Education at the British Pharmacological Society: current & future directions

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Aspects to be covered

Where does education “sit” within the BPS
- Structure of the Society

Role of the Education & Training department within the BPS
- Developing a connected HE teaching community

Key projects at the moment
- Focus on Pharmacology
  - Core curriculum and QAA benchmarking
  - Diploma in Advanced Pharmacology plus workshops
  - Integrative Pharmacology Fund evaluation
- Prescribing Safety Assessment

Future challenges
Organisational structure of the Society
Role of the Education & Training department within the BPS

- Recommend to Council policies and strategies related to the support of education and training for pharmacologists;
- Develop materials and programmes of activity to support pharmacology (together with the Clinical Committee) across lifelong learning:
  - Careers resources and outreach for young people
  - Education & development of undergraduate and postgraduate students
  - Supporting CPD, accreditation and assessment
- Develop and keep under review core curricula in pharmacology for courses in which the discipline forms a significant component
- Work with the Policy and Public Engagement Committee to engage adult audiences

Develop a connected HE teaching community:
- 27 course organisers/programme directors from across UK
- Part 1: ‘what is core pharmacology?’
- Part 2: ‘how can the Society help you?’
A modern and relevant Society:  
*Focus on Pharmacology*

“How should the Society improve its engagement with university departments in a time of change, in order to better promote the discipline of pharmacology?” - CHOPT 2014

The objectives of Focus are:

- To understand the value of UK pharmacology
- To ensure that pharmacology knowledge and skills are supported – now and into the future.

- The results of Focus will be synthesised and used to inform Society activities, including the advice and resources we are able to provide our members with to support pharmacology.
- The Society will be using Focus to inform its next 5 year strategy.
Key projects at the moment

*Focus on Pharmacology*

**Five overlapping research themes**

- What are UK/global priorities for health, social wellbeing and the economy?
- Who has a stake in this vision for pharmacology?
- How healthy is the pharmacology talent pipeline?
- What impact is pharmacology making on research and society?
- How can the Society best support pharmacology now and into the future?
Theme C

Core curriculum and QAA benchmarking

Worked with Royal Society of Biology and QAA to revise the benchmark statement on Biomedical Sciences to broaden its remit and ensure that pharmacology and other “biomedical” disciplines were more visible.
Theme C

*Core curriculum and QAA benchmarking*

Towards a modern and relevant undergraduate core pharmacology curriculum that:

- Captures expertise, resources and needs from across UK pharmacology – academia and industry
- Is dynamic – to reduce its vulnerability to becoming outdated
- Is a resource that is *practical*
- Is produced by our members for our members
- Can support accreditation processes
Theme C

Core curriculum and QAA benchmarking

The Delphi process;

- A process of consensus building:
- Named after Oracle of Delphi – Greek mythology
- Answered every question with a question – an iterative process
- Developed by Dalkey and Helmer of the Rand Corporation in 1975
- Extensively used method for needs assessment, policy making, and curriculum development

Developing a core curriculum in clinical pharmacology and therapeutics: a Delphi study

T. Walley and D. J. Webb
Theme C

Core curriculum and QAA benchmarking

Stages of the Delphi process;

- Choose a facilitator
- Identify the experts – from industry, academia or other
- Round 1 questions – general questions to gain a broad range of views. Collate responses, statistical analysis to define...
- Round 2 questions – delves deeper into topic to clarify certain issues. Collate responses, statistical analysis to define...
- Round 3 questions – Focuses on supporting consensus. Collate responses, statistical analysis to define...
- More questions, or define curriculum and send for consultation
Theme E

*Diploma in Advanced Pharmacology*

- Aims to extend the pharmacological knowledge base of researchers who are either entering the field of pharmacology, or who wish to develop their expertise in this area.

- Developed and delivered by experts from academia, industry and healthcare, and it’s intended to provide an advanced pharmacological education alongside normal employee duties over the course of 2-5 years.

- Award requires
  - Attendance at six workshops and completion of the associated reflective accounts
  - A 6,000–7,000 word dissertation.
  - A poster communication at a British Pharmacological Society meeting.
  - An oral communication at a British Pharmacological Society meeting.

- Students must complete within five years.
Theme E
*Diploma in Advanced Pharmacology*

Workshops
- General and Advanced Receptor Theory.
*And at least one from the following:*
  - Statistics.
  - Drug Discovery.
  - Pharmacokinetics & Pharmacodynamics.

Others planned for 2016
- Ion channels
- Biologics

Workshops can be taken as “stand alone” CPD opportunities gaining Royal Society of Biology accredited CPD points.
Theme E

*Diploma in Advanced Pharmacology*

In 2016, we will be reviewing our Diploma and Workshops content using:

- Outputs from Core Curriculum review
- Stakeholder interviews and focus groups

We will be making recommendations about the content areas the Society is best-placed to support, and how our audiences would prefer to engage with this material e.g. workshops, e-learning, meetings
Future challenges

- Maintaining the momentum – ensuring that education stays at the forefront of the Society’s agenda
- Maintaining the identity of pharmacology in an increasingly interdisciplinary landscape
- Communicating across the disciplines;
  - a spirit of inclusivity rather than exclusivity
  - developing synergistic relationships with other societies
- Identifying what support our members need and what it is reasonable for the Society to provide