Wherever the art of medicine is loved, there is also a love of humanity.

Hippocrates
460–370 BC

www.reading.ac.uk/pharmacy
At Reading School of Pharmacy, we pride ourselves on our teaching excellence and research achievements. We offer an exciting and innovative curriculum that integrates professional practice with strength in science. We use a variety of teaching methodologies to deliver the curriculum, making extensive use of electronic learning platforms, and podcasting our lectures. Our specialist pharmacist Teacher Practitioners keep the course relevant and our staff are friendly, enthusiastic and creative.

We are ranked in the top 20 for Pharmacy and Pharmacology in the UK and more than 85% of our research output is rated as internationally excellent or world leading. Our strength in research feeds into our teaching and enables our students to develop problem-solving skills and a deep understanding of how research impacts all areas of health. This provides you with the skills fit for becoming a future leader in an ever-changing pharmacy landscape.

Professor Becky Green
Head of Reading School of Pharmacy
www.reading.ac.uk/pharmacy

1 In the National Student Survey, 2017, the teaching on our course received a score of 88%, and the School of Pharmacy received an overall satisfaction score of 91%. 2 11th in the Guardian University Guide for Pharmacy & Pharmacology, 2019, and 20th in the Complete University Guide for Pharmacology & Pharmacy, 2019. 3 Research Excellence Framework, 2014 – Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy.
Catherine worked as a medical admissions and anticoagulant pharmacist before moving into the Education and Training arena at Frimley Park Hospital – and got the bug for teaching.

In 2011 she joined the University as a Senior Teaching Fellow in pharmacy practice. “As soon as I arrived at Reading, I knew there was something I needed to bring to the course – and that was more hands-on experience of real-life patients. Training workshops and simulations are useful, but nothing can beat the real thing.”

True to her vision, Catherine launched the Healthy Living Assessment (HLA) later that year.

After training and competency tests, Year 4 students are able to undertake a Healthy Living Assessment on real patients. This entails performing a series of diagnostic tests to calculate the possible risk of heart disease. They also consult with the patients and discuss their lifestyle (such as diet, exercise regime and alcohol consumption) enabling them to give evidence-based healthy living advice.

But for Catherine it didn’t end there. Her determination to help her students have a greater understanding of their patients’ challenges has been further enhanced by the introduction of an Interprofessional Learning Symposium.

Students have the opportunity to talk to elderly patients and then get to experience for themselves the everyday difficulties these patients face.

For example, by wearing visual impairment glasses, students can empathise with how challenging simple tasks can become – like reading a medicine label, filling out a hospital menu or simply finding the toilet.

By putting on bariatric suits (which simulate being overweight) and movement-restricting elderly simulation suits, students discover how hard and stressful it can be for some people to get back up after experiencing a fall.

“Today, empathy with the problems that patients face is paramount to any would-be pharmacist,” Catherine summarises, “and there is no substitute for real, hands-on experience – which is something that I am determined every pharmacy graduate from Reading School of Pharmacy walks into work with.”
THINKING IN VITRO
Developing more relevant human in vitro models of disease can help us to better investigate the underlying causes. As such, they may also help to identify new therapeutic targets and test drug candidates.

Dr Angela Bithell

Try to imagine a dish that thinks it’s a brain. If you can, you can seriously start thinking about working alongside Dr Angela Bithell.

As a lecturer in Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine, her research has led to the development of 3D ‘brain network’ models in vitro.

The in vitro models have been specially created to help us build a better understanding of central nervous system diseases and their causes.

By mimicking features of healthy human brains and brains affected by Alzheimer’s disease, Angela’s work aims to identify and test life-changing new drugs.

She also brings her research to her teaching. You might learn with her during your MPharm studies and could be offered the opportunity to carry out your final year research project alongside her and have your name published on any resulting research papers.

Research within Reading School of Pharmacy as a whole spans a broad spectrum from study of molecules and chemistry, through formulation, diagnosis and pharmacology, to patients. With funding from government, charity and industry, academics are helping to improve healthcare. At Reading, our particular strengths include neurobiology, cardiovascular disease, crystallography, nanomedicine and health service innovation.

Reading School of Pharmacy is also one of the University’s key supporters of equality. In fact, Angela leads the School’s Athena SWAN programme, promoting the careers of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), as well as Diversity and Inclusion in higher education.

“The result is a nice working environment, free from obstacles. We make sure that both staff and students are aware of everything that’s in place to support them.”

“Developing more relevant human in vitro models of disease can help us to better investigate the underlying causes. As such, they may also help to identify new therapeutic targets and test drug candidates.”
"Don’t be afraid to step sideways and explore a new opportunity." These are the words of Professor Ben Whalley – a pharmacist turned academic turned company director – whose own circuitous career path is proof that there is more than one route for a registered pharmacist.

Ben has been guided by his need to find challenge, surprise and satisfaction in his work. While working as an independent locum pharmacist in the 1990s, he became interested in neuropharmacology. Ben sought a PhD opportunity and when he finished his postgraduate studies, he joined Reading School of Pharmacy. Here, he led a research programme focused on cannabis-derived medicines, particularly for the difficult-to-treat forms of epilepsy.

In 2017, Ben took up the post of Director of Research for GW Pharmaceuticals, a global leader in pioneering novel therapeutics from the cannabis plant. “This was a unique opportunity to develop the drug I worked on for so many years. However, I was also delighted to be able to maintain formal links with the University of Reading, where I had the chance to flourish as a scientist and contribute tangibly across a diverse range of work.”

Ben is evidence that a Pharmacy degree can lead to various opportunities. Our graduates have careers in industrial pharmacy, community pharmacy, government and regulatory bodies, hospital pharmacy, education and research, and medical writing. Employers from many of these areas of practice attend the School’s annual careers fair, making it a good event for finding work placements and job opportunities.

According to recent data, 100% of Reading School of Pharmacy graduates are in work or further study within six months of graduating. The numbers speak for themselves, but what makes Pharmacy graduates so employable? Ben has his thoughts:

“Pharmacy provided me with a skillset and a mindset that I have always found valuable in my roles. From the rigour of scientific thinking, through to the ability to consider the context of non-clinical drug development, pharmacy provides an incredibly diverse yet robust foundation on which to build a career.”

The placements and experiential learning that you receive as part of your undergraduate degree are an opportunity to explore many of the different avenues you can take with a pharmacy degree.
Emily Jackson went to prison for the sake of her education. Well, to clarify, she spent two days working in HM Prison Swansea’s Pharmacy Department – one of eight placements that Emily undertook during her MPharm degree. Getting out into the workplace helps students put learning into context, which is why MPharm students undertake placements throughout their undergraduate degree.

HM Prison Swansea was Emily’s first placement. She shadowed the Chief Pharmacist throughout her daily activities and was trusted to help with controlled drug stock checks.

“Learning about prison drug charts and medication was extremely interesting and it was especially useful to observe the pharmacist-patient interaction to see how it compares with other pharmacy settings.”

Next, she spent four weeks interacting directly with customers during her placement with Boots, followed closely by a week at St Bernard’s Hospital, where she gained experience of psychiatric medicines. She then furthered her knowledge at Royal Berkshire Hospital, University Hospital of Wales, Morriston Hospital and Prince Charles Hospital.

“Placements in such a wide range of establishments enabled me to make an informed decision about what area of pharmacy I wanted to work in for pre-registration. Working in these environments gave me real-life experience that can’t be learned from lectures.”

As well as shadowing pharmacists, Emily had an opportunity to work alongside other healthcare professionals and to learn from medicines management technicians, pharmacy technicians and assistant technical officers.

However, it is not only the students who benefit from these relationships. During her final placement, Emily supported a hospital pharmacy with an audit and was directly responsible for a number of prescription changes that improved the quality of care for patients.

It is the outstanding quality of students, like Emily, that has helped solidify long-established, trusted relationships between Reading School of Pharmacy and the healthcare sector. Yet, despite close links with industry and strong support from the School, securing placements takes effort.

“Don’t be afraid to contact as many places as possible because, in my experience, they are always supportive and positive.”

Since graduating, Emily has begun her pre-registration year back at Morriston Hospital in Swansea.

“I feel I’m very well prepared with both theoretical and practical knowledge from my time at Reading and am excited to discover what opportunities lie ahead in my pharmacy career.”
The NHS needs a new generation of revolutionary leaders who can think outside the box. You could go into finance, accounting, or management in other areas within the pharmacy industry – areas you may not realise are open to you. At Reading School of Pharmacy, we fully understand the evolving role of the pharmacist.

In conjunction with the award-winning Henley Business School at the University of Reading, the Certificate in Business Administration (CBA) programme is a unique opportunity to add a management qualification to your MPharm degree. The programme is taught as an intensive summer school, so you can focus on your MPharm during term-time.

Kalid Odweyne, a Reading Pharmacy graduate, embarked on the opportunity to distinguish himself from other pharmacists.

“Pharmacy is moving away from modern-day dispensing and becoming more involved with things like managing a local area, commissioning, and finance. The CBA is very relevant to the current climate with leadership and financing modules and will further my employment prospects. I’m not tied to one area of pharmacy – I’m able to carry out a clinical role and look into management and leadership roles, which the NHS needs.”

Kalid learned to manage performance in organisations. He also learned financial and management accounting principles, while developing key leadership and strategy skills.

“The CBA helped me understand an organisation, or a Trust, and how to come up with ideas to improve the current ways of working. I found it extremely interesting and I’m now of more value in a pharmacy context. It puts you ahead of others. It pushes you out of your comfort zone, and I’m really happy I was encouraged to do that. It is an investment in your future and you can’t go wrong with it in my eyes.”

At Reading School of Pharmacy, you can invest in your future and stand out from the crowd with the Postgraduate Certificate in Business Administration.
STUDY ABROAD

Life experience must be lived, not learned, and studying abroad can give you valuable skills and unforgettable experiences that are hard to find at home. This is exactly what happened for Reading School of Pharmacy student Sara Morsi.

With a keen interest in culture, history and languages, Sara decided to take part in the Erasmus+ scheme. During the first term of her final year, she took her MPharm studies to the University of Padova in Italy, carrying out laboratory research for her dissertation on Parkinson’s disease.

“I was excited and a little nervous to travel solo for the first time. The University of Reading provided great support – they ensured I was settling in well and maintained regular contact. They also provided financial support via the Erasmus+ grant, which helped fund a portion of my living costs in Italy.”

Sara didn’t hesitate to immerse herself in the Italian way of life. Although everyone spoke English in the labs, she enrolled onto an Italian language course, enabling her to engage with the locals over some good food and gelato.

On weekends, she explored Italy’s best known cities, including Venice, Verona, Naples and Rome.

“I knew this invaluable experience would allow me to meet new people and learn new things, such as travelling independently and the culture in a different country. It would also be a useful addition to my CV. I expanded my scientific skills by trying laboratory techniques and procedures I might not have tried had I not gone abroad.”

Reading School of Pharmacy has global links, allowing you the chance to collaborate with peers from a range of countries. For example, if you study Pharmacy with us at Reading, you’ll have the unique opportunity to undertake your final year project at the University of Reading Malaysia.

Sara has some advice if you’re considering studying abroad: “Embrace the opportunity and go for it! There’s so much to learn, not only about the country you’re heading to but about yourself too. It’s an unforgettable experience.”

Disclaimer
This brochure was issued in 2018 and is aimed at prospective undergraduate students wishing to apply for a place at the University of Reading (the University) and start a course in autumn 2019. The brochure describes the University’s Study Abroad scheme. During the first term of her final year, she took her MPharm studies to the University of Padova in Italy, carrying out laboratory research for her dissertation on Parkinson’s disease.

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Year abroad and placement fees
Some courses include optional or compulsory year abroad or placement year. During this year you will only pay a partial fee which is currently set at 15% of the normal tuition fee. Check the website for the latest information: www.reading.ac.uk/fees-and-funding

The partnerships listed are correct at the time of publication [June 2018]. For up-to-date information on the University’s partnerships contact studyabroad@reading.ac.uk

Where Study Abroad is not a compulsory part of the degree programme, the University of Reading cannot guarantee that every applicant who applies for the scheme will be successful. Whilst efforts are made to secure sufficient places at partner institutions, the number of places available and the University’s partners can vary year-on-year. In all cases, the University cannot guarantee that it will be possible for applicants to choose to study abroad at a particular institution. Further, certain courses and/or institutions may require you to satisfy specific eligibility criteria. It can be a competitive process. For further information on the University’s Study Abroad Scheme please contact studyabroad@reading.ac.uk

Reading School of Pharmacy organises set placements for every MPharm student. Additional placements are not guaranteed and are fully dependent on students securing their own placement opportunities, normally through a competitive recruitment process. The University provides support for those wishing to apply for additional placement opportunities.