned at a minimum of Level 3, with a number of modules relevant to the workplace learning going far beyond to be positioned at the highest level (level 11) of integration as per Hardens Ladder - transdisciplinary.

Strengths of the programme were noted by the accreditation team in relation to this standard:

- The innovative means by which the School has embraced novel concepts of integration into its curriculum which are particularly suited to the Trinity College academic environment,
- The enthusiasm for contributing to research in relation to educational innovation, and
- The clarity with which points of integration are identified in curricular documents through an innovative use of infographics.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The team agreed Standard 4 is met.

Standard 5: Teaching and Learning Strategy

The Teaching and Learning Strategy must be designed to deliver a curriculum that produces graduates that meet the Core Competency Framework for Pharmacists as established by the PSI Council from time to time.

Summary of Main Findings and Observations

The revised Teaching and Learning Strategy has been developed to deliver the curriculum in such a way that, upon successful completion of the programme, all students will have successfully demonstrated attainment of the skills and competencies to engage in practice that will maintain and improve patients' health, wellbeing, care and safety.

The Strategy supports a student-centred and profession-focused curriculum and utilises a wide range of active learning methods to complement and support a progressive structure of experiential learning placements.

The programme emphasises the application of theoretical knowledge in practice, and includes extensive case-based learning and practical components through a structured exposure to the requirements of the CCF. It is delivered in a collegial environment that fosters an ethos of professionalism and in which staff lead by example.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The team agreed Standard 5 is met.

Standard 6: Assessment Strategy

The Assessment Strategy must ensure that all graduates demonstrate the competencies set out in the Core Competency Framework for Pharmacists as established by the PSI Council from time to time. The strategy must align with the teaching and learning strategy (see Standard 5) and use effective and validated diagnostic, formative and summative assessment methods that are reviewed at frequent intervals and take account of developments in pharmacy practice within all components of the Professional Degree Programme.

Summary of Main Findings and Observations

The School has further developed its Assessment Strategy to ensure that consistency with the Teaching and Learning Strategy is maintained. A wide range of assessment methods including formal written examinations, MCQ and short answer examinations, assessed laboratory assignments, group projects, presentations and OSCEs ensure students are able to demonstrate they meet the learning outcomes. The School also utilises a portfolio of reflective learning activities to familiarise students with continued professional development techniques and these are particularly useful for assessing the non-statutory placements.

The School is currently exploring a suitable means of assessing student performance whilst on placement during Years 4 and 5.

Mechanisms by which assessments are collated and reviewed are clear and transparent. The School Appeals process is suitably robust and is in line with wider University governance protocols. External examiner reports are considered by the School Programme Management Committee and contribute to further programme development.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The team agreed Standard 6 is met.

Standard 7: Quality Assurance and Enhancement

All processes and activities related to the Professional Degree Programme must be clearly defined, documented, executed and controlled in accordance with a system of Quality Management which assures and demonstrates consistency, reproducibility and transparency of operations. There must be evidence that this process is being used to enhance the quality of the provision.

Summary of Main Findings and Observations

The quality assurance mechanisms in place within the School and university are suitably robust; the team agreed the measures in place will ensure the development of a high quality MPharm programme.

In addition to School-specific mechanisms, support and assistance is provided by the Trinity Quality Office, the Quality Committee and APPEL, which maintains quality assurance accountability for the Year 2 placements as well as the statutory Years 4 and 5 placements.

The equity of the APPEL engagement with the three consortium parties is of paramount importance; the continued development of clear lines of communication with the three Schools and the continuation of the collegial, proactive relationships between APPEL and the Schools will ensure APPEL functions equally successfully in the interests of all three Schools.

APPEL continues to make significant progress towards developing KPIs, quality assurance and enhancement processes, and leveraging suitable IT capabilities to enable APPEL discharge its duties efficiently and effectively.

The School staff is highly committed and has made considerable progress in further embedding an innovative and novel approach to integrated learning with the view to successfully delivering this MPharm programme.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The team agreed Standard 7 is met.

Standard 8: Students

There must be processes at HEI and School level to assist prospective students in their application to the Professional Degree Programme., in securing and maintaining placements for the practice-placement elements of the Professional Degree Programme, and to support students' development as learners and as future practising professionals.

Summary of Main Findings and Observations

All relevant policies and procedures are published on the TCD website and they are also available via the University Calendar.

The APPEL initiative continues to be committed to delivering a well-planned and executed process for ensuring students receive a high-quality and appropriate level of experiential training during the statutory placements in Years 4 and 5. The resource is enthusiastically supported in this by the School staff and the accreditation team found that the School's commitment to assisting APPEL deliver success represents one of the strengths of the TCD programme.

Students are supported through a range of mechanisms, both formal and informal and the Trinity environment fosters a rich learning context in which high levels of achievement are welcomed and valued.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The team agreed Standard 8 is met.

vii. General Observations

The accreditation team noted several aspects of TCD's integrated programme they particularly wish to draw attention to as being specific strengths. In the interests of supporting the School maintain the high level of commitment to delivering this innovative and forward-looking programme, the team highlighted the following;

- The continued commitment to embedding an innovative conceptualisation of integration and the progress towards reflecting this in research publications on teaching and education.
- The enthusiastic and high level of commitment evident within the School to the ongoing progress of the APPEL function and the collegial engagement of the Practice Educator within the consortium.
- The IPL Simulation Centre to be established at St James's Hospital.
- How innovative research continues to inform School teaching and module content
- The clarity of curricular integration through the use of infographics and the innovative representation of the School's conceptualisation of integrative approaches.

viii. Conclusions and Recommendations

The accreditation team agreed the following in relation to the Five-Year Integrated Master's Degree Programme provided by Trinity College Dublin (TCD);

- Standard 1 is met
- Standard 2 is met
- Standard 3 is met
- Standard 4 is met
- Standard 5 is met
- Standard 6 is met
- Standard 7 is met
- Standard 8 is met

On that basis, the accreditation team makes the following recommendations to the Council of the PSI;

1. The programme be approved and recognised for a period of three (3) years, June 22, 2017 and expiring June 22, 2020.
2. TCD provides to the PSI a report by 28 February 2018 to include the following as they relate to APPEL;
 - an update in relation to the development and implementation and monitoring of KPIs by which the performance of the APPEL function will be measured,
 - details of the operational plans for the recruitment of the statutory experiential learning placements to be undertaken by students in Years 4 and 5 of the programme,
 - details of the planned quality assurance mechanisms for the statutory experiential learning placements to be undertaken by students in Years 4 and 5 of the programme,

- details of the training to be undertaken by the tutor-pharmacists recruited to supervise the statutory experiential learning placements to be undertaken by students in Years 4 and 5 of the programme,
 - an update in relation to the procurement, implementation and further development of the IT platform,
 - an update in relation to the current and future plans for the administrative staffing,
 - an update in relation to the continued input of relevant stakeholders (including staff, students, tutors, supervisors and service users) into the evaluation and further development of the APPEL functions.
3. TCD provides to the PSI a report by 28 February 2018 to include the following as they relate to the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences;
- an update in relation to the approval of the curriculum by the university and any related curricular developments or changes,
 - an update in relation to any amendments made to the relevant KPIs and a status report in relation to all monitored metrics,
 - an update in relation to staff recruitment and progress towards achievement of a staff:student ratio of 1:23,
 - an update in relation to staff training.
4. The PSI undertakes a focused on-site visit during the first quarter of 2019 following the completion of the 4-month statutory placement and in advance of the 8-month statutory placement.