



Faculty of Health and Life Sciences  
School of Pharmacy

# **Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing**

## **Information for Prospective Designated Medical Practitioners.**

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# Introduction

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This guidance document provides a summary of the Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists course at De Montfort University. It is intended to provide background information for a Designated Medical Practitioner (DMP). It identifies the criteria for selecting DMPs, their role, responsibilities, preparation and support.

More information about Independent Prescribing is available from:

The General Pharmaceutical Council

<http://www.pharmacyregulation.org/education/pharmacist-independent-prescriber>

Department of Health: A Guide to Implementing Nurse and Pharmacist Prescribing in England 2006.

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_4133747.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_4133747.pdf)

“Working with a designated medical practitioner”. The Pharmaceutical Journal, 8/15 August 2015, Vol 295, No 7874/5, online | URI: 20068988

Further information can be obtained from the Module Leader

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## About The Course

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This course has been developed in accordance with the learning outcomes and indicative content provided by the General Pharmaceutical Council. This information is located at

<http://www.pharmacyregulation.org/education/pharmacist-independent-prescriber>

Essentially, the Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing course is either a stand-alone professional course which will be awarded 45 level M academic credits or one module of a 120 credit Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy.

The course will be delivered over a 4-month or 6-month period with attendance at the university on 8 compulsory study days. Students must undertake the equivalent of twelve days (12 x 7.5 = 90 hours) practice based experience overseen by their designated medical practitioner (DMP). In addition, students will be expected to complete study packs specifically prepared by the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE) to facilitate support for pharmacist prescribing, along with online learning and self-directed study.

The Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing is a 45 credit Masters level module, which requires approximately 450 hours of study. Learning activities that the student will be involved in include:

- learning in seminars / lectures at the university
- self-directed learning completing essential CPPE packs.
- self -directed learning completing the online pharmacology lecture series.
- learning in practice.
- time taken for private study, including recommended reading, completing written assessments and portfolio.
- completing assessments.

# Learning Outcomes

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**By the end of the course the student will be able to:**

1. Evaluate and apply an evidence-based practice and patient partnership approach to prescribing decision making, including public health and clinical governance concerns.
2. Create and use individualised treatment and monitoring plans for patients within the area of competence.
3. Prescribe safely, ethically, legally, cost effectively and within a team, communicating effectively with patients, carers, other prescribers and other healthcare professionals.
4. Perform patient examinations in order to diagnose and monitor the conditions within the area of competence.
5. Reflect upon prescribing practice and use this to develop audits and continue your professional development, recording this appropriately.
6. Use common diagnostic aids, e.g. stethoscope

# About The DMP

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## Selection Criteria for a DMP

It is expected that the DMP will be a registered medical practitioner who will satisfy the following criteria:

- Normally had at least three years medical, treatment and prescribing responsibility for a group of patients/clients in the relevant field of practice.
- Works within a GP practice and is either vocationally trained or has a certificate of equivalent training from the Joint Committee for Post-Graduate Training in General Practice **OR** is a Specialist Registrar, Clinical Assistant or Consultant within an NHS Trust or other NHS employer.
- Has the support of the employing organisation or GP practice to act as a DMP who will provide supervision, support and opportunities to develop competence in prescribing practice.
- Has some experience or training in teaching and / or supervising in practice.

## Role of DMP

The student is expected to spend the equivalent of 12 days (90 hours) Learning in Practice and although the DMP should be willing and able to devote enough of his/her time to give the student sufficient support and guidance, it is not expected that the DMP will need to spend all 90 hours with the student.

The student's Learning in Practice is expected to be related to their future prescribing role and to facilitate the development of the required skills and competencies. It will be individual to each student and reflect their own experience and clinical skills.

The DMP is requested to provide support, teaching and supervision in the clinical area in the following ways:

### Support the student

- Negotiate and clarify with the student how the mentoring role will be fulfilled to take account of the respective commitments of both the student and the DMP, the best learning opportunities and other local considerations.
- Assist the student throughout their time in practice in assessing their learning needs in relation to independent prescribing within the practice setting.
- At the start of the student's learning in practice time, discuss with the student ways in which the identified learning needs can be met and contribute to the development of the Assessment of Practice Based Learning Needs. The DMP will be required to sign the agreed plan of action.

### Examples of how the pharmacist could receive supervision (from the DoH guidance):

- Dedicated time and opportunities for the pharmacist to observe how a medical practitioner conducts a "consultation/interview" with patients and/or their carers, and the development of a subsequent management plan.
- Opportunities to allow in-depth discussion and analysis of clinical management using a random case analysis approach, when patient care and prescribing behaviour can be examined further.

- Facilitate student learning by encouraging critical thinking and reflection with the use of the student's professional portfolio or learning log.
- Allow opportunities for the student to carry out consultations and suggest clinical management and prescribing options, which are then discussed with the supervisor.

Whilst there is a variety of ways in which the DMP can supervise the student, the expectation is that the majority of supervision will be through observation of other medical practitioners and healthcare professionals conducting consultations and developing subsequent management plans, and in the latter part of the student's supervised practice, through the student undertaking supervised consultations, observed by the DMP.

### Teaching and support to focus on:

- The area of clinical competence, patient groups and circumstances for which the student is likely to prescribe.
- Developing critical thinking and reflection and encouraging the student to apply their theoretical learning to clinical practice.
- Assessing the student's developing prescribing competence and provide feedback to the student regarding their progress throughout the 90 hours in practice.
- Enabling the student to achieve the competencies required.

### Supervision and Assessment

The assessment of time in practice will be the responsibility of the DMP. The DMP will be required to do the following:

#### Throughout the 90 hours in practice:

- Provide the module leader with information regarding the student's progress **where necessary**, including any concerns relating to their competence, attitude or motivation.
- Make arrangements for the support of the student during periods of DMP leave which fall during the teaching element of the course.

### Towards the end of the 90 hours in practice:

- Provide written feedback to the university on the student's Structured Case Report: this will include commenting on a clinical evidence base that the student has developed to underpin their area of practice, commenting on an prescribing 'algorithm', which details the way in which a patient will pass through the pharmacist's care, and commenting on their overview of the management of a typical patient that they will be encountering in practice.

### At the end of the 90 hours in practice:

- Sign and date each of the competencies listed in a Practice Based Assessment of Prescribing Competence and complete and sign the statements to confirm that the student has completed the required number of hours in practice, and is competent to practice as an independent prescriber, if the DMP is confident, in their professional opinion, that this is the case.

It will be the DMP's responsibility to monitor the clinical development of the pharmacist throughout the duration of the course. Any concerns regarding the student's ability to practice safely or achieve the required competencies should be shared with the module leader at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate action can be taken.

## Support for DMPs

- The module leader will be the primary source of support from De Montfort University.
- DMPs who wish to may be registered to join the university's virtual learning environment shell specifically for DMPs. This will allow access to various documents and background information and provides a means of contacting other DMPs and the module leader via a discussion board or e-mail. A registration form will be e-mailed directly to DMPs on request.
- The module leader will provide support and guidance regarding the course, any aspect of the supervisory role and in dealing with concerns regarding performance, attitude and motivation of the student.
- Support for the role should be obtained from your employer. The nature of the support required should be negotiated with the employer.

- Peer support should be considered. Colleagues who have previously fulfilled the supervisory/mentoring role can assist in role clarification, problem sharing and solving, and sharing examples of good practice or pragmatic approaches to the role.