

Undergraduate Programme Specification

BSc (Hons) Pharmacology

This specification provides a summary of the main features of the programme and learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate where full advantage is taken of all learning opportunities offered. Further details on the learning, teaching and assessment approach for the programme and modules can be accessed on the University website and Virtual Learning Environment, GCU Learn. All programmes of the University are subject to the University's [Quality Assurance](#) processes.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION			
Programme Title	Bachelor of Science with Honours in Pharmacology Bachelor of Science with Honours in Pharmacology (GCU Pathways)		
Final Award	Bachelor of Science with Honours in Pharmacology		
Awarding Body	Glasgow Caledonian University		
School	SHLS		
Department	Biological and Biomedical Sciences		
Mode of Study	Full-time		
Location of Delivery	Glasgow Campus		
UCAS Code	B210 B211 (GCU pathways)		
Accreditations (PSRB)	Royal Society of Biology		
Period of Approval	From:	September 2025	To: August 2030

2. EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF PROGRAMME
The educational aim of the programme is the production of Honours graduates with specialist knowledge in pharmacology and with the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding to pursue a productive and satisfying career. While the programme aims to give students a thorough grounding in all aspects of pharmacology, it also includes modules that ensure a broad based experience of human biology and an appropriate knowledge of other related sciences. This permits exit at Certificate of HE, Diploma of HE and B.Sc. in Biological Sciences. The educational aims are to: 1. Provide a detailed understanding at a theoretical and practical level of current topics in pharmacology 2. Produce graduates who have developed the skills, knowledge and opportunity to pursue careers in pharmacology 3. Produce graduates who are able to integrate theory and practice and who are critical, reflective thinkers 4. Stimulate deeper learning, critical evaluation and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning through using a range of student-centred approaches and develop an effective learning environment. 5. Foster an ethos of career-long self-directed learning through continuous professional development

6. Encourage the development of creative and innovative thinking through a range of approaches
7. Develop further the student's ability to critically analyse published material including supportive data
8. Develop the student's ability to analyse complex scientific research
9. Foster the ability of the student to deliver effective communication of scientific knowledge to fellow professionals
10. Develop the student's ability to design and conduct an investigative project under supervision and demonstrate a critical and rigorous analysis of the data in the production of a thesis.

3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

A: Knowledge and understanding;

- A1 Explain the essential facts, concepts, principles and theories of the biological sciences
- A2 Acquire an in-depth understanding of key advanced aspects of pharmacology through research-led discovery
- A3 Understand the principles and areas of applicability of a range of research methodologies, data acquisition and data interpretation techniques
- A4 Understand the principles and practice of laboratory investigations

B: Practice: Applied knowledge, skills and understanding;

- B1 Competence in the practical application of a range of appropriate techniques and test measurement systems in the life sciences
- B2 Show ability to interpret current thinking in terms of their significance and the underlying theory
- B3 Evaluate critically research material from a variety of sources to gain a coherent understanding of theory and practice
- B4 Design and carry out an experimental programme independently
- B5 Develop an awareness of current scientific issues within an ethical framework whilst engaging with professional processes and practices

C: Generic cognitive skills;

- C1 Ability to analyse problems and develop strategies for their solution
- C2 Make a reasoned choice from a range of strategies and techniques as to which is most appropriate to solve a given problem
- C3 Apply critical, creative and innovative thinking, problem solving & reflective practice to a variety of theoretical and practical situations

D: Communication, numeracy and ICT skills

- D1 Use IT for communication, information retrieval and data handling
- D2 Be proficient in the use of IT for accessing databases and scientific literature and in the practical application of a range of statistical, quality assurance and computational techniques used in the treatment of experimental data
- D3 Communicate effectively with a wide range of individuals/stakeholders using a variety of means

E: Autonomy, accountability and working with others.

- E1 Plan, conduct and accurately report on work carried out by themselves
- E2 Critical discussion, evaluation and reporting of work carried out by themselves or others
- E3 Ability to prepare, interpret and implement risk assessments/ethics applications and undertake safe reflective and effective laboratory procedures
- E4 Utilise effective time management to organise and plan work to ensure tasks are completed and deadlines met
- E5 Develop effective independent and group working skills

4. LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS

The programme provides a variety of learning and teaching methods. Programme and Module specific guidance will provide detail of the learning and teaching methods specific to each module.

Across the programme the learning and teaching methods and approaches may include the following:

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Practical classes
- Placements
- International exchange
- Groupwork
- Scientific communication through a variety of means
- Flipped classroom approaches
- Critical analysis of scientific literature

The above approaches may be delivered either in person or online as appropriate and determined at module level by the Module Leader.

5. ASSESSMENT METHODS

The programme provides a variety of formative and summative assessment methods. Programme and Module specific guidance will provide detail of the assessment methods specific to each module.

Across the programme the assessment methods may include the following:

- Written coursework (essays, reports, case studies, dissertation, literature review)
- Oral coursework (presentations, structured conversations)
- Practical Assessment (Placement, VIVA, Laboratory work)
- Group work
- Blogs and Wikis
- Portfolio Presentations
- Formal Examinations and Class Tests

The above assessments may be delivered either in person and online as appropriate and determined at module level by the Module Leader.

6. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Specific entry requirements for this programme can be found on the prospectus and study pages on the GCU website at this location: www.gcu.ac.uk/study

The Course webpage specific to this Programme is:

<https://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate-pharmacology-glasgow>

<https://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate-pharmacology-pathway-multiple-locations>

All students entering the programme are required to adhere to the [GCU Code of Student Conduct](#).

7. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND AVAILABLE AND FINAL EXIT AWARDS¹

The following modules are delivered as part of this programme:

Module Code	Module Title	Core or Optional	SCQF Level	Credit Size	Coursework %	Examination %	Practical %
M1C726395	Biological Chemistry**	Core	7	40	30 (2 x 15)	70 (2 x 15)	
M1C724205	Core Skills in Biosciences 1*/**	Core	7	40	40 (2 x 20)		60
M1B130730	Introduction to the Human Body	Core	7	20	30	70	
M1B307731	Systematic Physiology	Core	7	20	30	70	
M2C726361	Core Skills in Biosciences 2*	Core	8	20	30		70
M2B130732	Infection & Immunity	Core	8	20	50	50	
M2C130733	Cellular Regulation & Metabolism	Core	8	20	50	50	
M2C726393	Practical Skills in Biomolecular Studies*	Core	8	20	100		
M2B230734	Fundamentals of Pharmacology	Core	8	20	40	60	
M2B130735	Human Physiology in Health & Disease	Core	8	20	30	70	
M3C430738	Clinical Genetics	Core	9	20	100 (2 x 50%)		
M3B230742	Systems Pharmacology	Core	9	20	40	60	
M3B230743	Anti-cancer and Antimicrobial Mechanisms	Core	9	20	40	60	
M3C926373	Experimental Analysis & Design*	Core	9	20	100 (1 x 35%, 1 x 65 %)		
M3I530744	Bioinformatics*	Optional	9	20	100 (2 x 50%)		
M3C530745	Current Trends in Microbiology*	Optional	9	20	100 (2 x 50%)		
M3B426445	Nutrition & Public Health	Optional	9	20	100		
M3B230746	Forensic Pharmacology & Analysis	Optional	9	20	40	60	

¹ Periodically, programmes and modules may be subject to change or cancellation. Further information on this can be found on the GCU website here:
www.gcu.ac.uk/currentstudents/essentials/policiesandprocedures/changesandcancellationtoprogrammes

M3N225784	Inspiring Action and Creating Change: An Introduction to Social Innovation	Optional	9	20	100		
M3C926378	Bioscience Placement*	Optional	9	60	100		
MHC926371	Project & Workshop*	Core	10	40	100		
MHC726389	Biology of Disease	Core	10	20	40	60	
MHB226379	Translation Medicine	Core	10	20	40	60	
MHB223457	Neuropharmacology	Core	10	20	30	70	
MHB230747	Emerging Therapeutic Technologies	Core	10	20	30	70	

*These assessments are composed of multiple elements to create a portfolio that demonstrates competency and understanding.

** 40 credit modules are taken across Trimester A and B. Assessments are required in each Trimester that contribute to the final overall mark for the module.

Students undertaking the programme on a full-time basis commencing in September of each year will undertake the modules in the order presented above. This may be subject to variation for students commencing the programme at other times of year (e.g. January) and/or undertaking the programme on a part-time or distance learning mode of delivery.

The following final and early Exit Awards are available from this programme²:

Certificate of Higher Education in Biological Sciences- *achieved upon successful completion of 120 credits*

Diploma of Higher Education in Biological Sciences- *achieved upon successful completion of 240 credits*

Bachelor of Science in Pharmacology- *achieved upon successful completion of 360 credits*

Bachelor of Science with Honours in Pharmacology- *achieved upon successful completion of 480 credits*

8. ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

² Please refer to the [GCU Qualifications Framework](#) for the minimum credits required for each level of award and the Programme Handbook for requirements on any specified or prohibited module combinations for each award.

Students should expect to complete their programme of study under the GCU Assessment Regulations that were in place at the commencement of their studies on that programme, unless proposed changes to University Regulations are advantageous to students. These can be found at: www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/supportservices/qualityassuranceandenhancement/regulationsandpolicies

In addition to the GCU Assessment Regulations noted above, this programme is subject to Programme Specific Regulations in line with the following approved Exceptions (Case 240):

i. Carrying of failed modules into subsequent levels

GCU assessment regulations allow for the carrying of up to two failed modules into subsequent levels of the Programme. The Pharmacology programme will not normally permit this to occur. The rationale for this is that it must be ensured that necessary knowledge which underpin subsequent higher-level modules have been attained by students before progressing to the next level of the programme.

ii. Compensation

Compensation of failed modules is applicable at level 4 using the standard GCU regulation. No compensatory passes are permitted for core SCQF Level 8 module Fundamentals of Pharmacology (M2B230734) and Level 9 core Pharmacology modules, Systems Pharmacology (M3B230742) and Anti-cancer and antimicrobial mechanisms (M3B230743). (Exception Case 240)

VERSION CONTROL (to be completed in line with AQPP processes)

Any changes to the PSP must be recorded below by the programme team to ensure accuracy of the programme of study being offered.

<i>Version Number</i>	<i>Changes/Updates</i>	<i>Date Changes/Updates made</i>	<i>Date Effective From</i>
1.0	Newly revised programme for entry 2025 onwards	2025	Sept 2025
