

Independent Prescribing, 2025-26

Description



Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists and Nurses

Level 7 / 30 credits

Division of Pharmacy and Optometry

2025-26

PROGRAMME HANDBOOK

Introduction to Independent Prescribing

Welcome to the Division of Pharmacy and Optometry at the University of Manchester. This programme handbook provides details of the University of Manchester Programme leading to the Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing. It includes information about the aims and learning outcomes, structure, content, assessment and programme management. It should be read in conjunction with the School of Health Sciences Student Handbook.

We hope that your time studying with Manchester will be productive and enjoyable.

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General information about the Division of Pharmacy and Optometry is contained in this handbook, but more information can be obtained from the following web sites:

The Pharmacy home page:
www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/pharmacy

The Nursing home page:
www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/nursing

The Midwifery home page:
www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/study/midwifery

The Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health home page:
www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk

The University of Manchester home page:
www.manchester.ac.uk

Communications

Good communication between university and student is important for the smooth running of any course, but for a distance/blended learning course, it becomes essential. The following section outlines the different options available and their recommended use.

Online meetings

During the course, you must use MS Teams for meetings and assessments. If you are unfamiliar with this platform, you can find guidance on how to join and participate in meetings on the Microsoft website: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/office/join-a-teams-meeting-078e9868-f1aa-4414-8bb9-ee88e9236ee4>

You might find it easier to focus, hear and be heard if you use a headset and this is particularly important to consider for the case presentation assessment.

Student portal

From here you will be able to access many of the areas and sites that you use regularly, eg, Canvas®, your email and the library. You will be able to access this when you have your student password and username at the following address: www.portal.manchester.ac.uk.

e-Learning environment: Canvas®

All learning for the course is delivered through Canvas®, so it is crucial that you have access, know how to use it, and check it regularly for relevant information.

As well as teaching and assessment materials, Canvas® has a *Course Information* folder that contains details about the course, a link to the course handbook and details of other University resources that will be useful during the course. From the Canvas® homepage, you can also access Announcements, the General Discussion Board and your PebblePad® portfolio.

You will access Canvas® through the student portal using your university username and password.

e-Portfolio: PebblePad+ ®

You will collate various evidence for your portfolio submission using PebblePad+®, which you will access via Canvas®.

Course Overview

This 30-credit course comprises:

- 26 days of structured learning activities
- 90 hours of supervised practice with support from a designated prescribing practitioner who will enable the development of sound skills in the field of prescribing practice.

The course is delivered through directed online learning materials, workshops on campus and formative assignments. You will find directions for all learning on Canvas in the *Planner* folder. You can find a copy of the programme specification in the Course Information folder on Canvas®.

References

Throughout this course handbook, we will refer to the following resources (which were all last accessed on 03 September 2025):

- General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) (2025). *Guidance on supervising pharmacy learners in practice*. Available at https://assets.pharmacyregulation.org/files/2025-06/gphc-guidance-on-supervising-pharmacy-learners-in-practice-june-2025_0.pdf?VersionId=uJtMTDYfEPj0MchPsPFAqt7VwHDGYley
- General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) (2022). *Standards for the education and training of pharmacist independent prescribers*. Available at <https://assets.pharmacyregulation.org/files/document/standards-for-the-education-and-training-of-pharmacist-independent-prescribers-october-2022.pdf>
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2023). *Standards for prescribers* [online]. Available at www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-post-registration/standards-for-prescribers
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) (2021). *A competency framework for all prescribers*. Available at <https://www.rpharms.com/resources/frameworks/prescribing-competency-framework/competency-framework>
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) (2019). *A competency framework for designated prescribing practitioners*. Available at www.rpharms.com/resources/frameworks/designated-prescribing-practitioner-competency-framework

We may refer to designated prescribing practitioners (note lowercase format) as an umbrella term for the Designated Prescribing Practitioner, Practice Assessor and Practice Supervisor. This is in line with the agreement made by all stakeholder organisations during the development of *A competency framework for designated prescribing practitioners* (RPS, 2019). You can find further details of these roles in the [Roles and Responsibilities section](#) below.

Course aims

Enable pharmacists, nurses, midwives and health visitors to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for safe and effective prescribing practice, to successfully meet the standards set out by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) and apply for registration to practice as independent prescribers.

The course will enable students to:

- Develop a systematic, evidence-based and critically reflective approach to identifying and addressing development needs associated with independent prescribing.
- Critically appraise the ability to meet and further develop the consultation competencies within *A competency framework for all prescribers* (RPS, 2021).
- Critically appraise the ability to meet and further develop the governance competencies within *A competency framework for all prescribers* (RPS, 2021).
- Meet the professional standards set out by the General Pharmaceutical Council (pharmacists) or the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC registrants) to enable application for registration as an independent prescriber.

Intended learning outcomes

On completion of the course, all practitioners will be able to demonstrate the cGPhC indicative learning outcomes (GPhC 2022 pp 87-9) and the competencies detailed in *A competency framework for all prescribers* (RPS 2021, pp 9-20), which the NMC adopted as their indicative learning outcomes in 2021).

Delivery

The course offers you the benefit of a flexible approach to learning with e-learning that you can complete at a time that suits you, combined with six study days on campus:

- directed reading and e-lectures will provide knowledge and help you to develop an understanding of the key topics
- workshops will support you to develop practical skills and discuss key concepts with peers so that you benefit from a range of perspectives, share learning and discuss ideas
- practice-based activities will allow you to explore the relevance of this learning in the context of your practice through reflection on practice and discussion with colleagues
- 1:1 tutorials afford a more personal perspective on your development.

Online teaching and learning are delivered using the University of Manchester's learner management system, Canvas®. We will also use a variety of internet resources to support your learning, and we will be using various technologies to support you in achieving an engaging and interactive student experience.

One of the benefits of having pharmacists and NMC registrants on the course together is that each of you will bring your personal experience and knowledge to the course. Sharing that knowledge and experience with your tutors and other students will significantly enhance your learning experience and that of others.

We have made every effort to provide you with up-to-date and accurate information; however, some minor details might change during the course of your studies. We will make you aware of changes and in exchange, we request that you notify us if you find content, eg, videos and weblinks, that are broken.

Learning in practice

You will already have identified a designated prescribing practitioner (DPP for pharmacists) or a Practice Assessor (PA) and Practice Supervisor (PS for NMC registrants) who will support your period of learning in practice.

Eligibility criteria for Designated Prescribing Practitioners, Practice Assessors and Practice Supervisors

The DPP/PA will facilitate the 90-hour period of learning, supervision and assessment in clinical practice. This includes overseeing, supporting and assessing your competence in clinical practice with

patients in collaboration with academic and workplace partners.

The DPP/PA must meet the eligibility criteria set out by the GPhC and NMC, ie, they must be a registered independent prescriber who:

- is a GP, specialist registrar, clinical assistant or consultant who is usually on the relevant GMC specialist register working in a clinically active and relevant setting
- **OR** is an experienced practitioner, registered with a UK regulatory body, and who holds an independent prescribing annotation.
- is in good standing with their professional regulatory body, has no conditions relating to their practice and is not under investigation for issues related to professionalism or practice.
- is an active prescriber who normally has at least three years of recent clinical and prescribing experience for a group of patients/clients in the relevant field of practice and attained the professional skills and knowledge to oversee, support and assess prescribers-in-training.
- can demonstrate that they meet all competencies within *A competency framework for all prescribers* (RPS, 2021).
- has experience or training in teaching and/or supervising in practice.
- normally works with the applicant.
- is sufficiently impartial to the outcome for the applicant and, wherever possible, should not be the same person sponsoring them to undertake the course.
- has the support of the employing organisation or GP practice to act as the Designated Prescribing Practitioner or Practice Assessor.
- is familiar with the requirements of the course and the need for the applicant to achieve the learning outcomes.
- agrees to retain the primary responsibility for the overall supervision and assessment of the applicant as a prescriber in training while working in collaboration with academic and workplace partners during the applicant's period of learning in practice.
- meets all of the competencies detailed in *A competency framework for designated prescribing practitioners* (RPS, 2019)

In addition, Practice Assessors must:

- ensure there are sufficient opportunities to periodically observe the student to inform decisions for assessment and progression
- ensure there are sufficient opportunities to gather and coordinate feedback from the Practice Supervisor and other relevant people to be assured about decisions relating to student assessment and progression.
- agree to work in partnership with the nominated Academic Assessor to evaluate and recommend the student for progression in line with course standards.

The Practice Supervisor must be a registered independent prescriber who:

- is an active prescriber who has current clinical and prescribing experience for a group of patients/clients in the area in which they are providing support, supervision and feedback.
- can demonstrate that they meet all competencies within *A competency framework for all prescribers* (RPS,2021).
- has an understanding of the proficiencies and course outcomes that they are supporting students to achieve.

- agrees to support and supervise the student, providing feedback on their progress towards, and achievement of, proficiencies and skills for safe and effective practice as an Independent Prescriber.
- agrees to periodically record relevant observations on the conduct, proficiency and achievement of the student, and to share these observations with practice and academic assessors to inform decisions for progression.
- will appropriately raise and respond to student conduct and competence concerns.
- is familiar with the *A competency framework for designated prescribing practitioners* (RPS, 2019) and can already demonstrate these competencies or is working towards achieving them.

Information for your DPP, PA and PS is available in the Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP) Handbook section of this document. Please ensure that they have a copy of this.

Roles and responsibilities

The nature of arrangements for the period of learning in practice, including the proportion of time with the DPP or PA/PS), is determined by the trainee prescriber's profession. Trainee prescribers should also spend time with a range of other prescribers, ideally from different professions, so that they see different approaches to similar tasks and receive feedback from different perspectives.

Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP, for pharmacists)

The DPP retains the primary responsibility for the overall supervision and assessment of the applicant as a prescriber in training while working in collaboration with academic and workplace partners during the applicant's period of learning in practice.

This means that the DPP doesn't need to provide all 90 hours of supervised practice, but universities often stipulate a minimum number of hours. At Manchester, we require that the named DPP supervises at least 30 hours. The DPP has a crucial role in supporting trainee pharmacist prescribers that involves:

- agreeing on a learning contract with the trainee prescriber
- planning a programme of learning in practice that will provide the opportunity for the trainee prescriber to meet their development needs and gain competency in prescribing
- facilitating learning by encouraging critical thinking and reflection
- providing dedicated time and opportunities for the trainee prescriber to observe how they conduct consultations with patients and their carers and the development of management plans
- allowing the trainee prescriber to carry out consultations, suggest management and prescribing options and plan follow-up
- helping the trainee prescriber to integrate theory with practice
- encouraging in-depth analysis of diagnostic and management approaches through case-based discussion
- providing timely feedback on highlights in performance and areas for improvement

- assessing progress and verifying that, by the end of the course, the trainee prescriber is competent to assume the prescribing role
- taking responsibility for signing off competencies
- working in collaboration with peers and the Academic Assessor to support the trainee prescriber
- maintain the suitability of the practice learning environments.

Practice Assessor (PA, for NMC registrants)

The PA retains primary responsibility for the period of learning in practice and assessment of the trainee prescriber while working in collaboration with academic and workplace partners during the applicant's period of learning in practice.

This means that the PA doesn't provide all 90 hours of supervised practice, but universities often stipulate a minimum number of hours. At Manchester, we require that the PA supervises between 15 and 30 hours. The PA has a crucial role in supporting trainee prescribers that involves:

- agreeing on a learning contract with the trainee prescriber and Practice Supervisor
- planning a programme of learning in practice that will provide the opportunity for the trainee prescriber to meet their development needs and gain competency in prescribing
- facilitating learning by encouraging critical thinking and reflection
- providing dedicated time to observe and provide feedback to the trainee prescriber on highlights in performance and areas for improvement
- encouraging in-depth analysis of diagnostic and management approaches through case-based discussion
- assessing progress and verifying that, by the end of the course, the trainee prescriber is competent to assume the prescribing role
- taking responsibility for signing off competencies
- working in collaboration with the Practice Supervisor and the Academic Supervisor to support the trainee prescriber
- maintain the suitability of the practice learning environments.

Practice Supervisor (PS, for NMC registrants)

The PS is involved with supervision rather than assessment, and should not be the same person as the PA. The PS role includes:

- agreeing on a learning contract with the trainee prescriber and Practice Assessor
- planning a programme of learning in practice that will provide the opportunity for the trainee prescriber to meet their development needs and gain competency in prescribing
- facilitating learning by encouraging critical thinking and reflection
- providing dedicated time and opportunities for the trainee prescriber to observe how they conduct consultations with patients and their carers and the development of management plans
- allowing the trainee prescriber to carry out consultations, suggest management and prescribing options and plan follow-up

- helping the trainee prescriber to integrate theory with practice
- encouraging in-depth analysis of diagnostic and management approaches through case-based discussion
- providing timely feedback on highlights in performance and areas for improvement
- working in collaboration with peers and the Practice Assessor and Academic Assessor to support the trainee prescriber.

Supervised practice with non-prescribers

Most of your supervised practice must be with prescribers so that they can help you to contextualise your learning to the prescribing role. However, we recognise that some competencies might be better (or more conveniently) developed with non-prescribers. We permit up to 10 hours of supervised practice with non-prescribers, but this must be focused on a specific development need, eg, basic observations with a healthcare assistant, physical examination with a physician associate or physiotherapist, patient records systems with an administrator, etc.

Collaboration between academic and workplace partners

Communication between academic and workplace partners is essential to ensure effective development and assure appropriate standards of assessment. All students are allocated an Academic Assessor (AA) who liaises with the DPP or PA and PS.

The AA is responsible for both pastoral and academic support, which includes:

- assisting students with the process of induction and orientation into academic life
- responding promptly to communication from students
- working with students to build personal academic relationships
- providing advice and guidance to students to support their academic and professional progress
- monitoring academic performance and engagement, ie, through regular tutorials and feedback on formative assignments
- advising on constructive strategies to address development needs
- providing pastoral support and signposting for non-academic matters
- summative assessment within the assessment strategy
- providing feedback on the performance of assessments
- liaising with Designated Prescribing Practitioners or Practice Assessors about the practice-based student assessment.
- escalating concerns promptly to the Programme Director
- contributing to the development of learning materials, assessments and course delivery in line with learning outcomes and professional and practice standards.

Progress meetings

You are required to undertake two formal meetings with your DPP/PA and AA during the course. This can also be an opportunity for the Practice Supervisor to contribute to discussions about progress and actions to address development needs. The two checkpoints are:

- **initial meeting** to agree on the learning contract and plan further support and assessment
- **progress meeting** to confirm progress towards the summative assessments.

These meetings will generally be online, last around 30 minutes and have set agendas, which are available in the PebblePad portfolio. The DPP or PA and PS should attend for half of the meeting and the other half is for the student and Academic Assessor to address any academic questions. However, they are also flexible to the needs of the student and situation. The progress meetings provide the opportunity to keep track of student progress, resolve any issues or queries and support the student with their studies. It also helps to identify any issues with time management or meeting competencies at the earliest opportunity.

Following each progress meeting, you must document notes from the meeting in your portfolio.

Changing your DPP, Practice Assessor or Practice Supervisor

During the application process, we confirmed that your DPP or PA and PS were eligible to act in those roles. It's expected that these people will undertake the role for the whole of the course. However, if circumstances change and you need a different person to take over in any of these roles, you must inform your Academic Supervisor so that the necessary steps can be taken to confirm the new person's eligibility, provide them with the information and access they need, and record their details ahead of the final practice-based assessments.

It may also be necessary to arrange a handover to ensure continuity of support.

Supervised practice

Supervised practice is a dynamic process that generally follows a series of stages. It is not simply about accruing time in practice, but about developing the competencies required of a prescriber. While the 90 hours is a requirement, it also serves as an indicator of the level of commitment required and allows appropriate time to be planned through the course. It is not uncommon for students to require more than 90 hours to ensure competence and confidence and so we recommend that the 90 hours is achieved well ahead of the portfolio deadline to allow time for additional development if required.

The learning contract contextualises the competencies to the student's area of practice and details actions to address these development needs. For pharmacists, much of the supervision and all of the assessments are undertaken by the DPP. For NMC registrants, the Practice Assessor and Practice Supervisor must agree on a plan with the student that allows the Practice Supervisor to support the development of competencies ahead of assessment by the Practice Assessor.

Case-based discussion and multi-disciplinary team meetings can count towards the period of learning in practice as long as they are supervised by a prescriber, involve patients that you are involved with

the care of and are relevant to the identified development needs. However, they should not form the majority of your supervised practice, which should focus on gathering feedback on your practical and reasoning skills.

Teaching

The course comprises six days of workshops. On enrolment, you will be provided with a log in for Canvas® , so that you can access the online learning materials and a university email address.

You will be able to access Canvas® remotely using any internet connection and your log in details. Help with accessing the electronic resources will be available from the prescribing teaching team at the beginning of the module and help with problems is available from the IT service desk on 0161 306 5544.

Teaching Schedule

There are six mandatory study days for which you can find via the Key dates button on the Canvas® homepage.

All workshops are designed to develop your understanding of pre-workshop tasks, develop practical skills and provide an opportunity to discuss concepts and ideas with your peers.

Attendance

All students are required to attend all workshops. The remainder of the work will be provided in an online format and completed through online activity. Attendance will be confirmed by registers and students will only be permitted to progress to assessments if they have complete attendance. Please bear in mind that being late to any workshop could impact on the assessment of your attendance and punctuality is an important factor in professionalism.

We understand that students will sometimes be absent for very good reasons due to personal or family circumstances. If this happens, we appreciate you making us aware of the circumstances so that we can offer appropriate support. If there are mitigating circumstances, such as illness (you or a family member), please discuss this with your Academic Supervisor in the first instance. You must also notify your employer of your sickness and non-attendance.

The regulators view prescribing as a high-risk activity and attendance at all workshops is mandatory. Students will not be permitted to attempt any summative assessments until they have complete attendance at all workshops, progress meetings and have submitted all formative assignments.

You can read more about the university policy on Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students in Regulation XX Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students.

Sickness

You must notify the Programme Director of absences from work (supervised practice) or study due to illness of fewer than 7 days using self-certification forms. Longer absences must be certified by a medical note signed by a general practitioner or hospital doctor. It is in your interests to keep us fully informed of medical or other problems you have so that the effect these may have on your work can be taken into account in examination meetings. We will be able to advise whether support from the Disability Advice and Support Service would be available/necessary to secure adjustments to teaching/assessment arrangements.

The University's policy regarding Work and Attendance of students is available from the policy webpage: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=1895>

Induction session

The course has an online induction workshop that allows you to learn more about the University, course and facilities. We introduce the programme team, offer an overview of the course, explain why the style of learning is so important for the success of the course and demonstrate the eLearning system. You'll also have a chance to meet your peers ahead of the first study day.

There is an induction e-learning and screencast for DPPs, PAs and PSs, which is followed up with the opportunity to discuss roles, responsibilities and processes with the Academic Supervisor during the initial progress meeting.

Pre-requisite IT skills

We ask you to ensure that you are familiar with the basics of:

- using a personal computer, including Microsoft® software, particularly Microsoft® Word®
- using the internet as an aid to study, including bookmarking, saving and storing web-based material, and communicating via email
- using a web-based search engine to search a clinical database (eg, PubMed).

See Technical support (below) for further details.

Computer hardware

You should have regular access to a Windows PC (or Windows-compatible PC) on which you can adjust the settings if required. Canvas® may require you to make minor adjustments to your settings or browser.

You do not need a high specification (expensive) computer to complete this course. However, you will need access to a reliable, fast internet connection because this will significantly improve the download times for web pages, audio and video. You can find details of system requirements on the Canvas® Browser Support page: <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-the-browser-and-computer-requirements-for-Instructure/ta-p/66>

We also require a soundcard in your computer and a headset and microphone.

Software

The software required to access the online course is:

- an internet web browser, ie, Chrome or Firefox
- Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Please note that Internet Explorer is not supported by Canvas®.

If you have any initial problems, we recommended completing a Canvas® browser check: <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-the-browser-and-computer-requirements-for-Instructure/ta-p/66>

Technical Support

If you are having problems accessing the student portal, email or your course materials, please click on the following link for support: <https://elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/student/>

Please note that queries and support needs for accessing online library resources should be directed to The University of Manchester Helpdesk: <http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/about/>

On the University campus, there are large open access PC clusters in various buildings, and they have printing, photocopying and scanning facilities, too. They are open at weekends and you can find their locations on the interactive University map (www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/maps/interactive-map)

The University also has an extensive Wi-Fi network that can be accessed from most university buildings, cafes and shops on Oxford Road. You can find details on the university IT Services website: <https://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/wireless/>

Canvas®

Canvas®, the University's virtual learning environment, will be used for online teaching.

It is a web-based system that complements and builds upon traditional learning methods used at The University of Manchester. By using Canvas, you can:

- view course materials and learning resources,
- communicate with lecturers and other students,
- collaborate in groups,
- submit assignments
- monitoring your own progress at a time and place of your own convenience.

Training in the use of software

The Faculty eLearning team have produced a Canvas® Support Website for new students, which you can access at <https://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/study-support/academic-support/online-study-resources/canvas/>

Assessment

Formative and summative assessment instructions are provided on Canvas®.

Summative assessments

The summative assessment of competence in practice will assess underpinning knowledge, decision-making and application of theory to practice using:

- objective structured clinical examination (OSCE)
- exam
- case presentation
- reflective practice portfolio.

We offer a brief overview of each below and you can find more information on Canvas®.

Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE)

This involves assessing your patient/client consultation skills as they relate to prescribing, as well as your decision making, problem solving and practical skills. This will comprise three stations that focus on:

- prescription-writing and providing medicines-related information
- history-taking with case note entry
- basic observations.

All stations are marked as pass or fail and you must successfully complete all three to pass the assessment. Students who fail the assessment must resit the failed station/s.

The OSCE will be undertaken on campus and we will provide all of the equipment that you will require. You might want to bring your own pen and stethoscope. If you feel that you will require anything else,

you must discuss this with the Programme Director well in advance of the exam; this includes medicines that you may need to use during the examination.

Exam

The exam covers knowledge and understanding across the prescribing process and is completed online in one of the computer clusters on campus. It comprises multiple choice and short answer questions for pharmacology, and law, ethics and governance, and carries an 80% pass mark for both sections, which is mandated by the regulator.

There is also a numeracy section composed of ten questions that has a 100% pass mark mandated by the regulator.

Students are required to pass all three parts of the exam and there is no compensation between them. Failing any section of the exam will require a second attempt at that section.

Case presentation

Most of the elements of the assessment address specific aspects of the prescribing process in isolation. The case presentation is an opportunity to bring most of these competencies together in the context of your scope of practice. You will deliver the case presentation by webinar in groups of up to four students.

You will be permitted 15 minutes to deliver a case that represents what you expect to be your typical initial prescribing practice, that demonstrates your development from practitioner to prescriber and that you have managed autonomously. The examiner and your peers will ask questions relating to the case to conclude this assessment. We have provided a template presentation and further guidance on Canvas®.

Reflective practice portfolio

The reflective practice portfolio provides a framework through which to record and demonstrate your progress and achievements during the period of supervised practice. We will use *A competency framework for all prescribers* (RPS, 2021) as a framework for this, and your learning in practice should be focused to demonstrate that you have met the competencies outlined within this framework. You will create your portfolio throughout the course using PebblePad.

One of the competencies you are required to demonstrate is an ability to negotiate an appropriate level of support and supervision for your role as a prescriber. You demonstrate this for the summative assessments by recording a complete set of supervised practice and securing sign-off from your DPP/PA before the portfolio deadline. If your portfolio has not been signed off before the deadline, you will incur late submission penalties that could result in failure of the assessment. If you are unable to secure sign-off before the portfolio deadline, you must discuss options with your Academic Supervisor,

which may include mitigating circumstances, extension or interruption and you can find details of these academic processes in the [SHS Student Handbook](#).

Please remember that patient confidentiality is of paramount importance, and any breach of confidentiality will result in an automatic fail of the portfolio assessment.

As well as looking for evidence of your competence within your portfolio, we expect you to demonstrate an ability to critically reflect on your own practice. The portfolio carries a pass mark of 50%. The marking scheme is available on Canvas® and you will have the opportunity for feedback from your Academic Assessor.

Assignment word count

In accordance with the University Policy on Marking:
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=26290>.

Portfolio essays and the short answer questions have word limits and the following penalties will be imposed for submissions that exceed the stated word limit:

- 0 marks if up to 10 % longer than stipulated
- 5 marks if more than 10 %, but less than 15 % longer than stipulated
- 10 marks if more than 15 %, but less than 20 % longer than stipulated
- 15 marks if more than 20 % longer than stipulated

A zero mark will be awarded if the piece of work exceeds the stipulated length by more than 50 %. It is acceptable, without penalty, for you to submit an assignment within a range that is plus 10% of this limit. If you present an assignment with a word count exceeding the specified limit by 10-50, the assignment will be marked but marks will be deducted, and this can reduce your mark below the pass mark.

In accordance with accepted academic practice, when submitting any written assignment for summative assessment, the notion of a word count includes the following without exception:

- All titles or headings that form part of the actual text. This does not include the fly page or reference list.
- All words that form the actual essay.
- All words forming the titles for figures, tables and boxes, are included but this does not include boxes or tables or figures themselves.
- All in-text (that is bracketed) references.
- All directly quoted material.

Assessment dates

Please refer to the Key dates button on the Canvas® homepage for assessment dates and deadlines for your cohort.

Feedback policy

The following policy has been developed in line with the University Policy on feedback to undergraduate and postgraduate taught students: www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/policy-on-feedback-to-undergraduate-and-postgraduate-taught-students.

“The University of Manchester is committed to providing timely and appropriate feedback to students on their academic progress and achievement, thereby enabling students to reflect on their progress and plan their academic and skills development effectively. Feedback, and acting on feedback, is, therefore, part of the active learning process throughout a student’s course of study.” (Teaching and Learning Support Office, 2010)

On the course we are committed to providing:

- immediate personalised feedback during workshops
- personalised feedback within eight working days for scheduled formative submissions*
- personalised feedback within 15 working days of submission for other formative work
- an opportunity to understand the marking scheme as well as the OSCE format through peer assessment of the mock OSCE
- provision of personalised feedback on all summative assessments.

*This is a short course, so we are committed to reducing the turnaround for formative feedback. We set deadlines for formative assessments so that tutors can schedule a time to provide feedback in a much shorter timeframe, but this is only possible when students meet the set deadline. Where a deadline is exceeded without prior agreement with the Academic Supervisor, the university standard of 15 working days applies.

Similarly, Academic Supervisors cannot necessarily provide *ad hoc* feedback in less than 15 working days without a prior agreement and even then, it will depend on their workload and other commitments.

In the case of staff sickness that may delayed feedback, students will be advised by email and the programme team will aim to make alternate arrangements to reduce delays.

Feedback is designed to be balanced by highlighting areas of good practice and offering guidance to address development needs. We encourage you to reflect on the feedback and to incorporate the ideas into your next work. If you are uncertain about it or have any questions, please ask your Academic Assessor for clarification.

Formative feedback

Formative feedback is intended to help students to develop their understanding and submissions towards the summative assessments. This is in several ways:

- three formative assignments for the reflective practice portfolio
- workshop activities and the mock OSCE

- mock exam
- numeracy quiz.

These assessments do not contribute to your final assessments.

It is your own responsibility to consider the feedback given on your work, to seek to understand it and to act on it.

Summative assessments

All summative results will be released after the Exam Board, which is usually scheduled within eight weeks of the portfolio submission deadline.

We aim to provide provisional results within 15 working days. However, you cannot request annotation or practise as a prescriber until your results have been ratified by the Exam Board. This means that our focus is on progressing to Exam Board as soon as possible to reduce delays to your annotation as a prescriber.

However, we do provide feedback on all summative assessments, irrespective of whether you pass, and this is intended to support your further development.

Recommendation of award

Due to the practice-based nature of the programme and the accreditation by the regulatory bodies, this programme has some higher requirements compared with the University Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations (www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate-degree-regulations) and details of these are outlined below.

You must achieve a pass in all stations to pass the OSCE assessment. If you are unsuccessful, you will be offered a second attempt for the station/s you did not pass at the first attempt.

The case presentation and reflective practice portfolio have 50% pass marks.

The exam consists of three sections that cover:

1. law, ethics and governance multiple choice questions (MCQs) and short answer questions (SAQs)
2. pharmacology MCQs and SAQs
3. calculations

The law, ethics and governance, and pharmacology sections have an 80% pass mark. The calculations section has a 100% pass mark.

You must pass each topic independently of the others because the regulator does not permit compensation. If you are unsuccessful in any topic at the first attempt, you will be offered a second

attempt for that section.

To successfully complete the course, you must complete all assessments independently of one another at the required pass mark. This means that obtaining a high mark in one assessment will not compensate for failure in another.

Students must complete the full course of study, including all assessed elements, within 12 months of the initial start date. In exceptional circumstances, a student may complete the course within a two-year period. Failure to meet this requirement means that the student must apply to complete a prescribing course from the start, including all learning and assessments and at additional cost.

Failure of assessment

If an assessment is failed, the student will be offered the opportunity to re-sit the assessment on one occasion only. Achieving a 'fail' in practice, as determined by the DPP/PA, will not be subject to a resit attempt, and students who fail their time in practice will fail the course.

Note that any issue regarded as unsafe practice will constitute an automatic fail of the course. Any example of a student compromising patient safety will be discussed with the student's regulator as a professional issue and not an academic matter.

Resits

If the student resubmits work, it will be counted as a resit. The maximum mark the student can obtain for a resit is the pass mark for that assessment.

Resit assessments are taken as part of the next available cohort. If there is any reason that this is not possible, the student must submit a mitigating circumstances/interruption request to delay the resit/resubmission to a later cohort. Please consult the [SHS Student Handbook](#) for information on mitigating circumstances/interruption requests.

Failure at the first and second attempt

If a student fails an assessment at the first attempt and then fails the resit, they will not be eligible to take the assessments again. This will result in an overall fail and exclusion from the course.

Course evaluation

Your feedback is extremely important to us and supports us to reflect on our practice and the development of the course in the same way that we aim to support your reflection and development. We request feedback at intervals during the course and consider the feedback at the programme board

meeting unless urgent action is required.

We also convene a Student Council at the end of the taught component of the course so that student representatives can gain a better understanding of the cohort's experience. This enables a more constructive discussion of solutions at the programme board meeting.

Sharing Information

The University may share appropriate information relating to your health and/or conduct with external organisations such as your employer(s), placement and training providers, professional and statutory regulatory bodies (PSRBs), eg, the GPhC or Nursing & Midwifery Council. This may occur where concerns about your health and/or conduct arise, and the University considers it necessary for them to be disclosed to one or more of the above organisations.

The University's Privacy Notice for Registered Students (which is accessible via this link: www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/data-collection-notice) includes further information about how the University may use and process your personal data, including the legal basis and conditions which may be relevant to such processing (see section 6 of the Privacy Notice). The University will only disclose special category data (such as data relating to your health) to a third-party organisation where one of the additional conditions are satisfied (see section 9 of the Privacy Notice), including where processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest.

Raising concerns

During your period of learning in practice, there may be situations where concerns about teaching and learning under the supervision of the DPP/PA/PS arise. Alternatively, there may be situations within practice where you observe or identify a situation or event that has the potential to cause risk or harm to an individual(s) or organisation.

In the first instance, all students with concerns should raise them with their DPP/PA/PS (unless the issue involves that person). If the concerns are of a nature that the student needs further support or feels unable to raise the matter locally for any reason, the student should seek support from their Academic Assessor in the first instance.

Following a meeting with the student, the Academic Assessor will determine whether any further action is required, or that the student's concerns are valid, and the matter should be taken further. In this instance, the Academic Assessor will involve the Programme Director.

Student Support

You will be allocated a member of the teaching team who will act as your Academic Supervisor/Assessor. You will be encouraged to keep in regular contact with this person in between teaching dates and they will be your first point of contact if you have any questions or queries or just

need to talk to someone other than your DPP/PA/PS. Contact details for your Academic Assessor are available on Canvas®.

Please consult the [SHS Student Handbook](#) for additional information on Student Support and services available to students.