

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

DIPLOMA IN THERAPEUTICS

2004/5

1	Awarding Institution	University of Newcastle
2	Teaching Institution	University of Newcastle in conjunction with the Regional Drug and Therapeutics Centre
3	Final Award	Dip.Ther
4	Programme title	Diploma in Primary Care Therapeutics
5	Programme Accredited by: N/A	
6	UCAS Code	
7	QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s)	
8	Date of production/revision	June 2004
9	Programme Aims: <p>To assist in the continuing professional development of general medical practitioners and pharmacists through the provision of specialist postgraduate education tailored to identify vocational needs in the field of therapeutics.</p> <p>The Course has been designed to enable students to develop specialist knowledge and skills built on their previous educational and professional experience and targeted to their future needs. The defined objectives for the programme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to develop the knowledge and skills of general practitioners and pharmacists in therapeutics as applied to primary care• to develop the knowledge, skills and approaches necessary for the implementation of rational prescribing in primary care• to offer a structured introduction to research methods relevant to primary care therapeutics• to develop approaches to information sharing and presentation skills for use in the primary care setting	

10(a) Programme Intended Learning Outcomes:

A Knowledge and understanding

A1 The science of drug therapy including the scientific principles of clinical pharmacology and prescribing

A2 Research methods, ethics and conduct in relation to drug treatment

A3 Assessment of the clinical effectiveness, safety, risk benefit and cost effectiveness of medicines

A4 Drug use in special patient groups including pregnancy, lactation, children, the elderly, and patients with co-morbidity

A5 Drug use in specific conditions

B Subject-specific skills

B1 Safe and effective prescribing

B2 Ethical drug use

C Cognitive skills

C1 Critical evaluation of drug therapy

D Key (transferable) skills

1 Presentation and communication skills

2 Literature searching, library and IT skills

10(b) Programme Intended Learning Outcomes:	Teaching and Learning Methods and Strategies
<p>A Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>The primary means of imparting knowledge (A1-A5) is by interactive seminar lead by a teacher. For A5, the teachers are specialists in each condition, allowing a broad discussion of the clinical issues involved as needed by the students. Seminars are supplemented by reading material, which is supplied in advance. There is widespread use of clinical examples and case histories to encourage interactive discussion.</p> <p>B Subject-specific/professional skills</p> <p>Safe and effective prescribing (B1) is taught using case histories and other clinical examples. Ethical drug use is learned by interactive discussions within the group.</p> <p>C Cognitive skills</p> <p>Critical evaluation of drug therapy (C1) is learned by seminar and the skills practised by an exercise in which students evaluate research papers relevant to a specific topic and then produce proposals for safe, effective and economical prescribing. These are then discussed within the group with a facilitator present. Critical evaluation is also a key component of the oral presentation and the dissertation</p> <p>D Key (transferable) skills</p> <p>Presentation and communication skills (D1) are acquired during case discussions and, more formally, by the oral presentation involving a key therapeutic area. There is a formal practical session on IT and literature searching skills in one of the teaching clusters.</p>	

10(c)	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes:	Assessment Strategy and Methods
A	Knowledge and understanding	
A1		MCQs, unseen written exam, oral exam
A2		MCQs, unseen written exam, oral exam
A3		MCQs, unseen written exam, oral exam Oral presentation, dissertation
A4		MCQs, unseen written exam, oral exam
A5		MCQs, unseen written exam, oral exam
B	Subject-specific/professional skills	
B1		unseen written exam, oral exam
B2		unseen written exam, oral exam
C	Cognitive skills	
C1		unseen written exam, oral presentation, dissertation, oral exam
D	Key (transferable) skills	
D1		oral presentation, dissertation, oral exam
D2		oral presentation, dissertation,

11 Programme Curriculum, Structure, and Features:

This is a part-time course taking place over 12 study days during one academic year. It is non-modular.

Day		Learning outcomes	Progression Requirements
1	Introduction Prescribing Adverse drug reactions	A1, A2, B1	N/A
2	Pharmacology, drug interactions drug monitoring, research methods N/A, economical assessment	A1, A2, A4, B1, B2, C1	
3	Prescribing for special groups, critical appraisal and IT skills	A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, C1, D2	
4	Prescribing in women, critical appraisal	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, B2, C1, D2	
5	CVS 1	A1, A5, B1, C1	
6	CVS 2	A1, A5, B1, C1	
7	GI and infectious disease	A1, A5, B1, C1	
8	Neurology/ Psychiatry	A1, A5, B1, C1	
9	Diabetes/Respiratory/Osteoporosis	A1, A5, B1, C1	
10	Rheumatology, oral presentations	A1, A5, B1, C1, D1, D2	
11	Palliative care	A1, A5, B1, C1	
12	Dermatology / Urology, oral presentations	A1, A5, B1, C1	

13 Criteria for Admission:

GCSEs required

N/A

A-Level Subjects and Grades

N/A

Alternative entry qualifications

- (a) GPs – MBBS or equivalent. Vocational training in General Practice
- (b) Pharmacists – Degree in Pharmacy

Admissions policy

Students with appropriate entry qualifications are offered places up to the limit of course numbers (25) on a 'first come first served' basis.

Arrangements for non-standard entrants

N/A

Any Additional Requirements

N/A

13 Support for Students and their Learning:

Induction

Students undergo a morning of induction at the beginning of the course.

Study skills support

The well-being of its students is one of the prime concerns of the University. Staff on the Diploma course are available to offer advice and to direct students to sources of specific help. There are specific seminars for IT skills.

Academic support

Each student will be assigned to a personal tutor for the duration of the course. In particular tutors will advise and review progress on dissertations.

Pastoral support

This would initially be via the personal tutor or course director. There is also a Student Advice Centre on Level 5 in the Student's Union Building.

Support for Special Needs

As above. The course programme director is responsible for making arrangements to address any special needs.

Learning resources

Students have access to the University library and computer clusters. In addition, essential learning material is circulated to students in advance of course days.

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning:

Module reviews

Validation is seen as a continuous process.

Student evaluations are performed for each teaching session and reviewed by the Teaching Committee (CPD and course facilitators). Adjustments to the course are made as appropriate.

Programme reviews

A comprehensive programme review is held annually by the curriculum committee, in the light of student evaluations, the external examiners report, and the minutes of the Student Committee Meeting.

External examiner reports

A report is obtained and acted upon by the curriculum committee following the Diploma examinations each year.

Accreditation reports

N/A

Student evaluations

As above

Feedback Mechanisms

As above

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms

Regulation changes approved by the curriculum committee are forwarded to the University Teaching Committee for approval before implementation.

15 Regulation of Assessment

Pass Marks

The final mark will be a single percentage mark, 50% being required to pass. In addition candidates must obtain 40% in each of the elements to be eligible to pass.

Course Requirements

N/A

Weighting of Stages

N/A

Common Marking Scheme

50% (40% in each element) – Pass

70% (60% in each element) - Distinction

Role of the External Examiner

The external examiner reviews the course content and all exam papers and is involved in the marking of the exam papers and dissertations. He/she also takes part in the oral exams, usually seeing the highest (to help decide the award of distinctions) and lowest (to help decide the award of pass/fail) scoring students.

16 Indicators of Quality and Standards:

Professional Accreditation Reports

N/A

Internal Review Reports

N/A

Previous QAA Reports

N/A

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. It should be noted that there may be variation in the range of learning opportunities reflecting the availability of staff to teach them. While every effort will be made to ensure that the module or modules described in the programme specification are available, this cannot be guaranteed.

The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

In addition, information relating to the course is provided in:

The University Prospectus

The Departmental Prospectus

The University and Degree Programme Regulations

The Degree Programme Handbook

QAA Subject Review Report