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## Programme accreditation, Pharmaceutical sciences, University of Geneva

Accreditation report (self-assessment report, report of the  
expert group, AAQ's proposal) | 27.10.2026

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# Management Summary

French version below; cf. version française ci-dessous

## **Short presentation of the study programme**

The School of Pharmaceutical Sciences (SPS) at the University of Geneva, part of the Faculty of Sciences, offers the only French-language programmes in pharmaceutical sciences (Bachelor of Sciences, 180 ECTS credits) and pharmacy (Master of Sciences, 120 ECTS) in Switzerland. Five years of basic academic and clinical training prepare the students for the Swiss federal licensing examination, which leads to the diploma of pharmacist. The first year of the Bachelor's programme can be completed at the Universities of Geneva, Lausanne and Neuchâtel, after which all students progress to the second year of the Bachelor programme at the University of Geneva. This collaboration is regulated by an agreement called Triangle Azur. Together with the Center for Research and Innovation in Clinical Pharmaceutical Sciences (CRISP) of the Faculty of Biology and Medicine of the University of Lausanne, the SPS forms the ISPSO (Institut des Sciences Pharmaceutiques de Suisse Occidentale), which collaborates closely with stakeholders and partners in the field, such as the University Hospitals of Geneva and Lausanne.

The SPS has a capacity of 90 to 100 study places per cohort, taking into account the available resources in terms of infrastructure and finances available. The programme is structured as follows: the Bachelor's programme consists of a first year focusing on basic natural sciences, a second year focusing on biomedical sciences and a third year focusing on pharmaceutical sciences. The Master's programme focuses on interdisciplinary and advanced pharmaceutical sciences and public health competencies in the first year, and internships, an individual research project and some teaching and clinical case resolution units in the second year.

## **Steps of the procedure**

The University of Geneva's Faculty of Sciences submitted an application for admission to the accreditation procedure to the Swiss Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ) for its pharmaceutical sciences and pharmacy programme. AAQ decided to admit the programme to the procedure and opened it on 2 June 2025. On 12 December 2025, AAQ communicated the composition of the expert group to the programme. The programme submitted its self-assessment report to the agency on 9 February 2026. During the on-site visit, which took place on 26 and 27 March 2026, the expert group held discussions with various members of the programme. Based on these discussions, the programme's self-assessment report and its appendices, the expert group then wrote its report.

## **Accreditation recommendation of the expert group**

The expert group recommends accrediting the programme of Pharmaceutical Sciences of the University of Geneva with three conditions.

## **Accreditation proposal by the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ)**

In its accreditation proposal, AAQ endorses the expert group's analysis and proposes the accreditation of the University of Geneva's programme in pharmaceutical sciences with three conditions. The agency submitted the expert group's report and its accreditation application to the programme for a position statement on 8 May 2026.

## **Hearing of the Medical Professions Commission (MEBEKO)**

MEBEKO submitted its statement to AAQ on 10 July 2026. In its statement, it supports the expert group's analysis and accreditation recommendation, as well as the accreditation proposal by AAQ.

## **Decision of the Swiss Accreditation Council**

At its meeting on 18 September 2026, the Swiss Accreditation Council accredited the University of Geneva's programme in pharmaceutical sciences with three conditions.

### **Portrait de la filière d'études**

La Section des Sciences Pharmaceutiques de l'Université de Genève, qui fait partie de la Faculté des Sciences, propose les seuls programmes en français en sciences pharmaceutiques (Bachelor of Sciences, 180 crédits ECTS) et en pharmacie (Master of Sciences, 120 crédits ECTS) en Suisse. Cinq années de formation académique et clinique de base préparent les étudiant-e-s à l'examen fédéral suisse qui mène au diplôme de pharmacien. La première année du programme de Bachelor peut être effectuée aux Universités de Genève, Lausanne et Neuchâtel, après quoi tous les étudiant-e-s poursuivent leur deuxième année à l'Université de Genève. Cette collaboration est régie par la convention Triangle Azur. En collaboration avec le Centre de recherche et d'innovation en sciences pharmaceutiques cliniques (CRISP) de la Faculté de biologie et de médecine de l'Université de Lausanne, la SPS forme l'ISPSO (Institut des Sciences Pharmaceutiques de Suisse Occidentale), qui collabore étroitement avec les acteurs et partenaires du domaine, tels que les Hôpitaux universitaires de Genève et de Lausanne.

La Section des Sciences Pharmaceutiques dispose d'une capacité de 90 à 100 places d'études par volée, en tenant compte des ressources disponibles en termes d'infrastructures et de finances. Le programme de formation est structuré comme suit : le Bachelor comprend une première année axée sur les sciences naturelles fondamentales, une deuxième année axée sur les sciences biomédicales et une troisième année axée sur les sciences pharmaceutiques. Le Master met l'accent sur les sciences pharmaceutiques interdisciplinaires et avancées et les compétences en santé publique pendant la première année, et sur des stages, un projet de recherche individuel et quelques unités d'enseignement et de résolution de cas cliniques pendant la deuxième année.

### **Déroulement de la procédure**

La Faculté des Sciences de l'Université de Genève a déposé une demande d'admission à la procédure d'accréditation auprès de l'Agence suisse d'accréditation et d'assurance qualité (AAQ) pour la filière d'études en sciences pharmaceutiques et en pharmacie. L'AAQ a décidé d'admettre la filière à la procédure et l'a ouverte le 2 juin 2025. Le 12 décembre 2025, l'AAQ a communiqué la composition du groupe d'expertes à la filière. La filière a soumis son rapport d'autoévaluation à l'agence le 9 février 2026. Dans le cadre de la visite sur place, qui s'est déroulée les 26 et 27 mars 2026, le groupe d'expertes a mené des entretiens avec les différentes parties prenantes de la filière d'études. Sur la base de ces entretiens, du rapport d'autoévaluation de la filière et de ses annexes, le groupe d'expert-e-s a ensuite rédigé son rapport.

### **Recommandation d'accréditation du groupe d'expertes**

Le groupe d'expertes recommande l'accréditation du programme d'études en Sciences Pharmaceutiques avec trois conditions.

### **Proposition d'accréditation de l'AAQ**

Dans sa proposition d'accréditation, l'AAQ soutient l'analyse du groupe d'expertes et propose d'accréditer la filière d'études en sciences pharmaceutiques de l'Université de Genève avec trois conditions. L'agence a soumis le rapport du groupe d'expertes et sa proposition d'accréditation à la filière pour prise de position le 8 mai 2026.

### **Avis de la Commission des professions médicales (MEBEKO)**

La MEBEKO a rendu son avis le 10 juillet 2026. Dans cette prise de position, elle approuve l'analyse et la recommandation d'accréditation du groupe d'expertes et soutient la proposition d'accréditation de l'AAQ.

### **Décision du Conseil suisse d'accréditation**

Lors de sa réunion du 18 septembre 2026, le Conseil suisse d'accréditation accrédite la filière d'études en sciences pharmaceutiques de l'Université de Genève avec trois conditions.

# 1. The procedure of programme accreditation according to the Higher Education Act and the Medical Professions Act

## Legal bases, object

The object of accreditation according to the HEdA and MedPA is the education of human medicine, dentistry, chiropractic, pharmacy and veterinary medicine. The accreditation of training in university medical professions is carried out within the framework of programme accreditation according to the HEdA, whereby the quality standards according to the HEdA are supplemented by quality standards according to the MedPA. The MedPA defines as a prerequisite for accreditation that graduates of the programme achieve the entirety of the objectives set out in the MedPA and are qualified for continuing education (Art. 24 Para. 1 MedPA). The totality of the objectives, i.e. the general objectives, the occupation-specific objectives as well as the qualification for further education, can only be assumed after completion of the entire five or six years of education. In other words, the subject of the accreditation procedure is the combination of Bachelor's and Master's programme, within the framework of which the training for a medical profession according to Article 2 MedPA takes place. The starting point for accreditation is in each case the Master's programme of the diploma-awarding higher education institution. Within the framework of the accreditation procedure, the diploma-awarding higher education institution must explain how it ensures the entry competences of the students (i.e. the exit competences of the Bachelor's graduates) with regard to Article 24 paragraph 1 MedPA.

## The procedure

The procedural steps, the procedural rules and the quality standards are laid down in the Accreditation Ordinance of the Swiss University Council (Accreditation Ordinance) and explained in the AAQ guideline "Accreditation of study programmes according to HEdA and MedPA".

## Participants' roles: SAC, AAQ, expert group, study programme

**The Swiss Accreditation Council (SAC)** takes the accreditation decision. As the supervisory body for AAQ, it comments on the longlist for the expert group. The SAC communicates and publishes the accreditation decision and maintains a list of accredited study programmes.

**The Swiss Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ)** admits the study programme to the procedure and carries out the accreditation procedure in accordance with the HEdA and MedPA: It accompanies the study programme in the accreditation procedure. It appoints an expert group and supports it in its mandate. AAQ prepares an accreditation proposal for the attention of the Swiss Accreditation Council on the basis of the self-assessment and the results of the external assessment, in particular the report of the expert group. AAQ publishes the overall documentation on the procedure on its website.

**The expert group** makes its assessment of the quality standards on the basis of the self-assessment and the on-site visit. The experts take part in the on-site visit, talk with the stakeholders of the study programme and write the report of the expert group, which also includes an accreditation recommendation.

The experts in the accreditation procedure of the programme in pharmaceutical sciences of the University of Geneva are (in alphabetical order):

- Prof. Dr. Clara Isabel Colino Gandarillas, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy at the Universidad de Salamanca, peer leader
- Lea Konecnik, MSc Pharmacy student, ETH Zurich
- Dr. Angela Küng Krähenmann, Lecturer and Coordinator of the MSc in Pharmacy Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, ETH Zurich
- Dr. Leonie Reutner, study coordinator, Departement of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Basel

**The study programme** submits its application for programme accreditation to an agency recognised by the SAC. It writes a self-assessment based on the quality standards. It invites the participants for the on-site visit. The study programme can provide its input for the expert group's profile and comments on the expert group's report and AAQ's accreditation proposal.

### Structure of the present report:

The report for programme accreditation is an overall documentation with different editorial parts:

## Title 1

### Title 2

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Text marked in blue is written by the study programme (self-assessment, statement).

## Title 1

### Title 2

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Text marked in orange is written by the expert group (expert group's report, accreditation recommendation).

## 2. The study programme in pharmaceutical sciences of the University of Geneva

### Presentation

The present self-evaluation report has been written to obtain renewal of the accreditation of the curriculum in pharmaceutical sciences at the University of Geneva (UNIGE)<sup>1</sup>. The School of Pharmaceutical Sciences (SPS) was successfully accredited for the first time in 2011 and renewed in 2018. Therefore, this report focuses on the years 2018-2025.

For the purpose of this report, the description is limited to the current curriculum. The data and information considered are current as of the official starting date of the AAQ certification process on June 2, 2025.

#### 2.1.1. SPS, ECOLE DE PHARMACIE GENEVE-LAUSANNE (EPGL) AND INSTITUT DES SCIENCES PHARMACEUTIQUES DE SUISSE OCCIDENTALE (ISPSO)

The School of Pharmaceutical Sciences (SPS) is part of the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Geneva and has been strategically located within the University Medical Center (CMU) since 2016. This positioning fosters strong interdisciplinary collaborations in both research and education between the Faculties of Sciences and Medicine.

Our current structure originated from the 2003 merger of the Schools of Pharmaceutical Sciences in Geneva and Lausanne, founded in 1925 and 1890, respectively. This merger gave rise to the Geneva-Lausanne School of Pharmacy (EPGL), which operated until 2019. That year, the EPGL was reorganized into the Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Western Switzerland (ISPSO), in accordance with the renewed agreement between UNIGE and the University of Lausanne (UNIL) (Appendix 1). As part of this reorganization, the Center for Research and Innovation in Clinical Pharmaceutical Sciences (CRISP) was established in 2019 by the Faculty of Biology and Medicine (FBM) of UNIL. CRISP, located at the Lausanne University Hospital (CHUV), serves as the Lausanne-based and SPS as the Geneva-based entities of ISPSO (Figure 1). Strategic decisions are submitted to the Coordination council of the ISPSO ("*Conseil de coordination de l'ISPSO*") according to the agreement.

ISPSO is the only institution in French-speaking Switzerland (Western Switzerland) offering comprehensive programs in Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacy. This unique role positions ISPSO as the central hub for pharmaceutical education and innovation in the region. The mission of ISPSO is to advance and promote pharmaceutical sciences and pharmacy practice through excellence in research and education. In line with its mission, ISPSO educates and trains pharmaceutical scientists and pharmacists for the full spectrum of professional roles – from discovery and development of drugs to their safe, effective, and responsible use within the healthcare professions. As a result, ISPSO maintains its role in Western Switzerland as the leading center for education and research in pharmaceutical sciences and pharmacy practice.

ISPSO maintains strong collaborations with key academic and clinical partners, including, in Geneva, the Geneva University Hospitals (HUG) and Pharma24, and in Lausanne, CHUV and the University Center for Primary Care and Public Health (Unisanté). Pharma24 and Unisanté

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispsso/contents/epgl/aaq.php>

host the only two academic community pharmacies in Switzerland<sup>2</sup>. Beyond these collaborations, ISPSO also works closely with industrial partners and patient organizations.

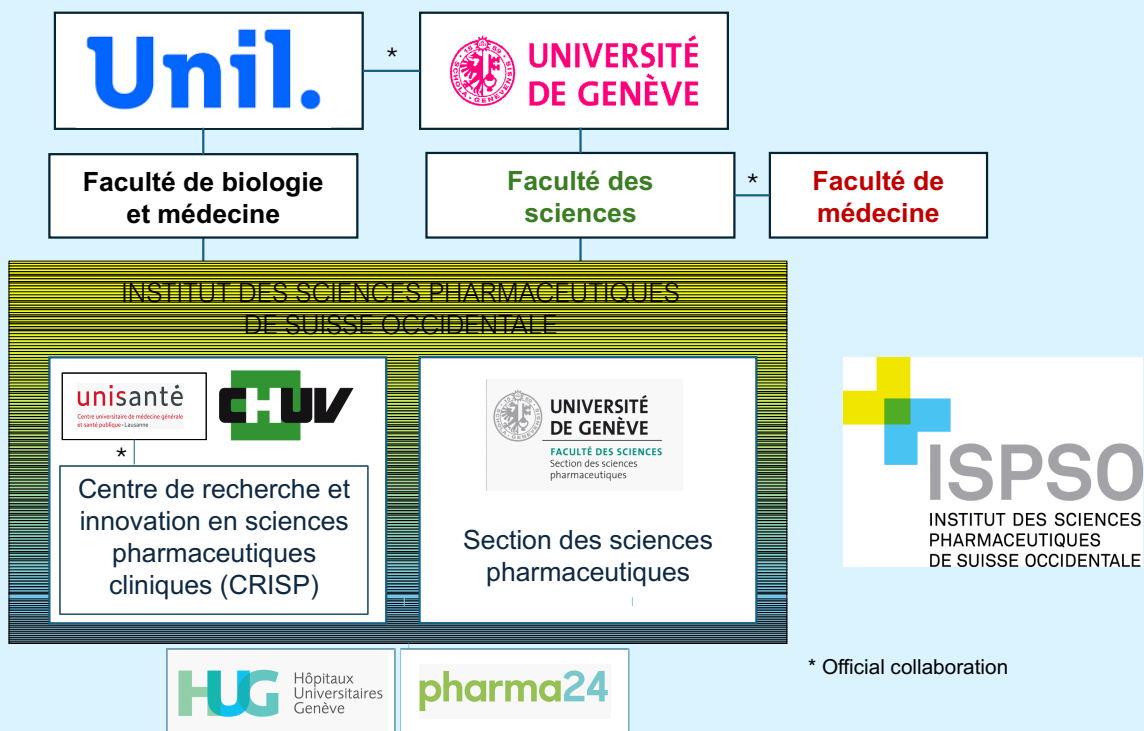


**Figure 1.** Organizational structure and key collaborations of the ISPSO.

Besides its close collaboration with UNIL, SPS also has a strong partnership with the University of Neuchâtel (UNINE). Unlike UNIL, UNINE is not linked to UNIGE by a specific convention, but all pedagogic collaborations are regulated by the “Triangle Azur” agreement (Appendix 2).

At the Swiss level, SPS is a member of the Swiss Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences (SAPhS)<sup>3</sup>, which is the forum of pharmaceutical sciences in Switzerland and organizes federative events among institutions involved in pharmacy teaching and with other stakeholders. The role of SAPhS is to promote scientific aspects of pharmacy education, research and practice, and to support the scientific basis of the pharmaceutical profession.

At the international level, SPS is a member of the International Federation of Pharmacy (FIP-AIM), a global organization focusing on the evolution of Faculties and Schools of Pharmacy to reflect the ongoing changes in pharmacy practice, science, research and their respective funding<sup>4</sup>. SPS is also an active member of CidPharmef<sup>5</sup>, the International Conference of French-speaking Schools of pharmacy, a network of AUF (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie). SPS organized the CidPharmef annual meeting in Geneva in June 2025, and several faculty members are particularly active in the working groups “Interprofessional collaboration & patient partnership” and “Falsified medicines”. Since 2022, SPS is also a member of the ULLA network<sup>6</sup>, a European consortium of ten Schools of Pharmaceutical Sciences. The primary aim of the ULLA network is to enhance collaborations within education and research in pharmaceutical sciences between its member universities.

<sup>2</sup> Perraudin et al., Res. Soc. Adm. Pharm., 2026, 22, 357-361. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sapharm.2025.10.011>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.saphw.ch/en/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fip.org/aim-benefits>

<sup>5</sup> <https://cidpharmef.org/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://ullapharmsci.org/>

### 2.1.2. GOVERNANCE

SPS oversees the operational governance and proposes strategic planning, while UNIGE is responsible for the quality of the study program and the validation of the strategic planning. A full description of UNIGE governance is presented in Appendix 3 together with a description of UNIL and UNINE structures to help understand their involvement in the training of SPS students.

#### STATUS AT UNIGE



SPS is an integral part of the Faculty of Sciences<sup>7</sup>, together with seven other Sections and independent Departments. It benefits from great autonomy in self-governance, in terms of organization, policies, as well as budget management (consumables, investment, personnel).

Its structure and operation are defined by the Faculty of Sciences and by SPS regulations (Appendix 4) in line with the bylaws of the University of Geneva<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, significant changes in the structure and operation, including the strategic plan, need the approval of the Coordination council of the ISPSO.

All decisions regarding the SPS are communicated via the scheme presented in Figure 2 and detailed in Appendix 3 that follows the decision trees of the Faculty of Sciences defined under the law of UNIGE.

The “**Collège des Professeurs de la Section**” (CP) is the governing body of SPS, headed by the president of SPS. Its members are all SPS professors. The CP appoints the members of the committees that are responsible for the detailed organization of various aspects of teaching, and it validates their suggestions. Before transmitting decisions to the Faculty of Sciences, some of them need to be validated by the “*Conseil de Section*”, a participative body of SPS. The “*Conseil de Section*” is composed of administrative and academic personnel, as well as student representatives. Once the decision is taken at SPS level, it is transferred at the Faculty level to the “*Collège des Professeurs de la Faculté des Sciences*” for discussion. The final approval is given by the “*Conseil participatif de la Faculté des Sciences*” as demanded by law. This council is composed of 12 representatives of the professorial staff, 6 of the teaching staff, 6 of the student body and 3 of the administrative staff. This process clearly represents a bottom-up approach allowing a good estimation of the needs in education and of problem-solving implementation plans (Appendix 3).

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/sciences/lafaculte/organisation>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.unige.ch/rectorat/static/statut\\_universite.pdf](https://www.unige.ch/rectorat/static/statut_universite.pdf)

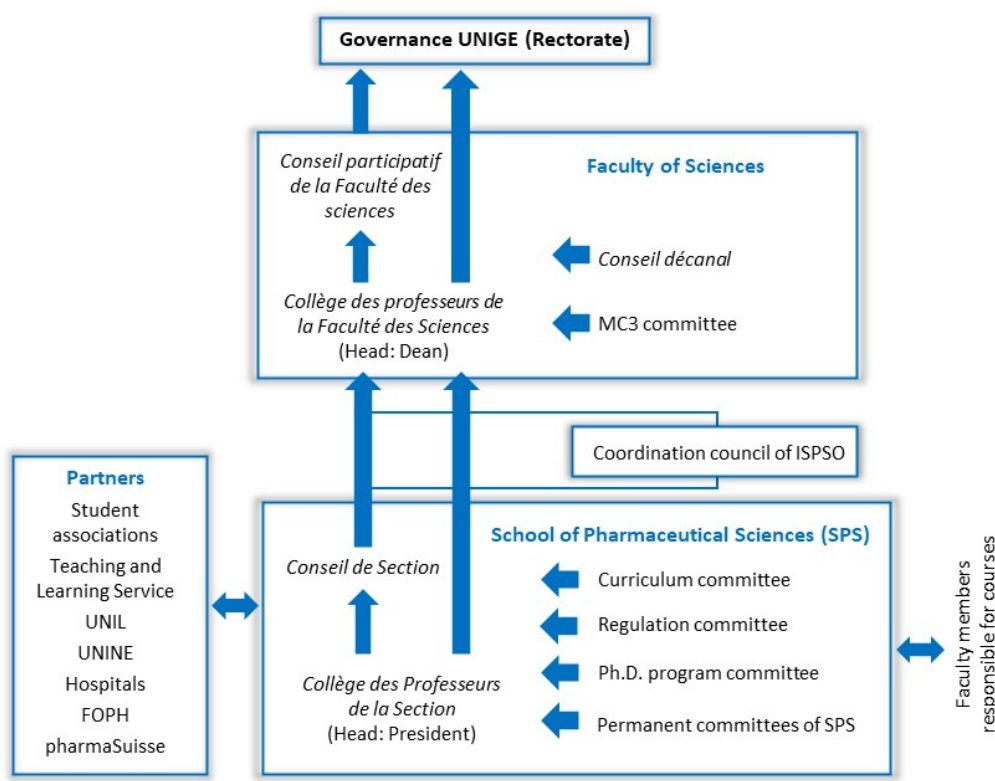


**Figure 2.** Governance structure of the SPS and its relationship with its partners and University management. Arrows indicate the flow of information throughout the governance scheme (for more detailed description of the various stakeholders involved, Appendix 3)

Within this governance, there are three participative bodies where student representatives are present. Within the SPS, it is the Curriculum committee (“*Commission enseignement*”) and the Section council (“*Conseil de Section*”). At the Faculty level, students are members of the “*Conseil participatif de la Faculté des sciences*” (Figure 2).

For its pedagogical support, SPS can rely on the services of the Teaching and Learning Service of the UNIGE (Pôle SEA, Service de Soutien à l’Apprentissage) whose mission is to support teaching (methods and evaluation) with the aim of continuously developing its quality. One representative is invited to all meetings of the Curriculum committee.

### Relations with the other partners

SPS maintains regular contact with student associations, the Teaching and Learning Service, the collaborating universities (UNIL and UNINE), the professional associations (e.g. pharmaSuisse<sup>9</sup>, pharmaGenève) and the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH). Representatives of these bodies may be invited by the CP or by some committees to discuss specific matters in relation to the curriculum.

### Relations with healthcare professionals

With the participation of faculty members working within the University hospitals (HUG, CHUV), as well as within Unisanté, Pharma 24 and community pharmacies to the CP or committees, SPS guarantees continuous interactions with the professional environment.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.pharmasuisse.org/fr> d

### 2.1.3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND CHALLENGES

Strategic decisions are submitted to the Coordination council of ISPSO according to the agreement detailing the interactions between the members of ISPSO (Appendix 1).

#### Strategic planning

According to UNIGE rules, SPS has its own Strategic Working Group ("*Groupe stratégique*"), which defines strategic planning for four-year periods with respect to research and teaching including the definition of research lines, candidate profiles of future faculty members and logistics. The detailed procedure for submission and validation of the strategic plan is presented in Appendix 3 as well as the strategic plans 2019-2022 and 2023-2026 (Appendix 5a; Appendix 5b). The strategic plan for years 2027-2030 is currently under revision.

Since 2021, a Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) composed of international experts has been established, whose role is to give SPS the opportunity for self-reflection and analysis, as well as to provide highly valuable suggestions with respect to SPS strategic development in both research and teaching. Some of these suggestions were implemented into SPS strategy.

#### Challenges

SPS faces many challenges, which are directly related to its mission as stated below:

"The main tasks of the Pharmaceutical Sciences Section are to develop pharmaceutical practice and pharmaceutical sciences through excellence in education and research, and to support specific activities in global health and humanitarian pharmacy."

SPS has the mission to provide its students with adequate skills for working in the various public and private settings of pharmaceutical sciences (community pharmacy, industry, hospital, public and private institutions). This great versatility implies a high-level education in all pharmaceutical sciences areas throughout the entire curriculum. SPS provides graduate and postgraduate studies.

It is our understanding that excellence in education has its roots in excellence in research. Research-driven teaching gives students insight into the latest developments in both fundamental and clinical pharmaceutical sciences and forms the basis for all courses offered:

- Two undergraduate degree programs in pharmaceutical sciences (BSc in pharmaceutical sciences and MSc in pharmacy).
- A Master in biomedical sciences, which is not part of the pharmaceutical sciences curriculum, and therefore will not be considered in the present report.
- A comprehensive Ph.D. program involving research, graduate lectures and active participation to national and international conferences, as well as in activities organized by the ULLA network.
- A Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) in Hospital pharmacy and a MAS in Toxicology.
- Two Certificates of Advanced Studies (CAS) in clinical pharmacy (Pharmacotherapy and Pharmacy services), a CAS in Medications and medical devices in emergency and disaster situations, a CAS in Quality assurance in pharmaceutical industry and a joint CAS in advanced therapeutic medicinal products (ATMP) from UNIL and UNIGE.

Teaching is closely integrated with the work of multidisciplinary research groups focused on addressing major challenges in prevention, diagnosis, and therapy, while advancing efficient healthcare delivery systems to ensure personalized, timely, and appropriate patient care. SPS

has state-of-the-art facilities and attracts researchers from all over the world. SPS benefits from excellent relationships with stakeholders and extensive collaborations with the pharmaceutical industry and health authorities at a national as well as international level.

#### 2.1.4. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY PROGRAM IN PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES AT SPS (in brief)

SPS proposes a curriculum in accordance with the Bologna Agreement: a 3-year Bachelor of Sciences in Pharmaceutical Sciences (BPharm-1-3, 180 ECTS credits) followed by a Master of Sciences in Pharmacy (MPharm-1-2, 120 ECTS credits), which includes an internship in community pharmacy.

The present report covers the current Bachelor and Master programs in pharmaceutical sciences (Figure 3).

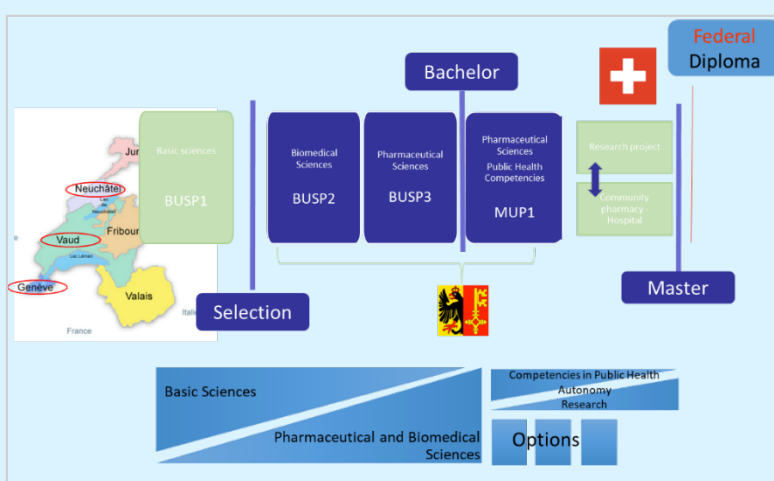


**Figure 3.** Schematic view of the curriculum in pharmaceutical sciences in western Switzerland.

#### Bachelor of Sciences in Pharmaceutical Sciences

The Bachelor of Sciences in Pharmaceutical Sciences is centered on natural, biomedical and pharmaceutical sciences together with coordinated modules (capsules), that are either focusing on patient-oriented pharmaceutical sciences (*Drugs & Patients*) or on society-oriented pharmaceutical sciences (*Drugs & Society*) and spread between BPharm-1 and MPharm-1.

##### 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Bachelor of Sciences in Pharmaceutical Sciences (BPharm-1)

BPharm-1 essentially comprises teaching in basic natural sciences (chemistry, biology, physics, mathematics and botany), which represent the basis for pharmaceutical sciences. BPharm-1 can be pursued at UNIGE, UNIL or UNINE. The terms of the collaboration between UNIGE, UNIL and UNINE are defined in the “*Triangle Azur*” agreement (Appendix 2).

The description of BPharm-1 is therefore presented separately for the three partner universities, but the content was harmonized in 2016. The educational structure of BPharm-1 is traditionally based on a well-balanced program of lectures, exercises and practical laboratory work.

In addition, the students of the three universities follow two common specific courses “*Drugs & Society Capsule I*” and “*Introduction to pharmaceutical sciences*”, which are centrally taught at UNIL. They provide basic knowledge in pharmaceutical sciences (including public health system, drug development, patient perspectives and the role of pharmacists in the health system) and physical pharmacy, and offer students the opportunity to meet their peers from the two other

universities. The number of credits for each course is given according to the estimated workload required to pass the exam.

#### STATUS AT UNIGE



All courses of the BPharm-1 program are compulsory. Most of the teaching is on basic science (mathematics, physics and chemistry; 57% of the ECTS credits), followed by courses in biology (23%) and pharmaceutical sciences (20%). The study plan (Appendix 6) indicates the number of hours and credits allocated to the different disciplines. The bylaws (Appendix 7) give the legal framework. All relevant information is available on the following website<sup>10</sup>.

#### Status at UNIL



As most students continue their studies at UNIGE, the program at UNIL is similar to the one at UNIGE. Based on the learning objectives, the School of Biology defines the study program. All courses of the UNIL BPharm-1 program are compulsory. Most of the teaching is on basic sciences (54% of the ECTS credits), followed by courses in biology (26%) and pharmaceutical sciences (20%). The study plan (Appendix 8) indicates the number of hours and credits allocated to the different disciplines. The bylaws (Appendix 9) give the legal framework for BPharm-1. Relevant information is available on the following website<sup>11</sup>. The description of each course is available on the following website<sup>12</sup>. A faculty member oversees the coordination of all the courses.

#### Status at UNINE



As is the case at UNIGE and UNIL, the BPharm-1 at UNINE offers the essential preparatory courses within the field. The course program is composed of 5 modules: Chemistry I, Chemistry II, Propedeutic I, Propedeutic II, and Pharmaceutical Sciences (Appendix 10). About half of the courses in the BPharm-1 program are provided solely for pharmacy students, while the rest are offered jointly with students enrolled in other Bachelor programs. However, all lab sessions and most exercises are offered solely to BPharm-1 students, ensuring a remarkable level of interactions. At UNINE, each module corresponds to a certain number of credits, according to the student's workload (hours). These modules contain courses essential to scientific disciplines or thematic courses specific to pharmacy. The BPharm-1 does not foresee any elective courses. According to the new regulations in force at UNINE, equivalences can be awarded for admission to this 1<sup>st</sup> year of pharmaceutical studies (Appendix 11).

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Bachelor of Sciences in Pharmaceutical Sciences (BPharm-2 and -3)**

All students who have successfully completed BPharm-1 in Geneva, Lausanne or Neuchâtel will be admitted in BPharm-2 at UNIGE.

Most of the courses are given as coordinated modules (capsules), which were introduced for BPharm-1 in 2018, BPharm-2 in 2019, BPharm-3 in 2020 and MPharm-1 in 2021. The broad topics of these capsules are focusing on 'Drugs & Patients' and 'Drugs & Society'. They include a combination of lectures, case studies and practical work to understand the scientific, clinical, and societal aspects of pharmaceutical sciences and their impact on health. It is important to note that interprofessionality modules are starting in BPharm-2, which involve students in pharmaceutical sciences, medicine and from the University of Applied Sciences in Health in

<sup>10</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/contents/enseignement/espace-etudiants.php>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/unil/en/home/menuinst/etudier/bachelors/sciences-pharmaceutiques.html>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/fbm/en/home/ressources/espaces/espace-interne-eb/bachelor.html#horaires-et-plans-d-etudes>

Geneva. Laboratory and practical sessions complement most lectures and provide students with opportunities to apply acquired theoretical knowledge. Laboratory-based courses account for more than half of the total teaching hours. A detailed description of these capsules can be found in standard 2.02 section.

The BPharm-2 and -3 study plans can be found in Appendix 6 where it indicates the number of hours and credits allocated to the different disciplines.

To provide students with real-world insights into pharmacy practice, patient communication, and teamwork within the healthcare system, a two-week internship in a community pharmacy must be completed by each student before the examination for the Bachelor's degree.

### Master of Sciences in Pharmacy

Holders of a Bachelor of Sciences in Pharmaceutical Sciences from a Swiss University are eligible to enroll in the Master of Sciences in Pharmacy program at SPS (MPharm, 2 years, Appendix 12 and Appendix 13).

The MPharm-1 consists of lectures covering advanced and interdisciplinary pharmaceutical sciences, integrated pharmacy practice capsules, interprofessional education (second module), and other courses in the field of clinical pharmaceutical sciences (Figure 4).

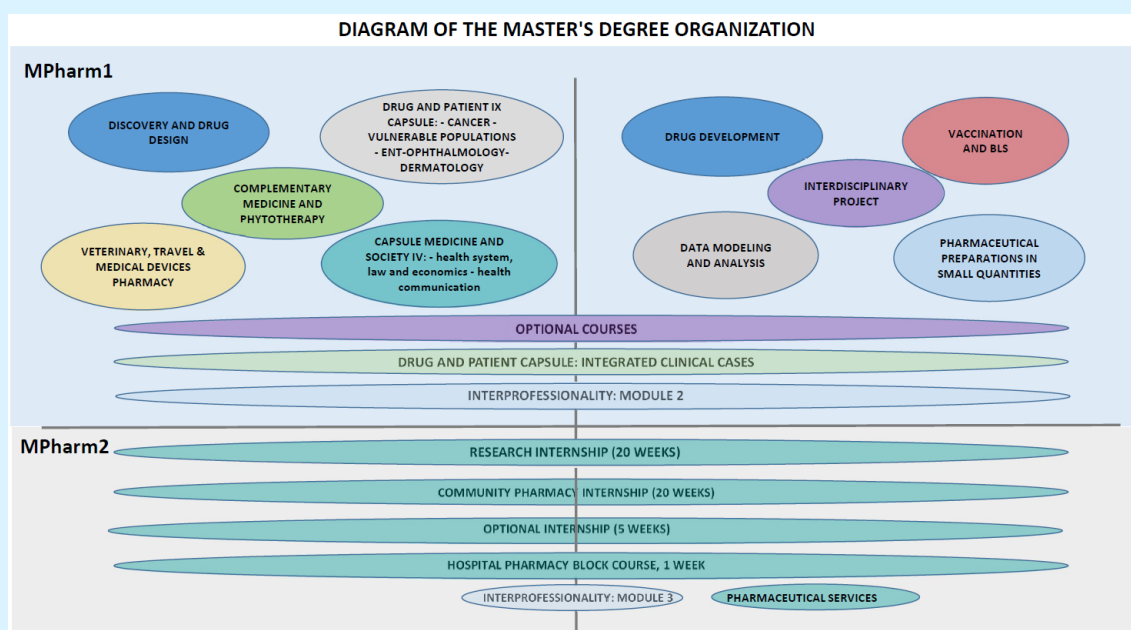


**Figure 4.** Schematic view of MPharm organization

Students are thus expected to integrate previously acquired knowledge in individual pharmaceutical disciplines and to apply their understanding in the multiple aspects of more elaborate drug-related issues. This frontal teaching is complemented by a variety of other training classes (clinical case scenarios, case-based learning).

The structure of MPharm-2 is organized by the students themselves. It includes a compulsory 20-week internship in a community pharmacy organized in collaboration with pharmaSuisse<sup>13</sup>, a 1-week compulsory internship in a hospital pharmacy, the third module in interprofessionalism, 20 weeks devoted to an individual research project, online clinical case resolutions every three weeks and two weeks of block teaching at the end of the program to finalize the preparation for

<sup>13</sup> <https://pharmasuisse.org/fr>

the Swiss federal examination. These internships are completed by a 5-week optional internship ("*stage à options*") performed either in a community pharmacy, hospital, research lab, or humanitarian setting. In all cases, the projects remain under the supervision of SPS.

Holders of the Master in Pharmacy degree are entitled to present themselves to the Swiss federal licensing examination leading to the professional title of pharmacist (Swiss Diploma for the Qualification of Pharmacist).

## Follow-up of the last procedure

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The first accreditation of SPS took place in 2011 and fulfilment was recognized by the accreditation agency in 2012 upon implementation of the three conditions stated by the experts. Renewal took place in 2019, with experts emitting only recommendations.

In 2018, a complete reform of the curriculum was undertaken, which has now been entirely implemented. The achievement of this process allowed us to address recommendations made by the experts in 2019, as follows:

- Interprofessionality modules are now compulsory, and are integrated throughout the whole curriculum.
- Training sessions are organized for community pharmacists who host students for their 20-week internships. Moreover, each student is invited to fill a survey at the end of their internship to evaluate it. Clinical case resolutions are spread out over the entire year instead of being concentrated at the end of the program, and various adjustments were made to improve the preparation for the Swiss federal licensing examination<sup>14</sup>.
- The "capsule" approach has been fully implemented (longitudinal modules throughout the curriculum).
- Students follow a compulsory training in BLS and vaccination, including practical training in intramuscular and subcutaneous injections.
- A Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) composed of international experts has been implemented, which follows SPS activities. The valuable suggestions emitted by the SAB consist in a structured feedback and some of the proposals are currently being implemented into SPS strategy.

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<sup>14</sup> Huneault et al., Curr. Pharm. Teach. Learn., 2024, 16, 102152. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2024.102152>

### 3. Standards of the programme accreditation according to HEdA and MedPA

#### **Instructions for writing the self-assessment by the study programme:**

- Describe the concepts and/or mechanisms your programme has developed to meet the standard and describe their implementation.
- Focus the explanations in the self-assessment on the instructions.
- Refer to evidence (processes, measures, regulations, etc).
- Be analytical and self-critical.
- Limit yourself to the essentials!
- Take further explanations and assistance from the explanations of the quality standards in the guide.

#### **Instructions for the evaluation of the fulfilment of the quality standards by the expert group:**

- Analyse / evaluate how the study programme meets the standard. Mirror the statements from the self-assessment with the insights gained in the interviews on the occasion of the on-site visit. Focus on the key concepts.
- Formulate conditions if mechanisms and/or concepts for meeting the standards are missing or existing mechanisms or concepts are poorly implemented.

#### **Notes on the degree of compliance with the standards:**

- A quality standard is considered to be fully met (completely fulfilled) if it is implemented completely and coherently, thus ensuring the quality of the study programme.
- A quality standard is considered to be largely met (largely fulfilled) if no significant deficiency is found in its implementation.
- A quality standard is considered to be partially met (partially fulfilled) if significant deficiencies or notable weaknesses in its implementation are identified, or if it is only applied to certain parts of the programme.
- A quality standard is deemed not to be met (not fulfilled) if it is not taken into account in the study programme and/or if its implementation is not able to guarantee the quality of the study programme.

With regard to quality development, the expert group may formulate recommendations in appropriate numbers at any time. If, on the other hand, a quality standard is only partially met or not met, the expert group must provide for one or more conditions.

## Area I: Training objectives

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### *Quality standard 1.01:*

*The study programme has clear objectives that clarify its special features and meet national and international requirements.*

*This quality standard assesses the following aspects: Educational objectives of the programme (including the way they are defined and communicated), specificities of the programme (for example, theoretical and/or practical orientation, distance and/or face-to-face teaching, links with the professional world, etc.), as well as the conformity of the educational objectives with the National Qualifications Framework, with the requirements related to the European Higher Education Area and with the national and/or international reference systems of university medical professions.*

### **Description and self-assessment**

The study program has clear objectives as witnessed by its mission statements, strategic plan and “*Règlement d’études*” – study regulations. The general objectives are publicly available on the SPS website and are explained to the students at the beginning of each academic year. Furthermore, the specific objectives of each course are described by the “*Programme des cours*” on the University webpage<sup>15</sup>. SPS ensures high-quality teaching given by experts in each field throughout the whole curriculum. By integrating modern teaching tools, such as flipped classrooms, interactive workshops, problem-based learning and practical work, the curriculum strengthens theoretical knowledge and equips students with the skills required for future pharmacists. SPS took the opportunity of moving to the new CMU building in 2016 to invest in new infrastructure, such as practical training rooms, simulation rooms, or interview rooms, to follow the state-of-the-art in terms of technological evolutions. Frontal teaching is performed in auditoriums, and most lectures are recorded. Recordings are provided directly after the course is completed and are available to students for the full academic year.

Given that pharmacy is a science-based profession, undergraduate students are thoroughly trained in all relevant scientific disciplines. Our goal is to inspire scientific thinking already at the undergraduate level. Interacting on various levels and backed by considerable funding, SPS offers its students quality training based on its cutting-edge research and state-of-the-art equipment.

As previously mentioned, a considerable amount of time is devoted to practical training mainly in laboratories, but also through internships in community pharmacies, hospital pharmacies and research groups. This aims to provide students with a solid foundation in scientific rigor and practical expertise, enabling them to meet the demands of contemporary pharmaceutical sciences.

Within the field of fundamental and patient-oriented research, SPS wishes also to attract motivated postgraduate students by offering a stimulating Ph.D. training program, given mainly in English, comprising optional lectures and courses of high quality within excellent research facilities<sup>16</sup>. During their thesis, Ph.D. students participate in the supervision of undergraduate students during laboratory courses and individual research projects. This contributes to the

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<sup>15</sup> <https://pgc.unige.ch/main/study-plans?year=2025&fac=547&level=default-value>

<sup>16</sup> <https://pharma.cuso.ch/les-activites/>

acquisition of additional transferable skills, including teaching, supervision, and teamwork, alongside advanced scientific expertise.

The consistency of mission and objectives with the strategic plan and research objectives is ensured through the interaction between the “*Groupe de Planification*” (Committee for Strategic planning), the “*Commission enseignement*” and the “*Collège des Professeurs*” (SPS decision making Committee).

The learning objectives are defined nationally by the Swiss Catalogue of Learning Objectives (Appendix 14), which defines each teaching subject and the associated level of practical and theoretical skills that students must acquire. SPS considers the cognition levels set within SCLO as the minimum requirements and often exceeds the objectives of SCLO.

To fulfill the international requirements of excellence in research-based teaching in the various fields of fundamental, clinical and humanitarian pharmaceutical sciences, SPS has adapted its cognition level requirements to the highest standards, as recognized by its international ranking. The integration of SPS in a local, national and international network of academic institutions, combined with close contacts with relevant leading international organizations as described under 2.1.1, strengthens its visibility, impact and excellence in education and research.

SPS communicates its mission and objectives to political authorities, to the public and to the research community (including the pharmaceutical industry) via its website. In addition, SPS takes an active role in communicating its mission and objectives to prospective students via presentations carried out during information days organized by UNIGE and UNIL. Faculty members are regularly addressed by the media for expert information to the general public.

SPS also proposes postgraduate training and continuous education that provide insights into the latest developments in fundamental and clinical pharmaceutical sciences, delivered in CAS, MAS and a Ph.D. program as detailed under 2.1.3.

### **Expert's group assessment**

Based on the self-assessment report and its appendices, as well as the results obtained during the on-site visit, the experts note that the objectives of the Pharmaceutical Sciences study programme of the University of Geneva are clearly defined and highlight the programme's specificities and alignment with the Swiss Catalogue of Learning Objectives. As published on the SPS website, the programme aims to equip students with the latest knowledge in pharmaceutical sciences and drug therapy management. The programme adopts a translational teaching approach and is guided by scientific research. The experts observe that the Bachelor's programme provides students with a solid foundation in basic sciences, medical sciences and pharmaceutical sciences. The subsequent Master's programme, consisting of a first year of mostly theoretical courses followed by a second year of research and pharmacy internships, prepares the students for admission to the federal exam in pharmacy. The experts acknowledge that the specific objectives of the individual courses are available on the University of Geneva's website and are precisely and transparently defined. They recognise that the programme aims to teach students the knowledge and skills required for all areas of work for pharmacists – community and hospital pharmacies, industry and research –, even though the pathway leading to community pharmacy is the most widely chosen.

The experts particularly recognise the following aspects as further distinctive features of the programme: innovative teaching and learning formats in certain theoretical and practical courses, namely Pharmaceutical Chemistry and Analytics, and the early and thorough integration of practical training. In this context, the experts commend the programme's strong research orientation – which is also evident in the practical components of the curriculum – and its state-of-the-art integration of interprofessionality. They also highlight the innovative approach of the study programme thanks to the capsules introduced with the latest curriculum reform in 2021, which facilitate a progressive learning process through transversal modules.

Following discussions during the on-site visit, the experts note that the SPS does not apply a structured approach to verifying the programme's alignment with international requirements, such as the European Directive (2024/782). However, they recognise that the SPS performs numerous networking and collaboration activities at an international level (for example, within the ULLA network).

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as largely fulfilled.

#### *Quality standard 1.02:*

*The programme pursues educational objectives that are consistent with the mission and strategic planning of the higher education institution (or the other institution in the higher education sector).*

*Every higher education institution has a clear mission, which is given to it by the (public or private) sponsor. This mission defines the institution's tasks according to its type and specificities. This quality standard assesses the linkage and coherence between the programme and the strategy of the HEI according to its mission.*

#### **Description and self-assessment**

The educational objectives of SPS are mentioned in its official public mission statement, which is: "To deliver world-class programs in pharmaceutical sciences, pharmacy, and biomedical sciences, training the next generation of healthcare and pharmaceutical experts to improve human health worldwide."<sup>17</sup> This is fully aligned with both the "Strategic objectives of the Swiss higher education institutions for 2025–2028" and the mission of UNIGE. It is based on the principles of excellence, innovation, and international openness, with a focus on research, teaching, and community contribution<sup>18</sup>. Digital transformation (incl. artificial intelligence (AI)) is integrated into teaching, research & services provided. Moreover, SPS follows the Open Science Charter established by UNIGE as a commitment to share scientific knowledge. Since the first year of study is also available at UNIL and UNINE, the learning objectives are harmonized on the three sites, and each student receives similar training in fundamental natural sciences.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/contents/index/missions.php>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/en/university/politique-generale/>

### Expert's group assessment

The experts point out that the programme's educational objectives, as set out in the self-assessment report and its appendices, take into account the University of Geneva's strategic plan for the period 2024-2034. These objectives are also consistent with the university's general policy and values, including international openness, community contribution and interdisciplinary research and teaching.

The programme's educational objectives therefore incorporate the University of Geneva's strategic pillars, particularly regarding employability and preparation for the professional world, and training in research and tomorrow's methodologies. Furthermore, the experts emphasise that research activities and close links with research form an integral part of the programme, and that its teams are composed in a manner that reflects its international reach. The experts also highlight the connections that the SPS maintains and fosters with stakeholders in the field, in accordance with the strategic pillars of the University of Geneva.

After the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts conclude that there is regular communication as well as close collaboration between the university, the faculty and the programme, and the entities responsible for the first year of Bachelor's programme at the Universities of Lausanne and Neuchâtel. They particularly highlight that the programme maintains good relationships with faculty members at an administrative level, as well as with the Faculty of Medicine, and that the collaboration between the University of Geneva and the Universities of Lausanne and Neuchâtel is the subject of a contract (Convention Triangle Azur). However, the experts point out that a few aspects are not fully aligned between these three universities and should be addressed through improvement measures, as discussed within further standards (see especially standards 2.07 and 3.02).

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

#### *Quality standard 1.03:*

*The university shall regulate, and where applicable the university colleges shall regulate, the course of study leading to a federal diploma in accordance with the objectives of the Medical Professions Act. The university awarding the Master's diploma shall be responsible for the quality of the training and for accreditation.*

*The study programme enables graduates – in line with the level of their university medical training – to namely:*

- a) To provide patients with comprehensive, individual and high-quality care;*
- b) to deal with questions using scientifically recognised methods and taking ethical and economic aspects into account, and to make appropriate decisions;*
- c) communicate appropriately and purposefully with patients and other stakeholders;*

- d) to assume responsibility in the health care system, especially in the area of primary health care, and professionally in the society;*
- e) to carry out organisational and management tasks within the framework of their professional activities;*
- f) take into account the competences of other recognised health professions;*
- g) to survive in international competition.*

### **Description and self-assessment**

Pharmaceutical sciences face many challenges since the roles and responsibilities of pharmacists in the healthcare system are constantly evolving. Therefore, the study program needs to be regularly adapted to meet the conditions defined by the Swiss Federal health authorities.

The teaching missions of the SPS are governed by the Medical Professions Act (MedPA)<sup>19</sup> and the SCLO (Appendix 14), which define the requirements and mandatory objectives for pharmacy education leading to the Swiss Federal Diploma of Pharmacist (*“Diplôme fédéral de pharmacien”*) (Appendix 15a; Appendix 15b). In accordance with these frameworks, SPS has reformed and adapted its curriculum, with the most recent reform completed in 2021.

The SPS curriculum enables pharmacy students to acquire comprehensive knowledge in all aspects of the drug supply chain, including active compound discovery, development (including molecular modelling, machine learning and statistical analysis), production, analysis, delivery, disposal, clinical use and surveillance. Students are trained to promote a responsible use of medicines and medical devices, such as their efficient, effective, safe, accessible, and cost-effective use, as defined and promoted by the World Health Organization<sup>20</sup> and the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP)<sup>21</sup>.

Appropriate responsibility includes pharmaceutical care, defined by the Pharmaceutical Care Network Europe (PCNE) as “the pharmacist's contribution to the care of individuals to optimize medicine use and improve health outcomes”<sup>22</sup>. It also encompasses health promotion and disease prevention, as well as collaboration and counselling with other healthcare professionals to share pharmaceutical expertise and to ensure coordinated, patient-centered care.

Each year of the curriculum has its own importance and contributes to training students in terms of organizational and management tasks within the context of community pharmacy, hospital, industry and more in general in the healthcare sector.

Throughout the entire curriculum, coordinated and integrated modules (capsules) aim at enabling students to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical understanding of treatment of patients, competencies developed through training and in intra- and interprofessional ways and in various settings (community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy, humanitarian pharmacy)<sup>23</sup>, along with abilities

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.bag.admin.ch/fr/legislation-professions-medicales>

<sup>20</sup> WHO, 2012, <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-EMP-MAR-2012.3>

<sup>21</sup> FIP, 2012,

[https://www.fip.org/files/fip/memberorganizations/News\\_files/Definition\\_of\\_Responsible\\_Use\\_of\\_Medicines\\_Phil\\_Schneider.pdf](https://www.fip.org/files/fip/memberorganizations/News_files/Definition_of_Responsible_Use_of_Medicines_Phil_Schneider.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> <https://pcne.org/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/>

in decision-making and patient communication. Similarly, clinical case-based learning has been introduced to allow students to develop their clinical reasoning skills, solve situations they are likely to encounter in hospital or community pharmacy practice, structure their clinical care, use appropriate professional bibliographic resources, and integrate fundamental and clinical sciences in their decision-making process. All courses taught during MPharm-1 are intended to train all cognitive domains up to the evaluation level and prepare students for the practical work during MPharm-2. Emphasis is put on transferable skills such as communication, financial and ecological aspects of pharmacy, awareness of complementary medicine and on the inter-professional approach to healthcare.

Students are encouraged to consider ethical, legal, economical and environmental aspects in all the dimensions of their training. They are taught to respect patients' autonomy and confidentiality, and to weigh the benefits and potential harms of their decisions while upholding professional integrity. They also learn to consider economic aspects, recognize the importance of cost-effectiveness and sustainability when selecting and evaluating therapeutic options.

The transversal integration of communication in health in various coordinated modules '*Drugs & Patients*' and '*Drugs & Society*' helps students develop essential skills in healthcare communication, such as empathy, listening capacity, providing information in partnership with patients and their families, as well as fostering interprofessional collaboration among healthcare professionals. This is in accordance with the objectives of the Federal Law for medical professions, which requires the curriculum to provide pharmacy students with a strong knowledge in providing patient education in the appropriate use of pharmaceuticals and medical devices, as part of pharmaceutical patient care. Theory is taught through lectures, while practical skills are developed through patient-oriented laboratory work, case analysis and fieldwork.<sup>24</sup> Interprofessional collaboration is taught through three modules starting from the second year of Bachelor (Appendix 16 description of interprofessionality teaching and Figures 6 and 7 in Standard 2.02). This contributes to a better understanding of the role of each healthcare professional and to recognizing each of them as essential and complementary partners. See standard 2.02 for more details on interprofessionality teaching.

Problem-based learning through practical sessions in pharmacy practice (TP and TD, "*Travaux dirigés*") in BPharm and MPharm, which is organized in small groups of students working on specific transversal pharmacological or pharmaceutical topics, offers the opportunity to train pharmaceutical, clinical and interprofessional decision-making skills, to analyze and understand the risk-benefit of the decision, to synthesize acquired knowledge and present it to their colleagues and faculty members.

Through its Pharmacy Practice group, which brings together Community pharmacy, Hospital pharmacy and Clinical pharmacy science units, SPS integrates clinical and research expertise across community and hospital settings and maintains strong connections with professional practice in the healthcare system.

SPS ensures that pharmaceutical and clinical competences (knowledge, skills and behavior) are progressively acquired so that after graduation, students can assume appropriate responsibility in all areas of pharmacy practice as determined by Federal Law and be prepared for postgraduate education (e.g., FPH in community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy or clinical pharmacy). SPS also offers such opportunities as detailed under 2.1.3.

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<sup>24</sup> Teaching frameworks used to guide this course are: The Health Professionals Core Communication Curriculum (HPCCC) in undergraduate/pre-registration education (Bachmann et al. PEC 2013) and The Glasgow Consensus Statement on effective communication in clinical encounters (Makoul et al. PEC 2024).

Student responsibility and direct relationship with the professional world progresses along the curriculum, with a final year of study (MPharm-2) involving various internships, such as in community and hospital pharmacies, industry, academia, humanitarian institutions. These internships are planned by the students themselves.

The curriculum includes a mandatory 20-week practical training period in a community pharmacy that involves all the common cognitive tasks and services of a community pharmacist. The students are exposed to and start developing first skills in team and budget management, medication inventory management and invoicing to health insurances to get prepared to face their responsibilities as professionals. They also put into practice the skills they acquired in communication with patients and interprofessionality. The internship is complemented by clinical case studies every three weeks, which enable students to make the connection between practice and the theoretical knowledge previously taught during the course.

The other mandatory 20-week internship is spent in a research setting (academia, industry, private laboratory, university-affiliated hospital or community pharmacy centers) and aims at conducting an individual research project. The completion of this Master thesis also increases the awareness of research that is performed within SPS and may encourage students to enter the Ph.D. program in pharmaceutical sciences<sup>25</sup>.

As member of the League of European Research Universities (LERU)<sup>26</sup> network, UNIGE is in close contact with other institutes delivering a pharmacy diploma. This allows to compare the quality and, above all, the content of the study program to the standards of other similar institutions worldwide. Continuous implementation of teaching standards as well as of the curriculum content ensures the competitiveness of SPS students. The excellence achieved by research-based teaching makes the cursus naturally evolve towards the highest international standards<sup>27,28</sup>.

### Expert's group assessment

Based on the programme's self-assessment and discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts conclude that completing the programme enables graduates to provide comprehensive, personalised, high-quality pharmaceutical care while applying scientific methods, taking ethical and economic considerations into account, and communicating appropriately and purposefully. Regarding the latter, the experts consider the compulsory, longitudinal course on communication in health to be particularly helpful, as it runs from the second year of the Bachelor's programme to the second year of the Master's programme, incorporating both theoretical and practical training. The experts also consider the interprofessional elements of the study programme (thanks to the Interprofessional Simulation Centre (CiS)), and the fact that students learn to discuss and interpret publications, thereby developing critical thinking skills, to be important for the aforementioned aspects.

They also note that graduates are prepared to take on responsibilities in healthcare and primary healthcare, which is enabled particularly through simulation and interprofessional training. Regarding management and organisational skills, the experts come to a similar conclusion: the interprofessional training provides students with the opportunity to experience working in a team.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/contents/etudes/programme-doctoral.php>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/internationalrelations/reseaux/reseaux-academiques/leru>

<sup>27</sup> [https://www.universityrankings.ch/institutions/id736-university\\_of\\_geneva-switzerland](https://www.universityrankings.ch/institutions/id736-university_of_geneva-switzerland)

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.universityrankings.ch/institutions/id737-university\\_of\\_lausanne-switzerland](http://www.universityrankings.ch/institutions/id737-university_of_lausanne-switzerland)

Students also develop self-organisation skills by organising their 5<sup>th</sup> year of study, and the compulsory 20-week internship in a community pharmacy in this year provides a good opportunity to familiarise themselves with these themes. Finally, the experts consider that graduates are able to take into account the competencies of other recognised health professions, thanks to shadowing (where students follow professionals from other health professions), interprofessional and simulation training, and the flexibility to choose where to complete the five-week internship. They add that the students obtain a competitive degree thanks to the curriculum's specific features, such as strong interprofessionality, an emphasis on practical elements and a clear orientation towards the professional field, which distinguish it from the curricula of other universities, particularly abroad.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

## Area II: Conception, architecture and structuring of the study programme

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*Quality standard 2.01:*

*The study programme implements the respectively applicable learning objectives in a way that allows graduates to achieve the training objectives according to MedPA.*

*This standard aims at coherence between the content of the programme and the respective teaching methods, and their alignment with the learning objectives.*

### **Description and self-assessment**

Upon graduation, students possess the competencies described in the SCLO for Pharmacy training according to MedPA (Appendix 15a; Appendix 15b). SPS ensures that all learning objectives are fulfilled, while preparing students to assume their future role in the healthcare system.

Learning objectives are defined for each course<sup>29</sup> and presented annually at the introductory session. They are structured throughout the curriculum following cognitive progression of the students, according to the Bloom taxonomy (Figure 5). Throughout the program, SPS encourages students to take more responsibility for their own learning and helps them develop the skills they need for lifelong learning throughout their careers. Faculty members in pharmacy practice also use the Kirkpatrick model<sup>30</sup> to train and evaluate student professional behavior.

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<sup>29</sup> <https://pgc.unige.ch/main/home?year=2025&fac=547&teachingDep=202562>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/the-kirkpatrick-model/>

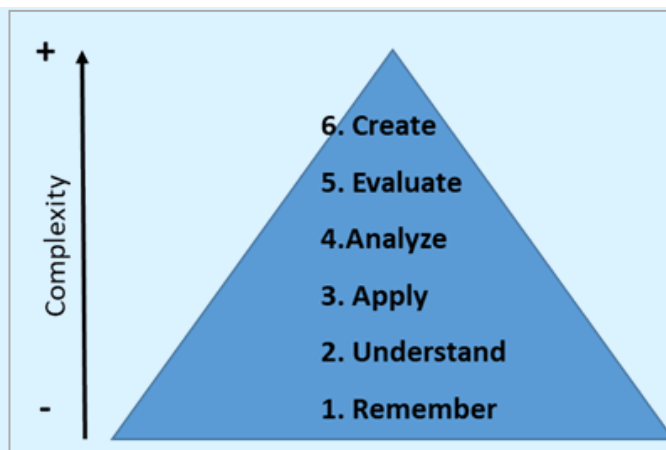


**Figure 5.** Bloom taxonomy of learning

Various teaching methods are used depending on the learning objectives ranging from frontal teaching to flipped classrooms, interactive workshops, problem-based learning, formative exams and practical work. Many modules encourage interdisciplinary learning.

Training objectives are then evaluated in a fair and comprehensive manner. Multiple choice questions (MCQs) are used to test factual knowledge on a large number of students in B-Pharm-1 and throughout the curriculum to prepare for the federal exam. Written examinations with short answers give the possibility to assess conceptual understanding, while oral examinations allow for a deeper and interactive evaluation under more realistic (stress) conditions, as well as simulation “patient-pharmacist” exams prepare for the final federal OSCE exam. The assessment principles and methods at SPS are consistent with the teaching and learning objectives and effectively promote learning. Examination results provide feedback on the understanding of learning objectives. The diversity of examinations encourages integrated and interdisciplinary approaches. Each teaching module is also independently evaluated in terms of learning objectives. Results are analyzed statistically by the “*Bureau des statistiques*” at UNIGE and the “*Observatoire de la vie estudiantine*”. Following the implementation of the Bologna process, individual assessment of courses and modules allows students to repeat only failed examinations instead of the full set of annual assessments.

### **Expert’s group assessment**

According to the self-assessment and information obtained during the on-site visit discussions, the experts state that the programme’s learning objectives align with the training objectives outlined in the Medical Professions Act (MedPA).

The experts observe that the programme incorporates a pedagogical progression by teaching the relevant scientific knowledge necessary for the profession, introducing clinical practice early on, and gradually developing clinical and interdisciplinary skills and knowledge. This prepares students successively for their future pharmacy practice. The experts note positively that the learning objectives of each course are presented to students in introductory sessions and made available online, together with other information, such as the type of performance assessment or corresponding literature (bibliographic notes). They also observe that the course content, teaching methods and assessment methods align with the programme’s learning objectives: in accordance with the principle of constructive alignment, theoretical content is primarily taught in lectures and assessed through written examinations (containing multiple choice and/or short-

answers question), while practical skills and competencies are developed through practice-oriented courses (practical work, problem-based learning, etc.) and teaching focused on clinical aspects (internships, simulated practices, etc.). Corresponding assessment methods are used for these, such as practical and oral examinations and simulation exams. The experts explicitly commend the inclusion of open questions, oral exams and a simulation exam of the objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) of the federal exam in the assessment modalities. In this context, they emphasise that students should receive further training in compounding to prepare for the federal exam, referring to condition 1 within standard 2.04. While they welcome the support of student learning through interactive and digital teaching and learning formats, such as interactive workshops and flipped classrooms, they suggest that the SPS reconsiders the practice of making recorded classes available to students online, which began during the COVID pandemic. While students appreciate having access to these videos, it undoubtedly leads to lower attendance at classes, making it necessary to seek strategies and/or incentives to improve this situation.

Overall, the experts highlight the positive aspects of the programme's modular structure, which provides content in a longitudinal and progressive manner from the Bachelor's programme to the Master's programme. They explain that the capsules combine different areas from a pathophysiological perspective, i.e. based on indication areas, integrating pharmacology, pharmaceutical chemistry, and practical pharmacy into the teaching simultaneously. Information obtained during the on-site visit revealed that the capsule approach enabled the programme to reduce overlaps and save time, while the coordination between the different capsules could still be improved.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

**Quality standard 2.02:**

*Graduates of the study programme must have the following knowledge, skills and abilities:*

- a) They have the scientific basis necessary for preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic, palliative and rehabilitative measures;*
- b) They understand the principles and methods of scientific research;*
- c) They recognise health-preserving influences, can assess them and take them into account in their professional activities;*
- d) They are able to advise, accompany and care for patients in cooperation with members of other professions;*
- e) They are able to analyse medical information and the results of research, as well as to critically evaluate their findings and implement them in their professional activities;*
- f) They are able to learn in interprofessional collaboration with members of other professions;*
- g) They know the legal basis of the Swiss social security system and the health care system and can apply this knowledge in their professional activities;*
- h) They are able to assess the effectiveness, appropriateness and efficiency of their services and to act accordingly;*
- i) They understand the relationship between the national economy and the health system and its various care structures;*
- j) They are able to apply and continuously supplement this knowledge, skills and abilities on the job.*

*This standard makes specific reference to study content that all students should be able to acquire by the time they graduate with a Master's degree.*

**Description and self-assessment**

The curriculum enables pharmacy students to have a strong grounding in the various aspects of drug use including production, dispensation, distribution, disposal of drugs and medical devices, in clinically-related fields including counselling on the appropriate use of pharmaceuticals and medical devices, prevention/detection and management of drug-related problems, pharmacotherapy, legal and ethical issues, as well as communication and team leadership skills. Appropriate responsibility includes pharmaceutical counselling of healthcare professionals and aspects of health promotion, disease prevention, pharmaceutical triage and patient care. The pharmacists must assume a crucial and increasingly important role in primary care, for instance in terms of screening, management of minor ailments through autonomous prescribing, interprofessional care management and vaccination.

Throughout the curriculum, research-driven courses in combination with clinical-oriented teaching provide students with insight into the latest developments in pharmaceutical sciences and forms the basis of all courses offered. Lectures are regularly updated according to the scientific progress. Students are trained to address scientific, clinical, and professional questions using scientifically recognized, evidence-based, and methodologically sound approaches. They learn to critically appraise scientific literature, apply evidence-based principles of pharmacology,

therapeutics and pharmaceutical care, and use validated methods, ensuring that decisions are based on reliable scientific data. SPS is responsible for instilling the principles of evidence-based medicine in its students, as well as stimulating their ability to think analytically and critically. As previously mentioned, teaching modules (courses and practical work) are built according to the Bloom cognition scores (Figure 5). The complexity of the topics taught increases throughout the program, and the learning methods are adapted to ensure that all cognitive domains are covered. These domains include knowledge (recall of data or information), comprehension (understanding of a given problem and state it in one's own words), application (transfer of what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in the workplace), analysis (distinction between facts and inferences), synthesis (build a structure from elements and create a new meaning based on it), and evaluation (appraise the value of ideas or results). The science- and patient-oriented practical sessions (2 full days per week of wet lab and about 10 full days per year of patient-oriented practice) within BPharm-2 and BPharm-3 encourage analytical, problem-based critical thinking.

Students receive longitudinal training in the use of bibliographic material and tools used in scientific and clinical research (bibliography modules, BPharm-1 to MPharm-1). They learn to critically read scientific articles and medical publications/guidelines. Recently, they are taught how to apply AI tools to search for medical information and research results, and how to quote AI use transparently. For instance, the module "*Projet interdisciplinaire*" taught during MPharm-1 puts emphasis on analytical and critical thinking. During this module, students must produce a short scientific report on an interdisciplinary topic, in accordance with recognized publication standards, and present their findings both through a scientific and a public outreach presentation. Interdisciplinary cooperation between fundamental pharmaceutical sciences and pharmacy practice is also conveyed to the students during this module. In parallel, during the capsule "*Cas cliniques intégrés*" in MPharm-1, students learn to use the main clinical databases to resolve complex real-world polypharmacy prescriptions by using state-of-the-art clinical national and international guidelines. The cases are built as problem-based learning, promoting self-training for clinical analysis, contextualization, clinical reasoning, based on the patient's care process framework<sup>31</sup>. These skills are also developed during interprofessional simulations (IP2 and IP3) in MPharm-1 and -2 (Appendix 16). In MPharm-2, students pursue an individual research project, experimental in nature, under the supervision of a faculty member. Each student is required to review the literature of their research topic, to carry out their own original research and to present the results in the form of a written thesis and an oral presentation. In some cases, this leads to student participation as co-author to scientific publications. Furthermore, during the internship in community pharmacy, students must fulfill structured learning objectives, where the use of medical information is key.

From BPharm-1 to MPharm-1, the coordinated teaching modules ("Capsules") are structured around "*Drugs & Patients*" and "*Drugs & Society*". The "*Drugs & Patients*" capsules address the major pathologies encountered in internal medicine and integrate disciplines from physiology to pharmaceutical care (Table 1). Practical work associated with these clinical themes allows students to develop relevant skills and abilities. This combined theoretical and practical pedagogical approach enables students to achieve a comprehensive and critical understanding of medicines within the context of diseases.

The "*Drugs & Society*" capsules cover topics related to professionalism, healthcare systems, global pharmacy and pharmaco-economics, thereby providing students with the knowledge and analytical tools needed to understand the broader societal, economic, and institutional dimensions of pharmacy practice. In addition, lectures on hospital pharmacy introduce students

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<sup>31</sup> <https://jcphp.net/patient-care-process/>

to the concepts and skills associated with pharmaceutical compounding and distribution within healthcare institutions, as well as patient-oriented activities in hospital settings. Lectures on community pharmacy prepare students for their internships and future practice by addressing aspects such as information source management in community pharmacies, the transition from hospital to community care, and certain business management activities related to community pharmacies. Running in parallel, a transversal teaching stream focuses on interprofessional collaboration and the principles of evidence-based medicine, fostering a culture of teamwork and critical appraisal that underpins safe, effective, and patient-centred pharmaceutical care.

**Table 1.** Teaching modules related to clinical knowledge and skills to be acquired theoretically and practically by the students throughout the curriculum.

| <b>Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences<br/>preparing to clinical skills</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Clinical skills</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BPharm-1                                                                       | Principles of public health, health communication, (pharmaco)epidemiology, scientific documentation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| BPharm-2                                                                       | Anatomy, histology, coordinated capsules “ <i>Drugs &amp; Patients</i> ” and “ <i>Drugs &amp; Society</i> ” (Figure 6).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Practical work related to the coordinated capsules “ <i>Drugs &amp; Patients</i> ”, towards prescription validation and triage of current situations.<br>A 2-week initiation internship in a community pharmacy.<br>First interprofessional module.        |
| BPharm-3                                                                       | Coordinated capsules “ <i>Drugs &amp; Patients</i> ” and “ <i>Drugs &amp; Society</i> ” (Figure 7), drug syndromes and safety, drug individualization communication.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Practical work related to the coordinated capsules “ <i>Drugs &amp; Patients</i> ” and “ <i>Drugs &amp; Society</i> ”.<br>A First-aid training course.                                                                                                     |
| MPharm-1                                                                       | Coordinated capsules “ <i>Drugs &amp; Patients</i> ” and “ <i>Drugs &amp; Society</i> ”, vaccination, veterinary pharmacy, medical devices, travel medicine. Optional courses together with medical students. Two specific modules on drug development (Drug discovery & conception and Drug development). A course on digital technologies in fundamental and clinical pharmaceutical sciences. | Integrated clinical cases capsule covering complex real-world polypharmacy prescriptions.<br>Practical work related to the coordinated capsules “ <i>Drugs &amp; Society</i> ”.<br>Second interprofessional module.                                        |
| MPharm-2                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Hospital and community pharmacy internships, as well as research internship (if related to community or hospital pharmacy, or clinical pharmacology).<br>Clinical case resolution, and formative exams (MCQs and OSCE).<br>Third interprofessional module. |

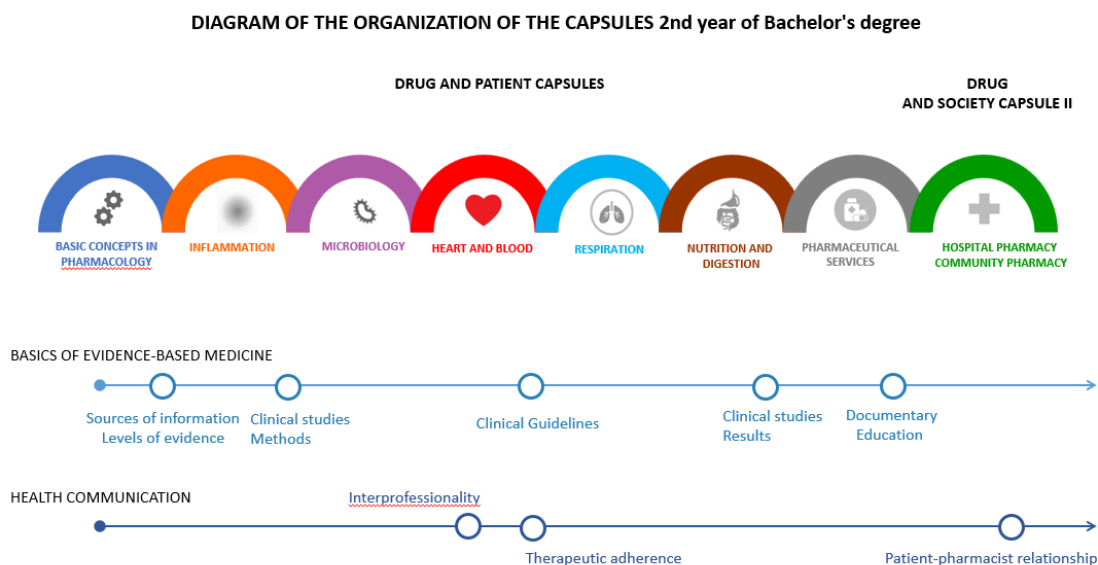


**Figure 6.** Schematic view of coordinated modules 'Drugs & Patients' and 'Drugs & Society' in BPharm-2.

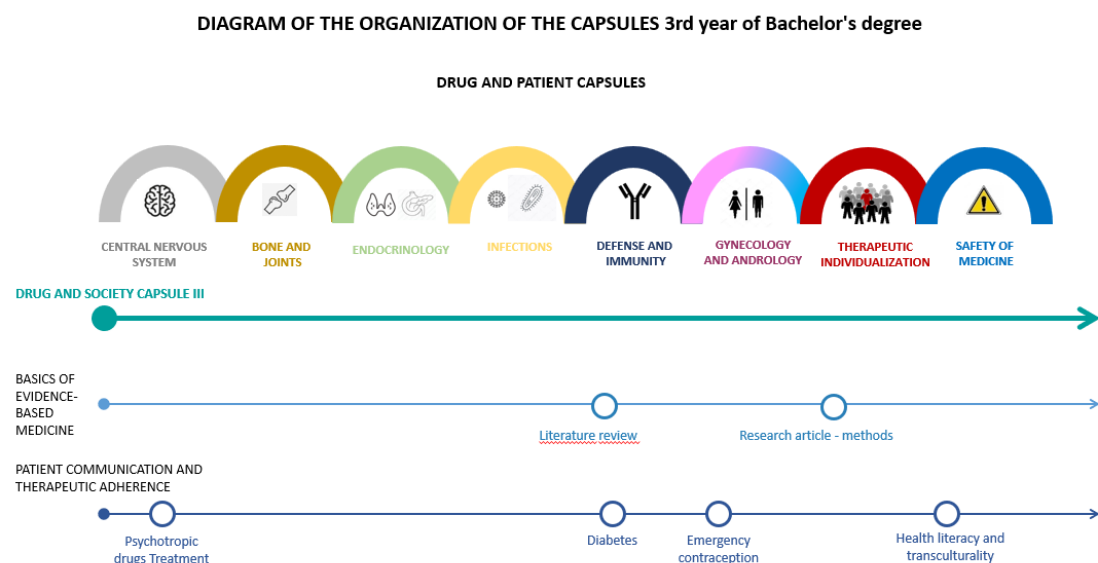


**Figure 7.** Schematic view of coordinated modules 'Drugs & Patients' and 'Drugs & Society' in BPharm-3.

The introduction of interprofessional immersion from BPharm-2 onwards (Fig. 4 and Appendix 16) is an experience that allows students to collaborate with other healthcare professionals from the start of their training, thereby disarming mutual preconceptions and strengthening their communication and teamwork skills and their ability to work in partnership with patients and their families. The program uses a variety of learning methods, such as e-learnings, simulations, shadowing, workshops and experience sharing with interprofessional teams in the field. This aims at allowing pharmacy students to better understand the role of each healthcare professional and to better recognize them as essential and complementary partners. The interprofessional curriculum is compulsory for the seven curriculums in medicine, pharmacy, nursing, nutrition and

dietetics, physiotherapy, midwifery and medical radiology technology. The teaching sequence of interprofessionality is built upon teaching frameworks and models.

The link between academic training and professional practice – including the healthcare system – is developed in the “*Drugs & Society*” modules taught from BPharm-1 to MPharm-1. These modules are organized in four dimensions: 1) Patient and patient community, 2) Professionalism, 3) Health system, and 4) Methods and tools in clinical pharmaceutical sciences. The program is supported by several external lecturers, which are experts in hospital and community pharmacy practice, pharmacists in public administration, primary care medicine, health policy, social insurances, drug pricing policy, health system organization and management, marketing and entrepreneurship. The emphasis is placed on patient safety, treatment efficacy, new technologies for drug delivery as well as on economic considerations, healthcare system and environmental sustainability<sup>32</sup>.

Students are made aware of the Swiss healthcare system already during the “*Drugs & Society*” module 1 in BPharm-1, where its structure, financing, evolution and challenges are discussed; the roles of pharmacists in various domains (research, industry, administrations, etc.) are presented. The basics of public, global and planetary health are introduced, along with the Swiss national priorities in terms of health promotion and prevention. An introduction to the Swiss legal framework related to drugs and medical professions is also taught during this module.

“*Drug & Society*” module 3 in BPharm-3 is mainly dedicated to hospital pharmacy, pharmacoeconomics, global pharmacy, as well as prevention and health promotion.

“*Drug & Society*” module 4 in MPharm-1 covers topics such as laws, social insurances, health policies, pharmacist remuneration, drug pricing policy, business model analysis, marketing and merchandising, and entrepreneurship. This module covers important aspects of the healthcare system, introducing the students to organizational and management tasks constitutive of the pharmacist professional activities.

Furthermore, the interface between academic training and professional practice is fostered through the Committee for the Federal Examination (“*Commission examen federal*”<sup>33</sup>) and the APhWS Working Group (former *Plattform Ausbildung Pharmazie*<sup>34</sup>), which are tasked with the definition of the next version of the catalogue of learning objectives (“*catalogue d'objectifs*”).

During BPharm, to allow students to obtain a first insight into the profession of pharmacist, they must actively participate in a 2-week introductory internship with 1 week spent in a community pharmacy, and the other week either in a community or a hospital pharmacy. This internship is not required by SCLO (Appendix 14) but has to be completed before the Bachelor examination (see “*Règlement Bachelor*”<sup>35</sup>). The theoretical and applied clinical knowledge acquired during the years of Bachelor and MPharm-1 offer the necessary competencies before entering the year of internships in MPharm-2. Relevant community training and teamwork with other health professions in patient care prepare students for the 20-week internship in a community pharmacy, the 1-week internship in hospital pharmacy and the optional 5-week internship. The latter can be carried out either in a community pharmacy, in a hospital pharmacy, for a humanitarian project, in a research group, or in the pharmaceutical industry. These internships enable contact with patients, other healthcare professionals and provide further training in clinical skills (Appendix 17).

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<sup>32</sup> <https://isps.unige.ch/isps/contents/epgl/rapports-annuels.php>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.bag.admin.ch/fr/examen-federal-en-pharmacie>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.saphw.ch/en/aphws/>

<sup>35</sup> [https://isps.unige.ch/isps/docs/reglements/BUSP\\_PE\\_2021.pdf](https://isps.unige.ch/isps/docs/reglements/BUSP_PE_2021.pdf)

The one-week internship in hospital pharmacy during MPharm-2 is intended to provide an introduction into pharmacy practice in a hospital setting. The organizational structure and running of a clinical unit are presented to students. During this internship, students work in collaboration with other healthcare professionals. This course is organized in the form of seminars for small groups of students at hospital pharmacies providing clinical services in Western Switzerland. This is organized with the Swiss organization of hospital pharmacists (GSASA<sup>36</sup>) through a collaboration agreement.

The 20-week mandatory internship in community pharmacy is organized with pharmaSuisse through a collaboration agreement. SPS provides students with learning objectives. Virtual meetings with student supervisors are also organized by SPS every six months to inform them of UNIGE requirements and to receive supervisors' feedback. The objective is to collaborate to transform the internship into a highly successful learning experience. The study program and the instructional methods ensure that students take responsibility for their own learning process and are prepared for lifelong learning.

pharmaSuisse has created regional surveillance committees for the community pharmacy internship<sup>37</sup>. These committees register the pharmacies involved in training. They monitor student placement, assist in resolving relational or contractual issues, and enable information exchange between the pharmacies by maintaining the network of training pharmacies. French-speaking Switzerland has a single regional committee, in which the student counselor at SPS and the person in charge of the internship in community pharmacy at UNIGE are members. PharmaSuisse, in cooperation with the faculty members of SPS, organizes preparative courses for pharmacists hosting students.

SPS grants pharmaSuisse the responsibility of managing the community pharmacy trainers for the 20-week internship in pharmacy. An SPS faculty member validates the internship report filled in by each student and their internship supervisor to deliver the ECTS credits. A better follow up of the internship in community pharmacy would increase the quality of the learning experience (Appendix 18, internship evaluation by students 2024-2025). However, SPS does not have the human resources for fulfilling this objective. More support is needed and has been asked to the government in 2023 without success<sup>38</sup>.

As a general consideration, SPS expects Swiss Federal Authorities to be more strongly involved in financial support to the accredited educational institutions, as this is the case for other health professions, including medicine and nursing.

### Expert's group assessment

Based on the programme's self-assessment and discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts observe that graduates acquire the comprehensive natural science fundamentals necessary for their future practice as pharmacists, with the first year being important for establishing a scientific basis, as well as throughout the entire Bachelor's programme. They add that the capsule structure enables elements to be retaken at a higher level. The experts also note that graduates develop an understanding of scientific research methods and principles, as well as critical thinking, particularly thanks to the six months dedicated to the Master's thesis and the

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.gsasa.ch/>

<sup>37</sup> [https://pharmasuisse.org/system/files/media/documents/2025-11/4\\_Commissions%20r%C3%A9gionales\\_Personnes%20de%20contact\\_06\\_25\\_f.pdf](https://pharmasuisse.org/system/files/media/documents/2025-11/4_Commissions%20r%C3%A9gionales_Personnes%20de%20contact_06_25_f.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> <https://movetia.ch/en/magazine/29-7-billion-for-education-research-and-innovation>

research orientation of the laboratory courses. They state that the programme includes teaching in health maintenance, patient counselling and follow-up skills in a collaborative context with other professions. This is enabled through the various disease fields of the capsules and interprofessional training (delivered by the Interprofessional Simulation Centre (CiS)), which enables students to collaborate with students from six other study programmes (medicine, nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, medical radiology technology, nutrition and dietetics). The experts also note that graduates acquire the skills needed to critically analyse medical information and research findings, and to apply them in their professional practice and acquire new knowledge through interprofessional collaboration. During the on-site visit, the experts learn that students are trained, for example, to synthesise and characterise compounds in a drug research and development context and to collaborate with both internal and external research groups. The experts also conclude that students acquire knowledge of the legal basis of the Swiss social security and health insurance system and are able to practise their profession effectively, appropriately and economically, while understanding the links between the economy, the health system and healthcare structures. This is notably covered by one of the capsules (Capsule medicine and society IV: health system, law and economics, health communication) in the first year of the Master's programme. Finally, the experts recognise that the programme equips its graduates with the ability to apply and continuously update their knowledge and skills.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

*Quality standard 2.03:*

*The study programme supports the development of the students' social competence and personality with regard to dealing with their future professional requirements.*

*In particular, the programme works to ensure that students:*

- a) recognise and respect the limits of medical practice and their own strengths and weaknesses;*
- b) understand the ethical dimension of their professional actions and perceive their responsibility towards the individual, society and the environment;*
- c) preserve the patient's right to self-determination in the course of treatment.*

*This standard makes specific reference to study content that all students should be able to acquire by the time they graduate with a Master's degree.*

### **Description and self-assessment**

The study program fosters the development of social competencies and professional identity essential for students' future professional requirements. Practical courses in MPharm-1 and -2 enable students to recognize the scope and limits of their professional role, and their place within the interprofessional health care. Ethical responsibility is emphasized, ensuring that graduates act in the best interests of patients, society, and the environment. Students are also trained to promote patient empowerment, respect patient autonomy and support informed decision-making in everyday pharmacy practice.

### Expert's group assessment

Based on their analysis of the self-assessment report and its appendices, and the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts judge the students to be sufficiently supported in the development of their personal and social skills. Some of the foundations for these capabilities are laid in the Capsule "Medicine and society IV: health system, law and economics, health communication", which covers talking about key stakeholders (hospitals, community pharmacies, insurance providers) and health policies and decision-making processes. The experts note that students are made aware of the limitations of pharmaceutical practice and their own strengths and weaknesses; this is strongly supported by practical approach in the interprofessional training, during which students must conduct consultations in an efficient, respectful and professional manner alongside other health professionals. By learning with and from other health professionals, aspects of communication are practiced and reflected and strengths and weaknesses of their own profession as well as other professions are experienced. The experts also note that students are encouraged to understand the ethical dimension of professional activity, take responsibility for it, and respect patients' right to self-determination. In this context, the experts highlight the simulation training positively, in which students learn to interact with simulation patients, played by trained actors, and to work in a team with other health professionals. Furthermore, students can apply their ethics training in practice during their internships in community, hospital or humanitarian pharmacies.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

### Quality standard 2.04:

*The study programme sets the following educational objectives:*

#### *The graduates*

- a) know and understand in particular the scientific basis for the manufacture, dispensing, distribution, documentation and disposal of medicinal products and pharmaceutical excipients and the corresponding legal regulations;*
- b) understand the interaction of the medicinal product with its environment;*
- c) have comprehensive knowledge of the use, effect, application and risks of medicinal products and of medical devices important for their profession;*
- d) know the most important non-drug therapies for humans and animals;*
- e) are able to provide pharmaceutical advice to members of other health professions and contribute with them to advising patients on health issues;*
- f) assume tasks for the promotion and maintenance of health and the prevention of diseases and acquire the corresponding competences, especially in vaccinations;*
- g) respect the dignity and autonomy of the human being, know the justifications of ethics, are familiar with the ethical problem areas of medicine, in particular with therapy with*

*medicinal products, and are guided in their professional and scientific activities by ethical principles for the benefit of people;*

- h) are familiar with the tasks of the various professionals in primary health care;*
- i) know and understand, in particular, the principles and the technical basis for the manufacture, dispensing, distribution, documentation and disposal of complementary medicinal products and the corresponding legal regulations;*
- j) have adequate basic knowledge of diagnosis and treatment of common health disorders and diseases.*

*This standard makes specific reference to study content that all students should be able to acquire by the time they graduate with a Master's degree.*

### **Description and self-assessment**

Various aspects related to the scientific bases and legal aspects of drug manipulation are taught to the students during the curriculum. Two modules addressing, first, the steps needed for drug discovery and design, and then, the different phases necessary to drug development provide an understanding of the entire journey of a drug, from the molecule to the pill. Moreover, a course on modelling and data analysis presents digital technologies in the context of fundamental and clinical pharmaceutical sciences. These courses enable students to make connections between all the concepts they have been taught so far. Furthermore, preparations of drugs in small quantities are an important topic of the Swiss federal exam and students are trained in these skills through theoretical and practical courses. Hospital management of drugs – logistics, production, and clinical use – is addressed during a full module dedicated to hospital pharmacy (BPharm-3). Industrial pharmacy is discussed in several courses (drug development, pharmaceutical technology, good manufacturing practices, quality assurance and control, etc.). A practical approach to all these issues is provided during the student internships, mostly in community pharmacy and optionally in hospital pharmacy. Teaching always refers to the related regulations.

Interactions of pharmaceutical products with their environment can be examined from two distinct perspectives. The first interpretation of this standard is in an ecological sense, where drug residues can act as micropolluting agents, causing for instance endocrine disruption. These aspects are explained to the students during the courses taught at the bachelor level (analytical pharmaceutical chemistry, biopharmacy, pharmacokinetics). The second perspective is related to interactions between the patient organism and the drug, which includes topics covered in the various “*Drugs & Patient*” capsules, starting from basic human pharmacology to aspects of applied pharmacology in individuals and populations.

The coordinated teaching in BPharm-2 and -3 addresses the treatment of diseases through general pharmacology and medicinal chemistry, focusing on the mechanisms of action of drugs and their effect on the diseases. This is followed by instruction in disease semiology, evidence-based pharmacotherapy and pharmaceutical care, with particular emphasis put on the integration of drug therapy at the patient level. Students learn to adapt treatments to patients' specific factors (co-morbidities, environmental factors (i.e drug-drug, drug-disease interactions), as well as at the population level, where the focus is put on evidence-based guidelines. In addition to theoretical instruction, students benefit from practical training that focuses on applying knowledge to the appropriate diagnosis and management of common health conditions. The students are also made aware of the particularly high risks encountered at the “interface situations”, such as when a patient is released from the hospital. The partnerships with Pharma-24 and Unisanté are utmost

important in this context. In BPharm-3, practical work in biomedical and toxicological analysis further explores the quantification of drugs in biological fluids.

During MPharm-1, the students follow courses on complementary and alternative medicine for humans. The objective of the course is to cover the use and limitations of some of these therapies such as phytotherapy, aromatherapy, homeopathy and mindfulness. The class is taught by practitioners experienced in various aspects of complementary medicine. Another module addresses veterinary pharmacy and medical devices.

Interprofessionality concepts are taught throughout the program thus enabling future pharmacists to position themselves within the healthcare network and society, and to better understand and appreciate their profession and its place in society. A detailed description of IP modules is given in Appendix 16. Thanks to this teaching, SPS students get to know the various experts of the Swiss healthcare and social systems, and the roles and responsibilities of the various health professionals, including the ones from the primary care setting. Emphasis is also given on quality and safety of care and on the impact of collaborative practice. During their 20-week internship in community pharmacy, students get to work mainly with primary care physicians and nurses, but also with patient associations, around screening activities and drug dispensation. Expositions to other healthcare professionals also occur during MPharm-2 when students participate in the 1-week internship in hospital pharmacy.

Since competences in vaccination have become compulsory for pharmacists (Appendix 15a; Appendix 15b), a module entitled “Vaccination-BLS” has been implemented. It is composed of theoretical courses on the composition, development and mode of action of vaccines and their advantages and risks, as well as of practical training including two practical courses, namely injection techniques and first aid (BLS for Basic Life Support). This is organized in collaboration with the University of Applied Studies in Health in Geneva.

Ethical aspects are essential competences that are explained and demonstrated throughout the curriculum. Each drug is explained in the context of weighing risks and benefits, including individual aspects specific to each patient. Many courses throughout the curriculum include examples of clinical cases, either theoretical or as role plays, and they allow to train competence in recognizing and dealing with ethical questions in the field of medicine. Students are trained to recognize their own preconceived ideas and prejudices and are encouraged to work on them to develop a more professional attitude. The students are also exposed to a variety of teachers and mentors in their curriculum, especially during their internship, and learn ethical values by observing the attitudes of their mentors and discussing situations with them.

Scientific communication is also taught throughout the capsules, and Appendix 16a details this essential topic. The 20-week internship in a public pharmacy broadens and consolidates this capacity. A final exam in real-life situations (OSCE) tests this competence to make sure that all future pharmacists have acquired the necessary skills in providing advice on pharmaceutical and health-related issues.

### **Expert's group assessment**

According to the programme's self-assessment and the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts consider that graduates acquire the scientific basis, principles, technical fundamentals and legal regulations underlying the manufacture, dispensing, distribution, documentation and disposal of drugs. Key to this are, for example, the first-year Bachelor's programme shared course called “Pharmaceutical Sciences” and two modules on drug development and a capsule in the

first year of the Master's programme integrating clinical cases related to prescription. The experts note that the curriculum also covers aspects of industrial pharmacy, hospital drug management and the preparation of small quantities of drugs. Regarding the latter, the experts have a positive view of the existing course at the end of the first year of the Master's programme, but emphasise that, in their opinion and based on students' feedback during the on-site visit, an additional "refresher" session is needed due to its position in the curriculum and because students often do not have sufficient opportunities to practise compounding (preparation of drugs in small quantities) during their internships, nor the necessary supervision. They recommend that such a refresher course should be held relatively close to the Swiss federal exam, under conditions similar to those of the exam, and that it should be supported by supervisors in order to enable students to learn the specific requirements for the compounding during the federal exam. In this context, the experts acknowledge that resource constraints are a limiting factor but emphasise the need for additional teaching staff to maintain teaching quality (see also standard 3.02). They add that this additional course could ideally take place in the same laboratory spaces as the federal exam, and that organised access to the laboratory during the summer would also enable students to practise compounding. The experts emphasise the importance of this additional course and/or the organised laboratory access, noting that this competency is part of Swiss catalogue of learning objectives in pharmacy and will remain no less important in view of supply shortages in Switzerland.

The experts further analyse that the programme sufficiently covers questions regarding the interaction of pharmaceutical products with their ecological environment and patients' organisms, as the curriculum integrates significant elements of pharmacology and toxicology. Additionally, the first year of the Bachelor's programme covers public health, the health system and epidemiology; questions of security are introduced in the laboratory sessions. They also conclude that the graduates have an adequate knowledge of the use, effects, application and risks of drugs and of medical devices relevant to their profession, thanks to the pharmacology and practical pharmacy content that forms, to a large extent, the basis of the study programme. These aspects are also addressed in the context of a basic life support course and a vaccination class, with medical devices being explicitly covered in the first year of the Master's programme. The experts add that, in the first year of the Master's programme, students attend courses on alternative and complementary medicine for humans and animals. Furthermore, students can attend optional courses offered by the Faculty of Medicine which also cover this topic.

The experts observe that, in the second year of the Bachelor's programme and in the Master's programme, as well as during the internships and the shadowing, students practise and train cooperation with members of other health professions in the interprofessional courses of the Interprofessional Simulation Centre (CiS). The experts emphasise that the students are therefore also familiar with the roles of various primary healthcare professionals. Furthermore, they note that graduates acquire knowledge of health prevention and promotion, including the relevant competencies, such as those relating to vaccination. A notable contribution to this comes from the "Drug & Society" module 3 in the third year of the Bachelor's programme; otherwise, the different disease areas covered by the capsule structure allow relevant aspects of health prevention to be addressed in a longitudinal manner. The experts also state that the programme constantly raises students' awareness of ethical issues: ethics is integrated into the curriculum as a transversal topic and is also addressed specifically in simulation training. Finally, the experts acknowledge that graduates have an understanding of diagnosing and treating common health disorders and diseases, thanks to the various indication fields covered by the capsules, as well as the case studies in the Master's programme.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as partially fulfilled.

#### Condition 1:

The SPS offers adequate opportunities for students to further practise and rehearse compounding under exam conditions towards the end of the Master's programme to ensure that students acquire the necessary skills for manufacturing medicinal products, thus supporting them in preparing for the Swiss federal exam.

#### Quality standard 2.05:

*The course of study is regularly reviewed to determine how, in view of new challenges and conditions in the professional field, the general objectives under the MedPA are being implemented and the necessary requirements for continuing education are being met.*

*This standard addresses the continuum of undergraduate, postgraduate and advanced training that underpins the MedPA. Show how you ensure this.*

#### Description and self-assessment

To address the challenges of implementing changes in the general objectives of the MedPA and the conditions in professional field on a regular basis, SPS has the following measures in place:

- SPS has representatives in the APhWS Working Group (former *Plattform Ausbildung Pharmazie*<sup>39</sup>) board, as defined in the bylaws of this working group.
- SPS has representatives at the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) as well as in Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences (SAMW<sup>40</sup>) and the Swiss Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences (SAPhS).

These representatives report to SPS "*Commission enseignement*", which proposes implementation measures to the "*Collège des professeurs*".

Besides these institutional procedures, SPS organizes regular discussions with stakeholders from various fields of pharmaceutical sciences to identify their progress and define strategic plans to follow the fast-evolving field of pharmaceutical sciences. As examples one can cite the yearly off-site Faculty meeting "*Journée stratégique de la Section*", and Ph.D. program events. Moreover, SPS faculty members who work in community and hospital pharmacies are in regular contact with professional associations and cantonal authorities through their activities. These regular contacts also contribute to the link between the training program and developments in the profession.

The results of such meetings may lead to specific implementations in the curriculum and continuous education in the form of Certificate/Master of Advanced Science (CAS/MAS) and/or the Ph.D. program.

In addition, the comments of the experts during the accreditation procedure, as well as the ones from the SAB are sources of fruitful discussions for SPS continuously evolving towards excellence.

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<sup>39</sup> <https://www.saphw.ch/en/aphws/>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.samw.ch/en.html>

### Expert's group assessment

Based on the self-assessment and discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts conclude that the SPS regularly reviews its programme in terms of its implementation of the general objectives of the Medical Professions Act (MedPA), new challenges and conditions in the professional field, and compatibility with postgraduate training. They consider the institutional processes through which representatives in various national networks report to the SPS's Teaching Committee, which then proposes development initiatives to the SPS's College of Professors, to be a valuable tool in this regard. The experts add that exchanges with other stakeholders in the field enable the SPS to keep up to date with developments and revise its curriculum accordingly, ensuring that teaching remains in line with the latest advances and is ready to meet future challenges. They also consider the scientific advisory board of the SPS to be a valuable source of knowledge transfer, as well as collaboration with other health professions programmes, and the involvement of SPS professors in the professional field. While the experts conclude that the processes to verify the programme's alignment with the MedPA objectives and recent developments are merely discussion-based, they note, based on the example of the attempted introduction of a professorship in digital pharmacy – which was cancelled due to a lack of resources –, that the SPS undertakes good initiatives in order to keep its curriculum up to date.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

#### *Quality standard 2.06:*

*The consideration of all guidelines valid in Switzerland on the professional qualification of graduates in the study programme is documented.*

*This standard aims to ensure that the requirements according to Directive 2005/36/EC of the EU Parliament and of the EU Council are taken into account in the course of study.*

### Description and self-assessment

The curriculum<sup>41,42</sup> and information about the Swiss federal exam for pharmacists are presented on the website of SPS<sup>43</sup>. The curriculum fulfils the requirements of the Swiss federal exam<sup>44</sup>.

Regulations applicable in Switzerland for the professional qualifications of graduates are taken into consideration in the study program to consolidate theoretical and practical knowledge of the students thus allowing them to prepare for the Swiss federal exam. Indeed, the SPS study program has the mission to provide students with all necessary knowledge to obtain the Master diploma in Pharmacy as well as the Swiss federal diploma. The study program also follows the Swiss catalogue of learning objectives in pharmacy (SCLO).

The study program considers the Swiss federal regulations that define the professional qualifications required to practice as a pharmacist in Switzerland. They are the *Loi fédérale sur*

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<sup>41</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/contents/etudes/bachelor.php>

<sup>42</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/contents/etudes/master.php>

<sup>43</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/contents/etudes/examens-federaux.php>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.bag.admin.ch/fr/examen-federal-en-pharmacie>

*les professions médicales* (LPMed<sup>45</sup> or MedPA) and *Loi fédérale sur les produits thérapeutiques* (LPTh<sup>46</sup> or HEdA). For example, SPS has developed a list of objectives for the community pharmacy training period that is based on the MedPA learning objectives in pharmacy. This list is to be used, fulfilled and signed by both the supervisor and the student during the training period (last edition, June 2024).

A good coordination with the other academic institutions delivering a Master in Pharmacy and preparing students for the Swiss federal exam is ensured. The participating institutions are currently the Universities of Basel, Bern and Geneva, as well as ETHZ. The Swiss Federal Authorities have put in place an Examination Commission for Pharmacy ("*Commission fédérale d'examen pour la pharmacie*")<sup>47</sup> to ensure coordination and supervision, in which a faculty member represents SPS.

For preparation, realization and evaluation of the three parts of the Swiss federal exam for pharmacists<sup>48</sup>, ad-hoc working groups are created and supervised by the *Commission fédérale d'examen pour la pharmacie*. Members of SPS or delegates are directly involved in these working groups, thus ensuring that the study program of SPS fulfils all requirements of the Swiss federal exam. These working groups comprise:

- Working group for MCQ examination on pharmacotherapy, law and economy
- Working group on practical examination on drug preparation in small quantities
- Working group for patient-centered examination (OSCE)

### Expert's group assessment

The experts note that, based on the relevant procedure documents, the programme takes into account the guidelines valid in Switzerland concerning the professional qualification of graduates. These guidelines are referenced in the programme's regulations and are available on the SPS's website.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

*Quality standard 2.07:*

*The form of assessment of the students' performance is adapted to the learning objectives.*

*This standard aims to ensure coherence and consistency between the methods used to assess student performance and the learning objectives. This includes all forms of assessment (theoretical and practical examinations, tests, papers, reports, projects, etc.).*

### Description and self-assessment

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<sup>45</sup> [www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20040265/index.html](http://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20040265/index.html)

<sup>46</sup> [www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20002716/index.html](http://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20002716/index.html)

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.bag.admin.ch/fr/commissions-dexamen-des-professions-medicales>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.bag.admin.ch/fr/examen-federal-en-pharmacie>

Various assessment methods are applied, according to the competencies that are expected at the end of a course.

#### **STATUS AT UNIGE**

Students are informed about the rules and methods used to assess their performance in each theoretical and practical course at the beginning of each academic year. This information is made available on the education web platform (Moodle UNIGE) and presented by the teachers during the first hour of each class.

The summative assessment methods are the following: written examination (including MCQs), oral examination, OSCE. Formative assessments such as lab sessions are evaluated by reports submitted during the semesters and final individual assessments (oral, written, practical or simulation). With regards to the Master thesis and internship in community pharmacy, specific evaluation criteria are set<sup>49</sup> (Appendix 17; Appendix 18).

Various methods are used to assess learning progress at UNIGE. MCQs are used throughout the curriculum. These examinations only test detailed knowledge but do not enable the development of a concept. However, they represent a rational and objective means to evaluate a large number of students. Written examinations with short answers give the possibility to develop more sophisticated concepts. Understanding certain concepts can also be checked by appropriate exercises. Oral examinations on given disciplines are maintained since this enables the examiners to interact directly with students during the examination. It also gives flexibility for an in-depth analysis of a particular topic. During the Master program, the integrated character of modular classes favors interdisciplinary learning. In BPharm-3 and during the Master, formative OSCEs (objective structured clinical examination; role-play situations) are introduced and MCQs are used to prepare students to interact with patients and for the Swiss federal exam.

The balance between formative and summative assessments and between written and oral examinations as well as the number of examinations and other tests is controlled by the Teaching committee. If problems in the quality of the learning process and its outcome were to arise, these assessment methods would be evaluated to determine whether they adequately promote learning. New assessment methods are considered when required.

Grades range from 1 to 6 (6 being the best grade, half and quarter grades may be given according to Faculty guidelines), the grade sufficient to pass an exam is 4. The regulations concerning the examinations are clearly specified in Article 8 of the "*Règlement d'études général de la Faculté des sciences*"<sup>50</sup>, which is updated regularly.

Students are informed of their exam results by the Faculty of Sciences, which is responsible for the whole infrastructural organization of the examinations. Since the introduction of the Bologna process, each discipline is individually assessed. In case of failure, the student only repeats the specific examination.

Examinations organized by the partner universities (UNIL and UNINE) are under their respective responsibilities but are regularly audited to correspond to those carried out at UNIGE.

#### **STATUS AT UNIL**

The students pass the BPharm-1 and obtain 60 ECTS credits if the mean of the grades obtained, weighted by the ECTS credits, is between 4.0 and 6.0 and if there are no scores of 1.0.

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<sup>49</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/contents/enseignement/reglements.php>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/sciences/application/files/8117/5793/0547/Reglegen.pdf>

Most of the courses are assessed by a written examination. Currently, four courses are validated by MCQs and only one by an oral examination. In addition, the validation of some courses requires a defined personal contribution during the year (e.g., writing reports).

At the beginning of the academic year, the students are informed about the examination methods via e-mail and during an information session. In addition, all relevant information regarding the examinations is available on the website of the School of Biology<sup>51</sup> (Appendix 19), and the regulatory framework is available at<sup>52</sup> (Appendix 9).

### **STATUS AT UNINE**

UNINE has offered B-Pharm-1 courses for a century, and since the creation of ISPSO, UNINE has harmonized its B-Pharm-1 program accordingly, to match the academic requirements of UNIGE. Unlike UNIL, UNINE is not linked to UNIGE by a specific convention, but all pedagogic collaborations are regulated by the “*Triangle Azur*” agreement (Appendix 2).

The BPharm-1 program is placed under the responsibility of the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Science, and under the control of the Supervisory Commission for Pharmaceutical Studies, which is chaired by a Coordinator. These bodies answer to the Faculty Council as well as to the Rector’s Office.

### **Expert’s group assessment**

As mentioned under standard 2.01, the experts consider that the principle of constructive alignment is respected: after analysing the relevant documents, they note that the learning content, learning objectives and assessment methods are consistent. Following the on-site visit, they commend the wide range of assessment formats: these include formative assessments, such as reports on lab sessions and final individual assessments in the form of oral, written, practical or simulation exams, as well as summative assessments, such as oral examinations, a simulated objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) and written examinations. The experts appreciate that the assessments become more complex in line with students’ progress through their studies and therefore conclude positively on the exam methods. However, they determine a substantial improvement measure regarding the first year of the Bachelor’s programme: the exams must be aligned across the three participating sites – the Universities of Geneva, Lausanne and Neuchâtel – in terms of pass / fail criteria and conditions for retaking an exam, to ensure equality and fairness for all students, particularly since the first year involves strong student selection. The experts understand that, during the first year, students at the three sites do not have the same number of attempts, even for the common modules including identical exams, nor do they have equal options for compensation. They emphasise that the SPS, together with the two sites in Lausanne and Neuchâtel, must compare the current exam conditions at the three sites in order to establish ways of compensating for the aforementioned imbalances.

The experts add that the evaluation of the internships is based on specific objectives and evaluation criteria, namely a form completed by students and their internship supervisors. While they evaluate the existing procedure positively, they note that, based on the information obtained

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<sup>51</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/fbm/en/home/ressources/espaces/espace-interne-eb/bachelor.html#horaires-et-plans-d-etudes>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/fbm/en/home/menuinst/faculte/organisation/eb/reglements-et-directives.html>

during the on-site visit, the quality of supervision and the way in which the form is completed varies greatly between internships.

The experts emphasise that students are duly informed about the assessment forms and rules, thanks to communication at the beginning of the courses and on Moodle (education web platform). However, the experts recommend that students should always have the opportunity to review their exams and also be allowed to take notes, as this improves the learning process.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as partially fulfilled.

Condition 2:

The SPS, together with its partners at the Universities of Neuchâtel and Lausanne, ensures comparable exam conditions at all three sites during the first year of the Bachelor's programme, thereby offering all students equal opportunities.

Recommendation 1:

The expert group recommends that the SPS allows students to take notes during exam review sessions.

*Quality standard 2.08:*

*The admission requirements and the conditions for obtaining diplomas are regulated and published.*

*This standard aims to determine whether the conditions for admission and the acquisition of diplomas are proper and transparent.*

### **Description and self-assessment**

According to the law on medical training (MedPA), undergraduate education is under the supervision of the Universities. The studies are organized into Bachelor and Master programs. The university and faculty regulations set the enrolment conditions<sup>53</sup>. Foreign students must meet the conditions established by the Lisbon Convention<sup>54</sup>.

The absence of a pre-university selection is a strong point guaranteeing access to study at a Swiss university. The possibility to start BPharm-1 at either Geneva, Lausanne or Neuchâtel allows a facilitated access to the study of pharmaceutical sciences for local students. Admission requirements are regulated independently by the three universities. All three partner universities have well documented admission procedures and study regulations, which are available online.

The common courses given in Lausanne for the students coming from the three Universities allow all students to be treated equally. From the second year onwards, UNIGE promotion criteria apply.

The number of students must not be limited during the curriculum, given the favorable job market and, even more importantly, the national shortage of healthcare providers including pharmacists. However, as already mentioned in previous reports and considering the growing number of

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<sup>53</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/immatriculations/conditions>

<sup>54</sup> <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/165.htm>

students, SPS aims at obtaining substantially more resources from the Rectorate and the Faculty of Sciences to guarantee the same level and quality of training.

The training of foreign students and their return to their countries of origin constitutes a transfer of know-how that reinforces ties with Switzerland and its pharmaceutical industry. This contributes to the creation of a positive image of Switzerland abroad. But at the same time, it substantially decreases work forces for the Swiss healthcare system.

Good relations of SPS with student organizations and representatives of professional organizations are maintained at various levels.

### **STATUS AT UNIGE**

Students must apply for enrolment to the student office of the UNIGE ("*Espace administratif des étudiants*") before April 30<sup>th</sup> to begin studies in September (beginning of the academic year).

UNIGE does not have a pre-university selection process as a condition for enrolment into the pharmacy program. Thus, SPS has the legal responsibility to accommodate any student satisfying the enrolment conditions. Passage from year to year is based solely on academic criteria. The conditions for passing the examinations are clearly defined in the regulation of the Faculty of Sciences (Appendix 20) and the regulation of SPS (Appendix 04). This information is made available to students on the website<sup>55</sup>.

Students having already carried out studies considered as equivalent may not be required to complete certain modules or may be admitted into a higher study year upon examination of their previous curriculum by the "*Commission règlements et équivalences*" of SPS. Students having studied pharmacy/pharmaceutical sciences, but whose former studies cannot be considered as equivalent to the BPharm (e.g., certain pharmacists with diplomas not recognized by the Swiss Confederation) may be required to join the curriculum as from BPharm-2 or to complete the entire Bachelor before admission to the Master.

Students are informed of their examination results by the Faculty of Sciences. Any student excluded from a curriculum is informed by registered letter. The regulatory provisions in force at UNIGE guarantee that equal opportunities are granted as stated in the "*Loi sur l'université*" article 3 (Appendix 21).

### **Status at UNIL**

Admission conditions into BPharm-1 are defined by the admission conditions to the UNIL<sup>56</sup>.

Candidates holding a Swiss certificate of maturity or a foreign qualification considered to be equivalent have access to the BPharm-1 program.

### **Status at UNINE**

Admission to UNINE requires students to register with the UNINE Registration office before April 30<sup>th</sup> of the upcoming academic year. Students are then subject to UNINE admission requirements: details are outlined on the UNINE website<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/immatriculations/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/unil/en/home/menuinst/etudier/immatriculations-et-inscriptions.html>

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.unine.ch/unine/home/admission.html>

### Expert's group assessment

Based on the self-assessment and its appendices, the experts note that the admission and graduation requirements are set out in the study regulations of the Bachelor's and Master's programmes, as well as the related regulations of the Faculty of Sciences and the University of Geneva. These are published and known to the target audiences.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

## Area III: Implementation

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*Quality standard 3.01:*

*The study programme is conducted on a regular basis.*

*This standard evaluates whether the study programme is offered on a regular basis.*

### Description and self-assessment

The curriculum in pharmaceutical sciences is offered yearly and begins always with the Fall semester of the academic year.

In Western Switzerland, the entire curriculum (BPharm + MPharm) is offered only at UNIGE since 2004. However, UNIL and UNINE offer BPharm-1. Students having validated BPharm-1 in one of these universities will then be accepted in BPharm-2 at UNIGE. The terms of the collaboration between UNIGE, UNIL and UNINE are defined in the "*Triangle Azur*" agreement (Appendix 2).

This system, based on a 1<sup>st</sup> year Bachelor offered at three locations, facilitates access to university studies even for students with modest financial resources thanks to proximity factors. This can also facilitate their integration into academic life. Hence, the current accreditation will also cover the courses taught at these partner universities. The system proved to be very successful in maintaining the regularity of the offer. It requires, however, good coordination and governance in terms of logistics and educational objectives, which are provided.

### Expert's group assessment

Based on the self-assessment report and supporting documents, the experts note that the programme is delivered regularly and that its long-term implementation is assured.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

**Quality standard 3.02:**

*The available resources (supervision and material resources) allow students to achieve the learning objectives. The higher education institution shall set out how the number of students in all phases of the curriculum is determined and to what extent it is aligned with the capacity of the educational institution.*

*This standard aims to ensure that the higher education institution offering the programme provides it with the necessary material resources and supervision, at all stages of the programme.*

**Description and self-assessment**

SPS has the freedom to design the curriculum and to allocate the resources necessary for its implementation. The UNIGE statutes<sup>58</sup> (Appendix 21) and the State of Geneva guarantee the academic freedom of their staff in both teaching and scientific research.

**Supervision**

In 2024, all positions allocated to SPS by UNIGE (funding by the State of Geneva) were used for teaching according to the functions associated with the specific positions. This represents 25.7 FTE of academic staff (professors and intermediate teaching body) and 44.0 FTE assistants involved in supervising lab activities. In addition, the activities of faculty members from SPS have raised significant external funding that was used in large part to hire additional staff (23.8 FTE) to ensure the quality of the teaching (Appendix 22). External experts and volunteer professors join the team for specific teaching topics such as health policy, laws, team and budget management.

As detailed in Quality standard 4.02, there is no formal mechanism to evaluate student supervision. This is evaluated through a combination of mechanisms, including external peer review conducted by the SAB, feedback from students, and measurable outcomes such as student success rates, research productivity, external recognition (grants, collaborations, publications), achievement of strategic educational and research objectives. In addition, an annual report prepared by the research group leaders, highlighting key achievements, challenges, and planned improvements, serves as a basis for assessing the output of each group (Appendix 23; Appendix 24). The results of the common Swiss federal examination at the four university sites offer an external, objective measure of the teaching staff effectiveness in maintaining high educational standards.

The content of the lectures and lab sessions is frequently revised to provide students with up-to-date information on issues in pharmaceutical research and in pharmacy practice. All lectures and lab sessions are assessed yearly by the students; when a problem is identified, it is addressed by the presidency. The programs and assessments are discussed within the “*Commission enseignement*”, which provides a platform for dialogue with students. It also serves as a forum to address any issues that may arise. An expert in teaching from Teaching and Learning Service at UNIGE is part of the “*Commission enseignement*”. Issues related to regulations are dealt with by the “*Commission règlements et équivalences*”. Both commissions then report to the “*Collège des professeurs*”. Consistency with and integration into the Faculty educational practices is ensured by the presence of SPS President in the “*Conseil restreint de la Faculté*” and through participation of staff from SPS to the “*Conseil participatif de la Faculté*”. In addition to undergraduate education,

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<sup>58</sup> [http://www.geneve.ch/legislation/rsg/f/s/rsg\\_C1\\_30.html](http://www.geneve.ch/legislation/rsg/f/s/rsg_C1_30.html)

the teaching staff is also actively involved in the Ph.D. training curriculum and in postgraduate education (e.g. CAS).

Regarding professional internships, access to the necessary resources is under the responsibility of pharmaSuisse<sup>59</sup> (community pharmacy) and GSASA (hospital pharmacy). The quality criteria for the learning objectives are edited by the Universities in cooperation with pharmaSuisse and GSASA. The “*Commission romande pour la formation pratique*” (CRFP) is responsible for recruiting trainers in community pharmacy, for supporting the management of any problems between students and the host pharmacists. Each semester, SPS organizes a non-compulsory meeting with the internship supervisors, the CRFP delegate and the faculty members involved in the internship and in the Swiss federal exam to present the learning objectives, teaching methodology for internships and to answer questions. These encounters allow to strengthen the collaboration between SPS and pharmacists involved in finalizing the pregraduate education of the students. There are no teaching human resources available at SPS for professional internships (e.g. developing new teaching methods in professional context such as entrusted professional activities), despite them being an important way of learning and developing professional skills.

Community pharmacists must fulfill criteria to be certified and allowed to supervise a student during the internship in community pharmacy. They must: 1) hold a federal pharmacy degree or a foreign degree recognized by the Swiss Confederation, 2) have 2 years of professional experience in a community or hospital pharmacy (being employed at a minimum of 80% according to LAMal) and 3) have completed the half-day train-the-trainer course, which is mandatory if their federal pharmacy degree was completed before 2004 or if the pharmacist did not graduate in Switzerland; in all other cases, the training is optional. All learning objectives that must be achieved during the internship in terms of pharmaceutical care and recommended pharmaceutical preparations are provided via Moodle, assessed throughout the internship and validated by signature of both the student and the internship supervisor. This is important to mention that the host pharmacies accept students on a voluntary basis, as there are no financial incentives. They get five FPH credits per month of supervision through the professional organization for postgraduate education FPH<sup>60</sup>.

### **Student number**

As described in standard 2.08, BPharm-1 can be followed at UNIGE, UNIL or UNINE. The study program at those three universities is coordinated by SPS. There is no formal selection of students prior to their studies. Admission in BPharm-1 is governed independently by the regulations of each of the three partner universities, which also cover the validation of BPharm-1. Usually, students follow the rest of the curriculum at UNIGE.

The number of students is in accordance with the capacity of SPS at all stages of the curricula. Between 70 and 75% of students are female (Appendix 27)

SPS aims at offering high quality education to students enrolled in the study programs. Until today, no restrictions as on the number of students have been applied. Considering the aim of high-quality education and the allocated resources including budget and infrastructure, the training capacity reaches a maximum of 90-100 students per year. However, in BPharm-1, the total actual number of new students reaches 216. To achieve this maximal capacity: i) the academic and administrative staff is fully mobilized including teaching assistants paid by third parties, ii) the use

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<sup>59</sup> <https://pharmasuisse.org/fr/profession-et-formation/profession-de-pharmacienne/periode-dassistanat-dans-une-pharmacie>

<sup>60</sup> <https://fphch.org/fr/formation-continue>

of the infrastructure, in particular the teaching labs, is fully optimized iii) the privately managed community pharmacies acting as clinical training sites in all French-speaking Switzerland are involved.

Between 2018 and 2024, an average of 86 Master students graduated from SPS each year. There is a clear trend towards an increase in the number of students enrolled (Table 2). A study by pharmaSuisse into the projected evolution of pharmacist demographics in Switzerland over the next 5 years has shown that the number of retirements will exceed the number of new pharmacy graduates. Combined with the fact that the general (aging) population is increasing, there is a shortage of pharmacists and the number of pharmacy graduates will have to increase in the coming years. We expect that the limited number of working spaces available in the laboratories together with the manpower required to maintain a high-quality education will constitute a limiting factor.

**Table 2.** Number of students enrolled in the two curricula (BS and MS) at UNIGE for the years 2021-2023 (Appendix 27)

|          | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|----------|------|------|------|
| BACHELOR | 350  | 331  | 341  |
| MASTER   | 202  | 153  | 163  |

SPS endorses student mobility within Switzerland and abroad as a valuable means of extending the training of its students. To this end, SPS takes part in the Swiss-European Mobility Program (SEMP)<sup>61</sup>. Student exchanges with Swiss universities (ETHZ and the Universities of Basel and Bern) or universities abroad (subject to strict limitations) are principally possible for the individual research project during MPharm-2. If an international exchange was to take place at another time of the program, the fulfilment of the learning objectives according to SCLO can no longer be guaranteed, due to the very varying structures of curricula at European universities. Consequently, the student would have to complete the semester/year upon return.

Details of the regulations governing acceptance and participation in the international exchange programs at the level of SPS, as well as transfer of credit points are detailed in the Swiss-European Mobility Program<sup>62</sup>. Regulations governing the exchange with Swiss universities are detailed at the level of UNIGE and are applied by SPS. Outgoing students can apply for a grant covering additional expenses at the receiving university. Practical aspects of these programs are dealt with by the UNIGE International Relations Office<sup>63</sup> in coordination with SPS personnel and faculty.

Since the last evaluation, the number of our students willing to perform their Master thesis or internship abroad has increased. We are now sending about 10 students per year to academic institutions in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, The Netherlands, UK, and USA. The feedback received by both the students and the host institutions is very positive and thus encourages us to maintain this unique opportunity to our students.

Every year SPS accepts several incoming students from SEMP contract partners. The incoming students present a study plan, which must be endorsed by the person responsible for exchange

<sup>61</sup> <https://erasmusgeneration.org/mobility/swiss-european-mobility-programme-semb>

<sup>62</sup> <https://movetia.ch/fr/conseil/aide-et-informations-au-sujet-des-offres-de-soutien/planifier-un-projet/swiss-european-mobility-programme--2>

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/international/>

programs at SPS. SPS accepts 1-2 incoming Erasmus students per group and academic year wishing to perform their individual research projects in MPharm-2 at UNIGE. Students participate in lectures and lab sessions alongside their Geneva colleagues. In the case of individual research projects, the incoming students receive daily supervision by a Ph.D. student or post-doctoral fellow under the guidance of a faculty member of the receiving group.

### Status at UNIL

The number of students enrolled in the 1st year has slightly increased over the past years (Table 3). More details on the student repartition at UNIL can be found in Appendix 28.

**Table 3.** Evolution of student numbers in the UNIL BPharm-1 program, for the years 2018-19 to 2024-25 (situation on October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year)

|                             | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| NUMBER OF ENROLLED STUDENTS | 63      | 67      | 58      | 66      | 78      | 70      | 80      |

### Status at UNINE

The number of 1<sup>st</sup> year students in pharmaceutical studies is presented in Table 4, with approximately 75% of women (Appendix 29).

**Table 4.** Students enrolled in BPharm-1 at UNINE (on September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year)

|                             | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| NUMBER OF ENROLLED STUDENTS | 23      | 19      | 32      | 39      | 36      | 31      | 28      |

### Budget

The budget of SPS has been determined by the Faculty of Sciences based on student numbers in 2004, the year that EPGL was established. Although the number of students has risen by 167%, from 302 students enrolled at the SPS for the academic year 2010-2011 to 504 in 2023, the budget has not increased. SPS has currently a total budget (all numbers as of 2024) of 14.6M CHF from public (~ 66%) and third-party funding (~ 34%) (Appendix 24). This budget includes the UNIL contribution (~ 5M CHF) according to the convention of the transfer of the School of Pharmacy from the Faculty of Sciences at UNIL to UNIGE (Appendix 1). It must be underlined that the SPS was able to acquire third party funding (e.g., 7.6M CHF in 2024) through its research activities from national and international granting agencies including Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF), Swiss confederation (art. 15), European Commission, NIH as well as collaboration with the industry. The proportion of this third-party funding has drastically risen since the creation of SPS. Thus, teaching activities benefit largely from both public and private fundings.

This clearly shows the imbalance between the number of students and the allocated budget that may impact on the quality of the teaching program. Hiring additional staff using external research funding helps counterbalance the ratio between teaching staff and students. However, the number of FTEs and the budget do not keep up with the significant increase in student numbers both at the Bachelor, Master and Ph.D. levels and are now largely insufficient (Appendix 5a; Appendix 5b). Indeed, the total number of FTEs is constantly decreasing: 124.9 in 2021, 119.6 in

2022 and 118 in 2023. The financial sources and all conditions linked to financing are transparent and do not hinder the autonomy of the academic unit to make decisions concerning teaching and research. On average, a substantial fraction (~ 40%) of the budget is devoted to teaching, according to the terms and conditions of the individual contracts of the academic (ranging from teaching assistants to full professors) and technical staff regardless of the source of financing. Furthermore, external funding allows SPS to renew or maintain laboratory equipment for the benefit of student training and research activities.

### **Status at UNIL**

The School of Biology at the University of Lausanne has a policy allowing its study programs and the allocation of necessary resources to be organized. No special budget is allocated for the BPharm-1 program. The School of Biology and departments of UNIL and EPFL involved in the teaching for the BPharm-1 program contribute to the financial resources.

The curriculum is tightly defined by the objectives. The School of Biology applies the same high-quality standards to this program as to its other programs. The designated head of the BPharm-1 program, together with the curricular oversight committee, and the pedagogical team of the School of Biology are responsible for the quality of the program.

### **Status at UNINE**

The Faculty of Sciences accepts the constraints imposed by the current context of the BPharm-1 program and its commitments to ISPSO. UNINE has established its curriculum in pharmaceutical sciences so that it corresponds at best to the requirements of ISPSO, allowing for an accreditation process in agreement with UNIGE.

If the BPharm-1 has endured at UNINE, it is due to the high quality of the Faculty's science courses, corresponding well to the expectations for basic studies in the pharmaceutical program. Furthermore, the favorable support and attractiveness of an optimally sized Faculty are known criteria that the students living in the region want to benefit from.

The budget of the BPharm-1 is an integral part of the budget at the Faculty's level (Appendix 25). Currently, neither the Faculty nor the Supervisory Commission possesses clearly defined allocations regarding the financing of the BPharm-1 program. However, the Commission can make suggestions to the Dean's Office for the allocation of new financial resources to this program if needed.

The Faculty of Sciences manages its activities based on a budget allocated to it on an annual basis by the Rector's Office. This budget is then divided by the Dean's Office and distributed to the institutes to guarantee their proper function. For the academic years 2015-2023, an estimated budget of salaries and running costs (BSM = **Biens – Services – Marchandises**) allocated to BPharm-1 is enclosed (Appendix 25).

### **Infrastructure**

SPS took the opportunity, when moving into the new CMU building in 2016, to invest in new state-of-the-art infrastructures, such as practical training rooms and simulation labs. This one-site configuration is a good opportunity for improving the students learning experience and the scientific collaboration between scientists, as well as healthcare professionals from the Faculty of Medicine, the University Hospitals of Geneva (HUG) and the University of Applied Sciences in Health.

The teaching rooms used by SPS and managed at the level of the Faculty of Sciences and Medicine are, however, still spread over several sites. Classes for BPharm-1 are taught in several

buildings: Sciences II (Quai Ernest-Ansermet), Sciences III (Boulevard-d'Yvoy), Ecole de Physique (Boulevard d'Yvoy) and CMU (Rue Michel-Servet). From BPharm-2 to MPharm1, almost all courses and practical sessions are taught at the CMU. The different premises are readily adaptable to different teaching methods.

Various auditoriums with seating capacities for 50 to 400 people are available in several buildings for frontal teaching. This is sufficient for hosting the current student cohorts, hence allowing *ex cathedra* lectures to take place in a single room. At CMU, SPS shares the teaching facilities with the Faculty of Medicine (auditoriums, small teaching rooms). The small rooms (10 to 30 seats) are available for work in small groups, seminars, optional classes and tutorials. Some of these rooms are also available to individual students for their personal work. Moreover, since the COVID pandemic, *ex cathedra* lectures are recorded and made available to students for the entire academic year. These recordings are useful for students who want to improve their understanding of the teaching, or for those who are absent from class (e.g. illness). Conversely, there has been a drastic drop in in-person attendance, which is a cause for concern and a reason to consider reforming the teaching methods.

As previously mentioned, the curriculum contains many laboratory sessions. The lab space represents a bottleneck due to the specific requirements for each course. Five main labs are available at the CMU, covering 1300 m<sup>2</sup> and providing 250 working spaces. Three Teach-labs with a total of 140 working spaces are available to students, each equipped with a PC for specific teaching and exams requiring computer access. One of them is available to students for their personal work. Due to the increasing number of students, the use of those rooms needs to be carefully managed. Indeed, SPS is already experiencing constraints regarding accommodating all enrolled students in the teaching labs. SPS is continuously striving to update and improve the lab equipment used for student training, relying heavily on the equipment available in research groups. The research internship in MPharm-2 is conducted within the different research units (total research space amounts to 800 m<sup>2</sup>).

A library is located in the CMU building. It has rooms for work in small groups or collaborative work, individual workspaces, and PCs. It enables students to perform literature search, access to electronic databases, scientific journals (>1800 journals) and textbooks. Most of the resources are also available online.

Upon enrolment, students are given a University account giving them access to e-mail, inter/intranet, data storage facilities and software. This also allows free-of-charge access to the web through Swisscom hotspots in Switzerland by VPN (virtual private network). The “*Division Informatique*” (DINF) at UNIGE provides software for students<sup>64</sup>. Numerous IT services for students are also available on the following website<sup>65</sup>.

SPS<sup>66</sup> and the Faculty of Sciences use different platforms to organize the curriculum, timetables, to publish the examination results, to distribute the course materials and to manage training and collaboration activities online. The Moodle e-learning platform (moodle.unige.ch) is used by most teaching staff.

### **Status at UNIL**

The classes for BPharm-1 students are held in essentially two different lecture halls on the Dorigny campus of UNIL and at the EPFL. The planning (Appendix 26) is done in collaboration with the service “Unibat”, which is responsible for the attribution of lecture halls. With the increase

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<sup>64</sup> <https://ciel.unige.ch/2011/10/gdl-etugd/>

<sup>65</sup> <https://catalogue-si.unige.ch/>

<sup>66</sup> <https://ispso.unige.ch/ispso/index.php>

in student numbers, it will be necessary to be very attentive, to make sure that the conditions for the practical work of the BPharm-1 program will remain optimal.

The students have access to fully equipped libraries (*"Bibliothèque Cantonale Universitaire"* at UNIL and *"Learning Centre"* at EPFL). They have free access to computers and a quota for printing a certain number of pages on available printers. The campus of Dorigny offers wireless intranet/internet access.

In terms of IT infrastructure, BPharm-1 students are given a university account (e-mail, internet, data storage and access to software tools). BPharm-1 students must be equipped with a laptop computer. If a student does not have a suitable computer and cannot afford one, the School of Biology can lend him one to help with her/his studies, during academic periods.

SPS IT department has created an internal procedure to provide BPharm-1 students with the same access to the Teachlab facilities and logistics from their personal computers. Furthermore, the same curriculum as the one in Geneva in terms of informatics is provided to these students.

The School of Biology uses the UNIL platform SylviaAcad, to organize the curriculum and to publish the examination results. The students have access via the interface "MyUnil" to their schedules, course descriptions, and academic records. In addition, the platform Moodle is used by most of the teachers to provide the course materials, manage training and exchange with students.

The School of Biology provides detailed and regularly updated information about the content of courses, timetables, etc. on its website<sup>67</sup>.

The policies concerning the integration of e-learning in teaching are supported by the CSE (*"Centre de soutien à l'enseignement"*) and defined on the following website<sup>68</sup>.

### **Status at UNINE**

The premises of the Faculty of Sciences are grouped together in a single location, the UniMail campus. The premises and infrastructures are appropriate, with lecture halls of different sizes, several teaching rooms for laboratory, and computer rooms accessible to students. The classrooms and lecture halls are all equipped with computers and beamers. The entire UniMail campus offers wireless Intranet/Internet access.

The library is situated at UniMail. It contains an extensive body of specialized work (biology, chemistry, physics, medicine, mathematics) and provides access to electronic journals. The library is maintained by several librarians. The cafeterias and numerous study areas on various floors allow students to meet and work in a friendly environment.

The BPharm-1 program makes use of all computer technology tools common to the University. The Information Technology Service at UNINE (SITEL) provides software and hardware computer resources, ensures security and technical support for all the university community, and provides training for users. Each registered student is provided with a university account (email, internet, data storage and access to software tools on the PCs) and benefits from personalized support from SITEL.

E-Learning tools:

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<sup>67</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/fbm/en/home/ressources/espaces/espace-interne-eb.html>

<sup>68</sup> <https://fphch.org/fr/formation-continue>

- The “Moodle” e-learning platform adopted by UNINE is used by most teachers<sup>69</sup>. It allows for the creation of course spaces in which to store course material, manage training and collaboration activities online;
- administrative and professional tools;
- the “GEDE” (Gestion Electronique des Dossiers d’Etudiant-e-s) [*Electronic Management of the students files*] system combines all student registration files;
- the “IS-Academia” platform allows students to register for courses and exams online, providing personalized up-to-date access to their grades, printing transcripts and certificates<sup>70</sup>. This portal also includes the exams results posted by teachers;
- the “Pidho” portal posts course schedules by semester and program<sup>71</sup>;
- the “Course description” portal: each course is described. Students can access and print these descriptions;
- Swiss Virtual Campus (Lausanne-Genève-Neuchâtel-Fribourg), cours de “Chimie Générale”.

The expected increase in student numbers within the three sites is of concern. However, even though the space allocated to pharmaceutical sciences at the CMU is adapted to the number of students currently enrolled in pharmaceutical sciences curriculum, it is urgent that UNIGE carefully evaluates the needs for future expansion in line with the projected increase in student numbers. This could become an issue in terms of number of working space available in the laboratories, together with the manpower required to maintain a high-quality education, in the face of no budget increase being planned.

Regarding mobility, due to differences in academic curricula, national and international exchange of our students is only possible for the MPharm-2 individual research project.

### Expert’s group assessment

Based on the self-assessment report and its appendices, and the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts note that there is no restriction on the number of students. They point out that, from the second year onwards, that the number of students is determined by the capacity and resources of the SPS, with an absolute maximum of 110 to 120. Unfortunately, this does not align with the sector’s needs, particularly given the shortage of pharmacists in Switzerland. The experts note that the number of students entering the first year is rather high, and, based on information obtained during the on-site visit, conclude that, although the SPS discusses the option of introducing a *numerus clausus*, a selection process from the first to the second year that guarantees equal opportunities is required, referring to condition 2 within standard 2.07.

The experts consider the infrastructure – including IT resources, teaching rooms, auditoriums, a library, individual workplaces and the clinical training infrastructure at the University Medical Center (CMU), such as simulation and training laboratories and practical training rooms – to be well suited to the programme’s needs, except for the fact that the CMU’s laboratory infrastructure is already reaching its capacity. Overall, all stakeholders of the programme evaluate the

<sup>69</sup> <https://moodle.unine.ch/login/index.php>

<sup>70</sup> [https://www-academia.unine.ch/imoniteur\\_pbol/!logins.htm?ww\\_x\\_urlAppelant=gestac.htm](https://www-academia.unine.ch/imoniteur_pbol/!logins.htm?ww_x_urlAppelant=gestac.htm)

<sup>71</sup> <https://planif.unine.ch/pidho/>

infrastructure positively, as the experts learn during the on-site visit. However, the experts observe that, despite a significant rise in student numbers, the SPS's budget, based on student numbers from 2004 (the programme's first operational year), has not increased. They acknowledge the SPS' efforts to increase financial resources, but emphasise that "cross-funding" additional teaching personnel through third-party funding acquired by the SPS for its research activities is not a sustainable way of responding to increased student numbers and ensuring adequate supervision of students. Therefore, the experts conclude that the financial and teaching resources must be adapted to the increased number of students, bearing in mind the conditions that will arise in the programme in the coming years due to the retirement of approximately half of the SPS professors within the upcoming accreditation period. The experts consider maintaining quality during this generational shift to be a huge challenge, and emphasise the importance of a more detailed succession strategy that addresses crucial elements such as financing, facilities and endowment arrangements. However, based on the self-assessment report and its annexes, as well as the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts do not have sufficient evidence to evaluate the concrete succession plans and their implementation. They further emphasise that the University of Geneva must allocate more resources, in particular personnel for teaching and supervision, as well as laboratory spaces, so that the SPS can maintain the quality of its teaching, supervision and practical training opportunities. The experts add that the planned increase in study places, in order to respond to the growing demand for pharmacists, will be even less adequately covered by the current financial conditions, and therefore reiterate the need for additional financial allocation by the University of Geneva.

Regarding student support, the experts consider the available resources to be adequate and welcome the various support measures (at administrative and organisational levels). For instance, the student administration office of the SPS, comprising two full-time equivalents, handles student enquiries, while a student counsellor assists with curriculum-related queries.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as partially fulfilled.

Condition 3:

The University of Geneva allocates sufficient financial and personnel resources to its study programme in Pharmaceutical Sciences in alignment with the number of students, enabling the SPS to support students' learning pathways with adequate laboratory infrastructure, teaching and supervision in the long term.

*Quality standard 3.03:*

*The teaching staff has competences that correspond to the specifics of the study programme and its objectives.*

*This standard aims at the scientific, technical and didactic competences of the lecturers of the study programme, and their adjustment to the special features of the study programme already described.*

### **Description and self-assessment**

Faculty recruitment is based on the strategic plan of SPS. Scientists are hired based on both research and teaching expertise/excellence since SPS provides research-based teaching for the entire study curriculum. Recruitment follows the rules and guidelines of UNIGE. The composition

of the nomination/promotion committee considers the balance between faculty members, mid-level staff and students. Regular evaluations of each person are performed according to the rules of the University.

The Faculty of Sciences has defined staff selection criteria, which take into account performance in science, teaching and/or patient related activities, as well as the demands of the mission statement of the institution, economic considerations, and further issues.

The faculty members of SPS consist of full, associate and assistant professors. The mid-level staff consists of senior lecturers (*"Maitre d'Enseignement et de Recherche"*, MER), teaching associates (*"Chargé d'Enseignement"*, CE), assistant lecturers (*"Maître assistant"*, MA) and assistants (Ph.D. students and postdocs). According to an internal rule of SPS, all Ph.D. students and post-docs have teaching duties within SPS, being primarily involved in laboratory sessions and the daily supervision of Master theses. This strongly enhances the teaching capacity of SPS. High quality candidates with a Master in Pharmaceutical Sciences/Pharmacy are given priority during the Ph.D. student selection procedure to ensure quality of training. Ph.D. students are either directly enrolled by the research units or through recruitment organized by the Ph.D. School in Life Sciences (PSLS). Other persons involved in teaching are Privat docents (PD) and lecturers (CC *"Chargé de Cours"*). CE and CC have mainly teaching duties, their functions and activities being defined by the responsible professors in their job description (*"cahier des charges"*). This is complemented by PDs, who are holders of a Ph.D. degree, who have passed a habilitation procedure and who give courses on a voluntary basis. SPS selects PDs according to their teaching projects.

The entire academic staff involved in teaching at SPS comprises more than 180 persons (93.5 FTE) (Appendix 22; Appendix 24). In addition, some of the patient-oriented courses are given by external professionals hired by SPS on an hourly contract basis.

The proportion of teaching load, research activities, administrative tasks and responsibilities is clearly defined by the regulations applied by UNIGE (Appendix 30). Most teaching staff have both teaching and research activities.

Each academic position is periodically assessed before renewal and therefore none of the positions is permanent. The duration of the assessment period ranges from one to seven years and depends on the level of the individual position. The first term is generally subject to a probationary assessment<sup>72</sup>. For Professors and MERs, the renewal is based on a report including research, teaching, outreach and administrative activities provided by the faculty member. This report is examined by decision-making bodies (depending on the academic level) and an assessment interview is conducted. For the rest of the academic staff, a written evaluation, following an interview by the professor responsible for the person, is made. These evaluations are validated through SPS presidency and sent to the Rectorate. The final decisions concerning Professor, MER, CE and CC positions are also submitted for approval by the participative council of the Faculty (*"Conseil participatif de la Faculté"*), where academic staff at all levels are represented.

SPS is engaged in a systematic process of teaching quality evaluation supported by the Teaching and Learning Service and ADEVEN (*"Service d'Aide au Développement de l'Evaluation de l'Enseignement"*), which was implemented in 1999<sup>73</sup>. Questionnaires corresponding to each teaching module are automatically sent to all students as set at the institutional level. This is set

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<sup>72</sup> <https://memento.unige.ch/doc/0170>

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/sea/enseignement/evaluation-des-enseignements/formation-base>

at the Bachelor and Master levels, as well as for post-graduate education. Each teacher is evaluated, irrespective of their position. This contributes to the overall quality of teaching.

Training in community pharmacy is under the responsibility of SPS but the regional surveillance committees of pharmaSuisse are responsible for the quality of practical training in community pharmacy. pharmaSuisse has delegated these tasks to the Working Group “*Assistanat et stage d’initiation*” (AGAF). AGAF is composed of the five regional surveillance committees, the Swiss Association of Pharmacy Students (asep) and GSASA.

The teaching is supported by sufficient administrative staff ensuring the organizational implementation of the study program and guarantees efficient resource management. The administrative staff of SPS (11.6 FTE) provides on one side a centralized service at the level of SPS and on the other consists of support to the different research units (Appendix 22). The SPS administrator supervises their activities and ensures the correct attribution of tasks.

The student administration office (2 FTE) is available to answer questions and queries from students, keep student files up to date, as well as provide general information to students and teaching staff. The office is responsible for BPharm-2 to MPharm-1 class schedule and the organization of the exams, including the Swiss federal exam for the students from UNIGE. In addition, the student counselor helps students with specific questions regarding their curriculum, coordinates student mobility programs and proposes equivalences for students coming from a university outside of Switzerland. All these tasks are performed in coordination with the administrative office of the Faculty of Sciences.

### **Status at UNIL**

At UNIL, the hiring of academic personnel is governed by a number of legal directives in relation to the status of the position concerned, and BPharm-1 conforms with these regulations. All legal directives in force can be found online on the UNIL Human Resources website<sup>74</sup>.

Hiring and contract renewal is based on the three domains research, teaching and administration. A job description (“*cahier des charges*”) listing the tasks in these three domains is an integral part of the contract. The teaching staff has an initial probationary period of 2 years, and thereafter the contracts are renewed every 6 years. In relation to contract renewal, the Dean's office submits its proposals to the UNIL-CHUV-Unisanté Board of Managers for a decision. At the end of this procedure, the term of office is renewed if the assessment is satisfactory. If this is not the case, objectives and deadlines are set with the staff member concerned.

The teaching staff of the School of Biology, composed of experts for the aspects of pedagogy and organization, is instrumental in the planning of the BPharm-1 program and for the learning and assessment methods (see 2.3). The BPharm-1 program benefits from a variety of measures implemented by the Education Support Centre of UNIL (CSE<sup>75</sup>) (Appendix 31) such as pedagogic support, curriculum evaluation and teaching evaluation. The “*Fonds d’Innovation pédagogique*” (FIP<sup>76</sup>) conducts specific projects aiming at developing and introducing new teaching methods.

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<sup>74</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/unil/fr/home/menuinst/universite/organisation-universite/unites-et-services/service-ressources-humaines.html>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/unil/fr/home/menuinst/universite/organisation-universite/unites-et-services/centre-de-soutien-enseignement.html>

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/unil/en/home/menuinst/universite/organisation-universite/fonds-et-fondations-hebergees-a-la-direction/fonds-impulsion-pedagogique.html>

The administrative staff consists of two pedagogical advisors responsible for student affairs, study plans and timetables, examinations, computer infrastructure, and assistance to the director. The staff is presented on the following web page<sup>77</sup> (Appendix 32).

### **Status at UNINE**

At UNINE, the hiring of academic personnel is governed by a number of legal directives in relation to the status of the position concerned, and BPharm-1 conforms to these regulations. All legal directives in force can be found online on the UNINE Legal Services website<sup>78</sup>.

The Faculty of Sciences comprises professors and scientists that are attached to one of the 7 institutes. Appointment of faculty members is regulated by the UNINE procedures<sup>79</sup>. They outline the appointment procedure for full professors, tenure track, and assistant professors. These regulations clearly establish the procedures and directives to be followed, requiring that detailed specifications be stipulated for teaching tasks, research and management tasks of a professor position. Regulations also exist on the confirmation of professors to their positions, with an in-depth evaluation of their level of qualification performed after four years before their appointment is confirmed.

For teachers not belonging to the Faculty taking part in the pharmaceutical study program, their CVs and educational abilities are first evaluated by the President of the Supervisory Commission and the Dean, they are then appointed by the Rector's Office to the position of full or part-time lecturer, thus becoming member of the teaching staff.

To date, the teacher profiles at the Faculty have been defined in relation to the needs and goals of the institutes. To ensure that the appointments of professors teaching in the BPharm-1 program fully respect the interests of the program itself, it is crucial that a representative of the Supervisory Commission participates in future profiling and/or appointment commissions.

The quality of instruction is of great importance to the Faculty of Sciences. The BPharm-1 program benefits from a variety of measures aimed at developing educational practices. The teaching skills are evaluated during recruitment and then workshops are proposed by the Quality office within the "*Réseau Romand de Conseil, Formation et Evaluation*". Innovative teaching projects are financially supported, and remarkable educational involvement is awarded annually.

BPharm-1 is supported administratively by the Secretariat of the Faculty of Science (an assistant to the Dean, a Faculty technical coordinator and a Faculty study counselor).

### *Analysis and conclusion*

SPS can ensure that all the staff involved in the study program possesses the appropriate competences regarding its unique features and objectives. The actual teaching staff/student ratio is only adequate because of externally funded positions and the commitment of SPS that all Ph.D. students and post docs, regardless of funding sources, participate in the teaching of undergraduate students. An increase in the number of students without an increase in teaching staff will certainly affect the quality of the educational framework.

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<sup>77</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/fbm/fr/home/menuinst/faculte/organisation/eb/contact.html>

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.unine.ch/luniversite/organisation/secretariat-general/affaires-juridiques/>

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.unine.ch/luniversite/lois-et-reglements/>

### Expert's group assessment

Based on the self-assessment, its appendices, and the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts conclude that the teaching staff's skills correspond to the programme's objectives and specificities. They note that the members of the teaching staff (senior lecturers, teaching associates, assistant lecturers, assistants; full, associate and assistant professors) are competent in their field and establish links between teaching, research, practice and clinical work. Referring to the different research groups within the SPS, the experts determine that the teaching staff has a variety of speciality fields, contributing to the multidisciplinary of the curriculum. As highlighted under standard 3.02, the experts identified a shortage of teaching and supervision resources, particularly in view of the retirements of several professors. While the SPS provided a succession plan, the experts conclude that key structural aspects – including financing, facilities and endowment arrangements – were not yet sufficiently detailed, and no further concrete implementation strategy was presented during the on-site visit.

The experts deem the SPS's recruitment, personal assessment and promotion processes, based on its strategic plan and the University of Geneva's guidelines, to be adequate. They also positively highlight the teaching evaluation carried out by an internal service team of the University of Geneva (ADEVEN), as well as the training opportunities for teaching staff, which include a wide range of didactic programmes. Regarding the first year of the Bachelor's programme, the experts note that the Universities of Lausanne and Neuchâtel also have adequate teaching staff and associated processes.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

#### *Quality standard 3.04:*

*The educational institution pursues a sustainable junior staff policy, which includes education and training, development and assessment of the teaching staff. The criteria applied take into account both research performance and teaching qualifications.*

*This standard is again aimed at the teaching staff, this time the focus is on promoting young talent.*

### Description and self-assessment

SPS supports long-term merit-based career progression and promotion of young academic staff according to their chosen career pathway.

The staff has access to continuing education, career development opportunities, and appropriate counselling within the University.

The University ensures recognition of meritorious academic activities by allowing promotion of teaching staff in accordance to well-established rules included in the University laws (Appendix 21; Appendix 30). This merit-based recognition is consistent with an internationally recognised fair estimation of the value of the research performance and teaching qualifications.

Pedagogical training development and assessment of teachers is performed in collaboration with the pedagogic unit Teaching and Learning Service, which provides support and workshops. New teaching methodology in pharmacy practice is also inspired by the Centre of interprofessional simulation (CiS), the Medical Education Research and Development Unit (UDREM) of the Faculty

of Medicine at UNIGE and CidPharmef (e.g. simulation, virtual learning, entrustable professional activities). On the other hand, part of the training and development is ensured for all members of the teaching staff by actively being involved in research activities that includes attendance to conferences, workshops and seminars. In accordance with the University regulations, SPS applies a policy promoting lifelong learning of its personnel and the development of their professional skills. It is worth mentioning that the Ph.D. program in Pharmaceutical Sciences is a valuable means for the continuous education of lecturers. The quality of the Ph.D. program is continuously assessed by validation of detailed activity reports, annual reports and a complete assessment take place regularly following the CUSO<sup>80</sup> accreditation process.

### Expert's group assessment

Following their analysis of the self-assessment and the outcomes of the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts conclude that the SPS has implemented a sustainable junior staff policy, which includes education, continuing education, staff development and promotion, and staff evaluation. They note that the criteria for promotion and appointment are clearly defined in regulations and made transparent to staff.

The experts welcome the fact that teaching staff are encouraged to undertake continuing professional development, rather relying on their intrinsic motivation than obliging them. They also highlight the positive impact of the pedagogical training, development and assessment offered by the University of Geneva's teaching and learning service (ADEVEN). They also acknowledge that student evaluations of teaching and teachers identify areas for improvement and are considered when contracts are concluded or renewed. The experts acknowledge that junior staff (PhD students) must undertake continuing education totalling 30 ECTS credits, 6 of which must be for conferences, and that they have free access to a wide range of training courses on transferable skills, such as communication, presentation and writing skills or stress management, thanks to CUSO's (Conférence universitaire de Suisse occidentale) offer. In general, the experts note that only a very small percentage of graduates start a PhD and, as the reason for this seems unknown, the SPS could investigate this and promote this career path more.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as completely fulfilled.

## Area IV: Quality assurance

### *Quality standard 4.01:*

*The governance of the study programme takes into account the interests of the relevant stakeholders, and allows the necessary developments to be realised.*

*This standard focuses on the involvement of stakeholders. The persons concerned include, in particular, the students, but also, depending on the specifics of the programme, the mid-level faculty, the professors, the administrative and technical staff, as well as the external partners*

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<sup>80</sup> <https://www.cuso.ch/>

*such as the funding bodies, the alumni and the representatives of the world of work, professional associations, politics, civil society and all other interest groups.*

### **Description and self-assessment**

SPS ensures that all important stakeholders participate in the implementation of the quality process, including the students.

The mission statement and objectives regarding the pharmaceutical education of SPS are defined in collaboration with representatives of the principal stakeholders and other interested parties. They are regularly discussed at the APhWS national working group of pharmaSuisse, which includes representatives from the SPS and all other universities where pharmacy is taught, and representatives from the FOPH. Furthermore, the APhWS working group allows a national coordination in undergraduate education between the academic units (Basel, Berne, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Neuchâtel, Zurich), the Swiss Association of Pharmacy Students, FOPH and the professional associations and other interest groups (pharmaSuisse, GSIA and GSASA).

Input with regard to modification of the program comes from various sources including (i) evaluations by the students, obtained from ADEVEN, (ii) progress in pharmaceutical sciences in which faculty members from SPS are strongly involved, (iii) information on the socioeconomic and professional landscape in Switzerland, as provided by the substantial participation of community and clinical pharmacies, as well as industry representatives, (iv) adaptation of students' skill-sets through close cooperation with pharmaceutical organizations (pharmaSuisse, GSASA, GSIA, SAPHs), (v) involvement in the federal education platform for Pharmaceutical Sciences (APhWS national working group), (vi) feedback from pharmacy practice to pharmaceutical sciences by way of the continued postgraduate education program organized by SPS. All these procedures, however, are applied in accordance with SCLO.

All the updated information related to this matter is published on the website of FOPH<sup>81</sup>.

In practice such exchanges are managed as follows:

- Representatives of the SPS Teaching committee participate in a group set up by FOPH (the APhWS national working group) whose mission is to propose measures to improve or adapt the curriculum of pharmacist in order to fulfill the needs of the Swiss health care system as stated in the MedPA (Appendix 15a; Appendix 15b).
- A representative of the SPS Teaching committee participates in a group set up by the Swiss Federal Council (the Federal Commission for Pharmacy Examinations) whose mission is to define the objectives of pharmacy education in Switzerland (Appendix 15a; Appendix 15b) and ensures that core knowledge is revised and kept up-to-date with the latest scientific findings and standards of good practice through the active participation of the 4 universities and the national professional associations (pharmaSuisse, GSASA and GSIA<sup>82</sup>). The FOPH also has a representative at the Federal Commission who can convey parliamentary concerns with respect to the requirements of pharmaceutical training, and these can be discussed and acted upon.

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<sup>81</sup> <https://www.bag.admin.ch/fr>

<sup>82</sup> <http://www.gsia.ch/>

- SPS draws upon international developments in the field of pharmaceutical training through its participation in the FIP<sup>83</sup> (FIP Academic Institutional Membership<sup>84</sup>) and in the European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy (EAFP)<sup>85</sup>, as well as with its connections within the ULLA consortium. Furthermore, Unisanté is a member of Pharmaceutical Care Network Europe<sup>86</sup>.
- SPS maintains regular contacts with the local professional organizations (e.g., pharmaSuisse, Cantonal Pharmacist Associations, such as pharmaGenève and the “*Société Vaudoise de Pharmacie*”, Pharma industries and Biotechs).
- The Presidency and faculty members of SPS regularly participate in meetings of CidPharmef and lead working groups (e.g. interprofessional education and patient partnership, global pharmacy).

The Teaching Committee (“*Commission enseignement*”) has the responsibility for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Bachelor and Master programs on a regular basis. This includes the appropriate teaching and learning methods, evaluation of students, evaluation of the program and innovations in the curriculum. The results of the examinations are also used to assess and to improve the study program by focusing on the modules with high failure rates, analyzing the situation, and suggesting improvements. The “*Commission enseignement*” is composed of members of the teaching staff including Professors and MERs representing both pharmaceutical sciences and clinical pharmacy disciplines. The President of the SPS is invited to the meetings of the Committee. Members of the administrative staff involved with students and in schedule implementation are also represented. Student representatives are invited to participate with the exception of strategic discussion of particular concerns (Appendix 03a). The results of discussions within the “*Commission enseignement*” are submitted to the *Collège des Professeurs* of SPS that takes the decisions.

The study program is also evaluated using national standards via the Swiss federal examination that enables proper comparison between the four Swiss universities training pharmacists. The federal examination commission, which is composed of representatives from the four universities, health authorities (FOPH), and professional organizations (pharmaSuisse, GSASA, GSIA), evaluates the results and gives a feedback to the universities concerned (Appendix 33). Furthermore, information from this commission is transmitted to the working group APhWS that ensures a good link between the universities including Neuchâtel and Lausanne and the Swiss pharmacy student association (asep).

The Quality Charter is part of the general recommendations set by UNIGE (Appendix 34). It has a double objective: promoting, monitoring, and improving the quality of teaching, as well as assessing and developing the role of the teachers. SPS uses several tools to ensure the quality of studies and teacher performances, such as student evaluations of the teachers and courses, as well as ad hoc meetings between students and module teachers. Furthermore, discussions with the students are carried out at the level of the “*Commission enseignement*”.

At the end of the community pharmacy internship, students evaluate their internship learning experiences anonymously through an evaluation organized by ADEVEN. The results are

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<sup>83</sup> <http://aim.fip.org/>

<sup>84</sup> The FIP AIM is a Membership that allows Faculties and Schools of Pharmacy to become inter-connected on a global platform of discussion, leadership and shared challenges and successes. The FIP AIM focuses on the parallel evolution of Faculties and Schools of Pharmacy alongside the ongoing changes in pharmacy practice, science, research and their respective funding. These Academic Institutes are represented by their Deans, Vice Deans and other Decision Makers within the Membership activities such as online discussion platforms and the annual International Dean's Forum at the FIP Congress.

<sup>85</sup> <https://eafponline.eu/>

<sup>86</sup> <https://pcne.org/>

presented every year to the “*Commission enseignement*” and to the internship supervisors during biannual on-line meetings. Actions are then taken to improve the internship through close collaboration with internship supervisors.

Each course is evaluated on a regular basis by ADEVEN. The frequency of the evaluations is based on various criteria, such as the novelty of a course, the renewal of contracts for the teaching staff and the results of previous evaluations. Owing to the confidential character of these assessments, the SPS presidency first discusses directly with the teacher if an evaluation is considered insufficient. If there is then a need to modify the curriculum, this is transferred to the “*Commission enseignement*” for discussion. On the other hand, a direct discussion between the teacher and the students is conducted in all cases to indicate which changes will be implemented based on their feedback.

Modifications of the program based on feedback from both teachers and students or based on modification of SCLO are discussed at two levels: the “*Commission enseignement*” and the “*Commission règlements et équivalences*”. Both committees meet regularly and report to the “*Collège des Professeurs*”. This provides opportunities for discussion, covering both the general organization of the curriculum and the specific organization of the lectures, laboratory sessions and individual research projects. The resulting dossiers are discussed at the SPS level within the “*Conseil de Section*” and at the Faculty level within the “*Conseil participatif de la Faculté*” where students are represented and asked to validate these changes.

During the elaboration process, dossiers related to modifications that may affect UNIL and UNINE are discussed with either the responsible of the UNIL BPharm-1 program and the UNIL Curricular oversight committee or the Supervisory Commission for Pharmaceutical Studies at UNINE by the President of the “*Commission enseignement*”. In both cases the management of BPharm-1 is dependent on the study program management at both universities.

### **Status at UNIL**

Teaching evaluation is performed by the “Centre de soutien à l’enseignement” (CSE). The results of such evaluations are confidential and are only given to the teacher involved. However, these evaluations are part of the documents required for contract renewal of the teacher.

Since there were no major changes in the study program during the last years, the School of Biology has carried out curriculum evaluations of the BPharm-1 by the students in academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19. The report of these evaluations is available in Appendix 35. The aim of these reports is to inform teachers about the comments that students have formulated on their courses and to help the School of Biology to manage the study program by improving, for example, the coordination between teachers. Throughout the evaluation process, the anonymity of participating students is preserved.

EPFL teachers are also evaluated. Individual evaluation of a teacher’s performance is done if a problem is detected or on the initiative of the teacher. The information obtained is transmitted to the “*Commission for teaching in basic sciences EPFL-UNIL*”, which can intervene to propose improvements. Information obtained from these evaluation procedures is used to improve the study program.

### Status at UNINE

UNINE has instituted an evaluation procedure for its courses<sup>87</sup>. This evaluation process is one of the quality insurance aspects implemented at UNINE. However, having only the first year of BPharm-1 students, the study program is not evaluated.

Feedback provided by students is gathered through course evaluations, using questionnaires that each teacher can adapt in relation to his/her teaching procedures and training goals<sup>88</sup>. At the end of the semester, faculty members are encouraged to dedicate a discussion-assessment time with the students regarding the feedback gathered.

Feedback provided by BPharm-1 students is then submitted to the Dean of the Faculty of Science and the Supervisory Commission of the BPharm-1 program.

### Expert's group assessment

Based on the self-assessment report and its appendices, the experts note that the governance of the programme by the SPS's College of Professors as the decision-making body and the SPS's Teaching Committee (professors and senior lecturers, administrative staff) as the executive body ensures that the views of the key stakeholder groups are considered and that any necessary changes are made. Students are thus represented on the Teaching Committee (two representatives per year of study, elected by their peers), which analyses aspects of the programme such as student evaluations, teaching and learning methods, and examination results. This committee then suggests areas for development and innovation. They also acknowledge that students and the intermediate body are represented by two representatives each in the Section's Council, where issues concerning the programme's development are discussed. The experts point out that the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Geneva has a participatory council comprising professors (12 members), teaching and research staff (6 members), administrative and technical staff (3 members) and student representatives (6 members). This council approves proposals to amend the study regulations or plans and is involved in the electing senior faculty members such as the dean, vice-deans and other members of the dean's office. The experts recognize that administrative staff is also represented on the Regulations and Equivalencies Committee, where eventual modifications to the programme based on teachers and students feedback are discussed. Following the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts conclude that, with some exceptions, the various stakeholders feel listened to and that their input is valued. However, they also note that the various committees (for example the Teaching Committee or the Regulations and Equivalencies Committee) merely have a consultative role; they make suggestions to the College of Professors, which then makes the decisions. They therefore recommend that, to enable stakeholders to participate not only in discussions but also in decisions regarding the curriculum (teaching methods and content), the SPS should integrate its committees more actively into decision-making processes.

Finally, the experts further estimate that the various exchanges in which the SPS engages with national working groups, platforms, networking groups, associations relevant to the field and representatives of industry, the community and clinical pharmacies are useful for taking into account the perspectives and contributions of external stakeholders. They point out, by way of example, that the SPS integrated the scientific advisory board, which meets every two years, into

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<sup>87</sup> <https://www.unine.ch/sep/evaluation-des-enseignements/>

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.unine.ch/sep/evaluation-des-enseignements/>

the discussion of its last strategic plan. Furthermore, they commend the SPS's initiatives to build a community of practical trainers who supervise students during their internships, for example by inviting them to regular meetings – which, the experts suggest, could be made mandatory. The SPS could proactively contact former students working in community pharmacy to build up a pool of ambassadors for internship supervisors. These community pharmacists would already know the pharmacy programme and the requirements of the Swiss Federal Exam in Pharmacy and could promote their knowledge and experience within the community. Furthermore, pharmaSuisse may be able to provide additional support for this activity within the “Commission régionale” for the community pharmacy internship.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as largely fulfilled.

#### Recommendation 2:

The expert group recommends that the SPS actively involves its various committees in decision-making processes relating to the curriculum.

#### *Quality standard 4.02*

*The study programme is covered by the quality assurance system of the higher education institution or the other institution of the higher education sector.*

*The standard aims to link to the quality assurance system of the higher education institution offering the programme.*

#### **Description and self-assessment**

SPS implements procedures for the periodic reviewing and updating of its structure and functions by making use of quality assurance mechanisms (i.e., governance, production, evaluations, improvement) that monitor the study program and student progress, and ensure that weaknesses are identified and addressed.

The SPS study program possesses its own quality assurance, and is integrated in the global management of quality applied to programs and teaching by UNIGE<sup>89,90</sup>. Quality processes are also implemented at UNIL and UNINE; thus assuring the quality of BPharm-1 programs to be continuously monitored at the three partner universities.

As UNIGE is the institution delivering the final diploma, its quality assurance process will be described in more detail than those of UNIL or UNINE.

UNIGE has established a comprehensive strategic policy with embedded quality criteria, ensuring continuous renewal in its quality assurance process<sup>91</sup>. Moreover, robust ethical guidelines have been implemented<sup>92</sup>.

#### **STATUS AT UNIGE**

UNIGE employs a comprehensive quality approach for the evaluation of its study program. Quality is implemented by all stakeholders of the academic community, i.e. each member, each group,

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<sup>89</sup> <https://qualite.unige.ch>

<sup>90</sup> <https://view.genially.com/64a68626f9a5bd0012b8c7fa>

<sup>91</sup> <https://qualite.unige.ch/notre-engagement/politique>

<sup>92</sup> <https://qualite.unige.ch/notre-engagement/charte>

each structure, each direction in conducting their mission, attaining their objectives and delivering their services (Appendix 34).

To apply UNIGE Quality policy, the Rectorate is engaged in a systematic process of evaluation. Responsibility for Quality has been assigned to the Secretary-General of UNIGE. For implementing this process, the Secretary-General is supported by two specific operational instances: the Quality Assurance Office (BQ) and the Steering Committee for the Internal Control System and Major Institutional Risks.

The BQ, headed by the Secretary-General, is charged with defining and ensuring the implementation of an institutional quality policy. In this context, it is responsible for developing the whole assessment process. The BQ works closely with the Teaching and Learning Service ("*Pôle de soutien à l'enseignement et l'apprentissage*"), whose mission is to enhance educational quality through pedagogical consultation, thematic workshops, evaluation services, and research. The structure of this service is described here<sup>93</sup>.

All academic teaching bodies are represented in this BQ (two professors, two non-professorial academic staff, two students, the head of the Research Service, the director of the Division of Academic and Student Affairs (DIFE), the head of the Teaching and Learning Service, Academic Advisors and Assessment Coordinators for the programs, the director of the Centre for Continuing and Distance Education (CFCD), and the head of the Quality office of the CFCD).

#### *Teaching evaluation system*

UNIGE uses a systematic evaluation of teaching, which is conducted by ADEVEN, with the goal of improving the overall quality of teaching modules by tackling strengths and weaknesses of the programs; identifying and highlighting the high-quality courses or identifying problematic situations and improve them; measuring the impact of pedagogical innovations on the students and communicate them; determining the kind of support needed by the teachers to help them developing their teaching ability.

Each course is evaluated, whatever academic position of the teacher. The evaluation process and tools applied are partially standardized. It covers all teachings constituting the basic teaching program, as well as all post-graduate teaching modules. Within this evaluation process, teachers are encouraged to discuss the results with their students and with their hierarchy. In fact, the results of the evaluations are made available to department heads who are invited to discuss them with the teachers concerned. If necessary, measures may be taken to support the teachers to ensure quality and the professional development of teachers. On the other hand, teachers' feedback is acquired when the whole curriculum is evaluated. Since 2024, to address the workload associated with this systematic evaluation for students, the University Teaching Commission is in the process of reforming the evaluation system to make it more agile, user-friendly, and informative for both teachers and students.

If a thorough evaluation is necessary, ADEVEN proposes alternatives to the evaluation by the students (i.e. peers, focus groups, expert)<sup>94</sup>.

#### **STATUS AT UNIL**

UNIL considers the institutional accreditation as an integral part of its assurance system. The Swiss Accreditation Council accredited UNIL as a university under the LEHE (Loi sur l'encouragement et la coordination des hautes écoles) in June 2021.

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<sup>93</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/dife/enseigner-apprendre>

<sup>94</sup> <https://www.unige.ch/dife/enseigner-apprendre/soutien-enseignement/evaluer-son-enseignement/>

UNIL maintains an internal curriculum evaluation process for its Bachelor's and Master's programs. For the Pharmacy sector, the University considers the program national accreditation as equivalent to this internal evaluation and therefore does not require a separate review for the 1st year of pharmacy studies.

The evaluation of the first-year pharmacy curriculum at UNIL is instead conducted by the School of Biology. With support from the University Teaching Support Center, this evaluation is based on systematic student feedback<sup>95</sup>.

### **STATUS AT UNINE**

The University of Neuchâtel is accredited for the period 2021-2028 in accordance with the Federal Act on Higher Education Institutions. This means that the Swiss Accreditation Council certifies that it has a quality assurance system in place that guarantees:

- the quality of teaching, research, and services, and the appropriate qualifications of its staff;
- compliance with the admission requirements set out in the legislation (high school diploma or equivalent prior education);

The quality of teaching is assessed in terms of:

- the quality of teaching practices and knowledge assessment methods;
- the alignment of teaching objectives with the educational aims of the study programs;
- the complementarity of teaching methods (lectures, seminars, practical work, participation in research, e-learning, etc.);
- teaching and study conditions (equipment in classrooms and laboratories, reading and workspaces, documentary resources, IT tools and supports, etc.).

The UniNE Teaching Charter<sup>96</sup> explains the importance the University attaches to establishing a relationship of trust between students and teachers, as well as a mutual commitment that provides fertile ground for the continuous improvement of teaching quality.

The student evaluation of courses procedure<sup>97</sup> is implemented each semester for all courses. It is managed by the Teaching and Learning Service.

### **Expert's group assessment**

Based on the self-assessment report, its appendices, and the discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts note that the study programme is not subject to an additional internal evaluation process by the University of Geneva, since the latter recognises the current accreditation procedure under HEdA and MedPA as equivalent to the internal programme evaluation requirements.

The experts further note that the programme complies with the University of Geneva's teaching evaluation requirements, which are carried out by an internal service of the University of Geneva (ADEVEN). All courses and teachers are evaluated by students through anonymous annual

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<sup>95</sup> <https://www.unil.ch/unil/en/home/menuinst/universite/organisation-universite/unites-et-services/cellule-qualite.html>

<sup>96</sup> [https://www.unine.ch/qualite/wp-content/uploads/sites/59/UNINE\\_charte\\_pedagogique.pdf](https://www.unine.ch/qualite/wp-content/uploads/sites/59/UNINE_charte_pedagogique.pdf)

<sup>97</sup> [https://www.unine.ch/qualite/wp-content/uploads/sites/59/BQ\\_presentation\\_evaluation\\_enseignements\\_par\\_etudiant-e-s\\_2024.pdf](https://www.unine.ch/qualite/wp-content/uploads/sites/59/BQ_presentation_evaluation_enseignements_par_etudiant-e-s_2024.pdf)

surveys (created and sent by ADEVEN) containing rating questions and open questions. These results are discussed among the various teachers of a specific course. In the event of a poor evaluation, the Faculty of Sciences asks the President of SPS to discuss the evaluation with the relevant teacher and produce a report, which is sent to the Faculty. Following the on-site visit, the experts note that, in some cases, teachers responsible for the respective courses show students the measures taken in response to the previous year's evaluation results during the presentations on the first day of classes (in the following study year). Therefore, the experts emphasise the importance of systematically providing feedback to students in order to show them the effects of their evaluations and to encourage them to continue filling out the surveys. The experts also note that the response rates to these questionnaires are very low, and recommend that, to avoid evaluation fatigue amongst students, the SPS considers the frequency and timing of evaluations, as well as the length, themes and type of questions covered. In addition to the thereby identified improvements, the SPS should also collect feedback on exams. During the on-site visit, the experts learn about the planned reform of the University of Geneva's evaluation system and consider that the necessary measures from SPS could be implemented alongside this reform.

Additionally, the experts observe that students can express their feedback and queries to the Teaching Committee. They also note that an evaluation is carried out at the end of the community pharmacy internship, and that the results are presented to the Teaching Committee and the internship supervisors in online meetings twice a year.

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as largely fulfilled.

#### Recommendation 3:

The expert group recommends that the SPS firstly reviews the frequency and timing of module evaluations and the topics and questions covered, as well as the options for gathering feedback on the exams and presenting evaluation results to students systematically, and secondly implements the identified improvements in the context of the reform of the evaluation system planned by the University of Geneva.

#### Quality standard 4.03:

*The training institution regularly reviews the students' results (including at the federal examination) and documents the consequences derived from this for the study programme.*

*The standard focuses on the review of students' results on examinations, including the federal examination, and the conclusions drawn from them.*

#### Description and self-assessment

Student performances as well as success at the Swiss federal examination are considered as good indicators of the overall quality of the study program delivered by SPS.

The results of the examinations are used to assess and to improve the study program. They are discussed at the level of the "*Commission enseignement*" and reported to the "*Collège des Professeurs*" of SPS. In particular, SPS focuses on the modules that are determined as problematic, and recommendations are taken through the "*Commission de notes*".

SPS students need on average 6 semesters (results 2018-2024) for completing the Bachelor, while the Master is being completed within 4 semesters (5 for 2022, Appendix 27). The rate of

students passing from Bachelor to Master ranges between 92 and 97% for the years 2018 to 2024. SPS delivered 73 Bachelors in 2022, 86 in 2023 and 92 in 2024. Concerning the Master, the number of diplomas was 114, 69 and 80 for 2022, 2023 and 2024, respectively (Appendix 27).

The percentage of SPS Master awarded students who continue to pursuing a Ph.D. thesis at the SPS directly after their Master varies as follows: 23% in 2018, 9 % in 2019, 11% in 2020, 7% in 2021 and 2022, 3% in 2023, and 1% only in 2024 (Appendix 27). These figures do not consider SPS Master awarded students who decide to work a year or two before coming back to pursue a Ph.D. at SPS, or students going elsewhere to pursue a Ph.D. This also implies that the SPS Ph.D. program is attractive for international students.

### Swiss Federal exam results

Concerning the results at the Swiss federal examination, the following data were obtained for SPS for the years 2018-2024 (Table 5).

**Table 5.** *Swiss Federal exam results at SPS (years 2018-2024).*

| Year | # of candidates | # of individual exam | # of individual exam failed (%) |
|------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2018 | 84              | 252                  | 12 (5%)                         |
| 2019 | 73              | 219                  | 19 (9%)                         |
| 2020 | 81              | 243                  | 22 (9%)                         |
| 2021 | 100             | 300                  | 20 (7%)                         |
| 2022 | 140             | 420                  | 29 (7%)                         |
| 2023 | 85              | 255                  | 16 (6%)                         |
| 2024 | 92              | 276                  | 20 (7%)                         |
| 2025 | 98              | 294                  | 27 (9%)                         |

Between 5 and 9% of individual exam are failed for each session. The candidates have 3 attempts at succeeding at each exam. The success rate at SPS is comparable to the Swiss mean.

### STATUS AT UNIL

Meetings of the “*Commission Consultative des Etudiant·e·s*” (CCE) (2 per semester) provide an opportunity to discuss the general organisation of the year. The problems and issues are taken into account by the School of Biology, which proposes modifications of the study plan. Students of the following year receive a feedback, specifying the main issues identified and the proposed amendments. In addition, every 4-5 years, feedback from students is requested by the School of Biology using an online survey. These data are analyzed and used in order to improve the quality of the study program. Since the academic year 2010-11, the Curricular oversight committee (Appendix 36) is in charge of collaborating with the School of Biology to improve the curriculum.

The success rate of students at the end of BPharm-1 at UNIL is around 50 % (Appendix 37).

### Status at UNINE

The success rate of students at the end of BPharm-1 at UNINE is around 42 % in average (Appendix 29).

### **Expert's group assessment**

Based on the self-assessment and discussions held during the on-site visit, the experts note that examination results, and thus student performance, are subject to analysis and quality assurance measures: student's results, including those of federal examinations, are discussed within the Teaching Committee and reported to the College of Professors. Exam questions and results are also discussed amongst the teachers of a course (most courses involve several teachers). The experts further explain that these discussions enable the identification of consequences for poor results, but they perceive this approach as being mostly quantitative. They emphasise the importance of qualitative aspects, given that the SPS does not evaluate students' exams. As mentioned under the previous standard, they recommend collecting systematic feedback on the assessments (see standard 4.02 with recommendation 3).

The expert group evaluates the quality standard as largely fulfilled.

## 4. Action plan for the further development of the study programme and its quality assurance system

Here are summarized the strengths and the points to be improved, which were identified by the experts in 2019, as well as those which emerged during the past 6 years, for each partner university when applicable. These points are presented according to the four areas, taking into consideration the analysis of each standard.

### AREA 1: EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

| STRONG POINTS SPS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SPS takes an active role in communicating its mission and objectives to prospective students via presentations carried out during information days organized by UNIGE.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| SPS is integrated into local, national and international networks of academic institutions and has contacts with relevant leading international organizations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| SPS has strong relationships with pharmaceutical companies, which enables it to keep up to date with current pharmaceutical research in an industrial environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| SPS is a pharmaceutical academic school with the major disciplines represented. SPS offers students quality training based on its cutting-edge research and state-of-the-art equipment. A considerable proportion of time is devoted to practical training mainly in lab sessions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| SPS has a Ph.D. program that is mandatory for graduate students and aims at broadening the training of young scientists. The program offers a wide variety of courses given mainly in English. The SPS doctoral program was integrated into the new Ph.D. School of Life Sciences (PSLS) that was created by the Faculties of Medicine and Sciences in 2018. About half of the Ph.D. students of the Faculty of Sciences part of the PSLS come from SPS. Furthermore, the PSLS organization was largely based on the doctoral program previously run by SPS. |
| Three compulsory interprofessional modules were introduced in the curriculum for BPharm-2, MPharm-1 and MPharm-2 students. This contributes to a better understanding of the role of each healthcare professional and to recognizing each of them as essential and complementary partners.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| The move of SPS to the CMU building in 2016 and its integration into the medical campus improved the collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine in terms of research and teaching. Students benefit now from several courses common to medical and pharmacy students.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| The pharmaceutical sciences curriculum has recently undergone a complete overhaul to match the MedPA. Some further adaptations were then performed based on faculty member and student comments.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| POINTS TO BE IMPROVED SPS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | POSSIBLE ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SPS grants pharmaSuisse the responsibility of managing the community pharmacy trainers for the 20-week internship in pharmacy. A SPS faculty member validates the internship report filled in by each student and their internship supervisor to deliver the ECTS credits. | A better follow up of the internship in community pharmacy would increase the quality of the learning experience. However, SPS does not have the human resources for fulfilling this objective. More support is needed and has been asked to the government in 2023 without success |

## AREA 2: CONCEPTION, ARCHITECTURE AND STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

| STRONG POINTS SPS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BPharm-1 students from UNIGE, UNINE and UNIL meet once a week throughout the entire year for the classes "Drugs & Society Module I" and "Pharmaceutical Sciences" given in Lausanne. This introduces students to pharmaceutical sciences, and the teaching is common to all BPharm-1 training sites.         |
| The relations between the three partner Universities involved in BPharm-1 teaching are excellent and lead to a coordinated teaching program with common learning objectives on the three sites.                                                                                                              |
| SPS has an attractive and well-balanced program, which gradually builds from fundamental and pharmaceutical sciences to patient- and health-oriented training throughout the curriculum. This enables students to acquire the necessary abilities to practice pharmacy.                                      |
| The number of students willing to perform their master thesis or internship abroad has vastly increased.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| SPS implemented the practical aspects of vaccination in collaboration with the University of Applied Sciences in Health (HEdS). According to some cantonal legislations, students are now allowed to vaccinate patients under supervision during their internship in community pharmacy (e.g. Geneva, Vaud). |
| Classes on global pharmacy were introduced. This prepares students to operate ethically and effectively in a globalized healthcare system by addressing health inequities, international drug regulation, cultural competence, and global public health challenges.                                          |
| Various uses of IA are addressed along the curriculum. Students are thus made aware of both opportunities but also of ethical, social and practical challenges that must be carefully managed.                                                                                                               |
| Non-drug therapies are addressed in <i>Drugs &amp; Society 3</i> where health prevention and promotion aspects are taught.                                                                                                                                                                                   |

UNGE and the University of Applied Sciences in Health (HEdS) have built a strong curriculum in interprofessionality. SPS joined it as a partner in teaching in 2019. Interprofessional education is mandatory for all the students in pharmacy as it is for all the students in medicine and from HEdS.

#### **STRONG POINTS UNIL**

The BPharm-1 program is governed by a curricular oversight committee with a designated person responsible for pharmaceutical sciences. The mission is to ensure high quality and coherent teaching according to the learning objectives and to coordinate with the Teaching committee of UNIGE. It is important that the person responsible for pharmaceutical sciences has a pharmaceutical background.

The courses of the BPharm-1 program are given by faculty members of two different universities, UNIL and EPFL, exposing students to the input of two excellent teaching institutions.

#### **STRONG POINTS UNINE**

The BPharm-1 program is managed by a Supervisory commission to ensure high quality and coherent teaching according to the learning objectives and to coordinate with the Teaching committee of UNIGE. A designated person is responsible for pharmaceutical sciences.

Half of the courses of the BPharm-1 program are given in small classes exclusively for BPharm-1 students allowing excellent teacher/students interactions.

| <b>POINTS TO BE IMPROVED SPS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>POSSIBLE ACTIONS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 20-week internship in community pharmacy: there is a need to encourage well-trained pharmacists to participate in the program and offer state-of-the art internship positions to students in community pharmacies. This would allow the University to set objectives for the pharmacists. | Incentives for stimulating the participation of community pharmacies are needed at the federal or cantonal level, as for other health professionals, e.g. medical doctors. This action at the policy level should be coordinated between the Universities involved in the Master in Pharmacy and the different stakeholders, mainly the national "Plattform Ausbildung Pharmazie" and pharmaSuisse. |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>The quality of the preceptors, as well as the way this quality is assessed are issues. The situation has improved since 2018 as students assess their internship position anonymously each year and trainers are invited to meet each semester with SPS according to voluntary mode. Further improvements are needed, as internships are crucial for applying new knowledge and developing professional skills. An urgent attention is required to address the shortage of pharmacists and encourage students to pursue this profession.</p> | <p>1) preceptors have to meet standards and must be evaluated, 2) preceptors must be better recognized for their involvement, 3) preceptors must participate in mandatory, continuous education offered by SPS to renew their position as preceptor, 4) SPS should be involved in the selection and evaluation of preceptors and practice sites in collaboration with pharmaSuisse, 5) an internship committee must be set up at SPS, 6) a list of accredited preceptors should be made available to the students each year. This work requires additional resources as there are no teaching human resources available at SPS for the management of professional internships.</p> |
| <p>The quality of the internship is heterogenous, as the relationship is based on an “instructor/mentor-student” model in some pharmacies, and on a relationship “employee-employer” in others.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p>As this internship is an essential part of the training, each student should be offered a relationship of “instructor/mentor-student” as standard in each training site, which means setting objectives for the trainers and ensuring these objectives are met.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p>The objectives for the internship period in community pharmacy are defined (Appendix 17); the student and the preceptor must validate that 80% of the objectives are met. This validation is heterogenous from one site to the other one.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Preceptors should be trained in evaluating their students by SPS. Some of the objectives should be validated and posted on the Moodle platform at SPS by the middle of the internship, to allow any significant learning issues to be identified.</p> <p>In preparation for the federal exam, the SPS is organizing a specific training during MPharm-2, including a training period at the end of the academic year, which should also allow harmonizing the level of the practical education towards excellence.</p>                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>BPharm-2: interprofessional module 1 is given between semesters and just before an exam session. This is not optimal for pharmacy students.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>The schedule must be coordinated with all the other partners (Faculty of Medicine and University of Applied Sciences in Health). The schedule cannot be changed because of the timetables and availabilities of facilities for 600 students. To compensate for this situation, the teaching program for pharmacy students was adapted.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <p>The capsules were successfully implemented throughout the curriculum, but this limits mobility between universities.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>The benefits encountered by the introduction of the capsules overcomes this limitation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| POINTS TO BE IMPROVED UNIL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | POSSIBLE ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Currently, much of the teaching is done <i>ex-cathedra</i> , which does not always favor active participation of the students.                                                                                                                                                        | Teachers are encouraged to value practical work in the final mark of their courses. The active participation and individual work by the students will also be encouraged by this change.                       |
| The current good collaboration between UNIL and EPFL for the organization of the basic science classes of the BPharm-1 program depends largely on the qualities of a single person on the EPFL side, the president of the Commission for teaching in basic sciences.                  | Maintain the good collaboration between EPFL and the School of Biology of UNIL by constant dialogue, keeping in mind that the legal frame is defined in a convention (Appendix 03c)                            |
| A large proportion of the classes of the BPharm-1 program is not primarily intended for pharmacy students. To guarantee appropriate teaching content for pharmacy students, a close collaboration between the teachers and the curricular oversight committee is constantly required. | With the increasing number of students (Pharmacy and Biology), the School of Biology will suggest solutions to maintain good conditions to study for these two populations of students who share some courses. |

### AREA 3: IMPLEMENTATION

| STRONG POINTS SPS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Since its last accreditation in 2019, the reform was successfully implemented in the curriculum. Minor adaptations based on student feedback were made in the first years. There is now an overall good level of satisfaction among students and the teaching body at the three partner Universities. Maintaining the three-site system for BPharm-1 is strategically essential to absorb the massive increase in the number of students (more than 300) desiring to start their studies in pharmaceutical sciences. The competence-based selection applied at the end of BPharm-1 allowed a selection of students pursuing their cursus at UNIGE. |
| Access to the study of pharmaceutical sciences for local students is facilitated due to the 3 sites.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| The students are well integrated into the different committees that accompany the curriculum.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| STRONG POINTS UNIGE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| The curriculum has become increasingly attractive. The training of foreign students and their return to their countries of origin constitutes a transfer of know-how that reinforces ties with Switzerland. This contributes to the creation of a positive image of Switzerland abroad. But at the same time, it substantially decreases work forces for the Swiss healthcare system.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| The statistics of employment show that virtually all our graduates find employment after their studies.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Good relations between SPS and student organization representatives are maintained at various levels and by representation in SPS committees.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The absence of a pre-university selection is a strong point guaranteeing access to university studies and allows a competence-based selection at the end of BPharm-1.                                                                                                                                                      |
| Several new Faculty members have been hired from outside since last accreditation. This concerns fields in pharmaceutical modeling, mass spectrometry and pharmaceutical technology. Given the retirements foreseen in the next few years, several new members will be hired as presented in the strategic plan 2027-2030. |
| <b>STRONG POINTS UNIL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| The BPharm-1 students benefit from LAB activities to facilitate their integration (e.g. Rallye at the beginning of the year). The BPharm-1 program can take advantage of the infrastructure and organization of the School of Biology.                                                                                     |
| The BPharm-1 program in its present form was established in 2018. Since then, it has successfully prepared UNIL students for the continuation of their studies at UNIGE.                                                                                                                                                   |
| Because of its geographical location, and the available infrastructure, UNIL is hosting the common pharmaceutical sciences teaching, which is central to the BPharm-1 program.                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>STRONG POINTS UNINE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| BPharm-1 students are well integrated in the Faculty of Sciences in Neuchâtel. The teacher/student ratio in Neuchâtel is favorable for a very good training. A chemistry lab is fully dedicated to BPharm-1 students.                                                                                                      |
| UNINE also attracts BPharm-1 students from foreign countries, which contributes to the positive image of Switzerland. Numerous services are available for local and international students, including accommodation, social, mental health, and other non-academic services.                                               |
| The Supervisory commission ensures an optimal management of the curricula and makes the link with the local pharmacists and Geneva.                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| POINTS TO BE IMPROVED SPS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | POSSIBLE ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| There are no teaching human resources available at SPS for professional internships (e.g. developing new teaching methods in professional context such as entrusted professional activities), despite them being an important way of learning and developing professional skills. | SPS expects pharmaSuisse to play a stronger role in funding by supporting/initiating actions towards political authorities at the federal/cantonal levels to strengthen accredited educational institutions in a context of shortage of healthcare providers. |
| The available resources in terms of budget are not sufficient to cope with the increasing demand of well-trained pharmacists in Switzerland.                                                                                                                                      | Resources need to be reviewed if the need of trained pharmacists exceeds the current capacity of SPS.                                                                                                                                                         |

| There has been no evolution of the operating budget over the past 14 years. Thus, part of the teaching is still strongly dependent on external competitive funding related to research projects. Additional institutional funding would be required, which was mentioned in previous strategic reports since 2015 (Appendix 5a; Appendix 5b). This lack has been recognized by the “ <i>Conseil de coordination</i> ”. | An increase in institutional budget allocated to SPS through the Institutions should be envisaged (UNIGE, UNIL, UNINE and Swiss Federal Authorities). Actions are currently undertaken by SPS.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The limit of the capacity of facilities (mainly lab facilities) is reached with the current number of students. However, it is predicted that the number of students will continuously increase, in line with the need in Switzerland.                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>The number of students must be regulated during the curriculum by competence-based exams, and not limited by space-related quotas, because of the favorable job market for pharmacists.</p> <p>However, in the future, if the number of students continues to grow, SPS will require substantially more resources from the educational stakeholders, notably University and Federal authorities to guarantee the same level and quality of training.</p> <p>While for lecture halls, space is sufficient given that some students choose to follow some courses online, the limit is reached for practical sessions (laboratories) in terms of security and to train students adequately. The problematic of supervision remains, and therefore more collaborators should be hired.</p> |
| POINTS TO BE IMPROVED UNIL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | POSSIBLE ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| The infrastructure and organization of the teaching were well adapted to accommodate ~50 students in the BPharm-1 program. Currently, there are close to 100 students.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | A solution needs to be found to manage the increasing number of students in terms of lecture halls and laboratories for practical work and number of assistants.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| The number of Master students doing their research internship in Lausanne has increased since last accreditation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Efforts to increase the visibility of the research groups at UNIL that can offer topics for Master theses will be done among MPharm-1 students.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| POINTS TO BE IMPROVED UNINE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | POSSIBLE ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| The number of Master students doing their research internship in Neuchâtel is low.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Efforts to increase the visibility of the research groups at UNNE that can offer topics for Master theses will be done among MPharm-1 students.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

#### AREA 4: QUALITY ASSURANCE

| STRONG POINTS SPS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| The well-developed collaboration with external stakeholders (e.g., hospitals and industry) may become a role model in Europe, as witnessed by the recent ranking for science innovation. Additionally, our research in community pharmacy, conducted in close collaboration with Unisanté and pharma24, is perceived as unique in Europe and beyond, and is regarded as an innovative model for research and teaching.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| There is an active participation of the Teaching committee and all teachers in the follow-up of the program evaluation. SPS made surveys of the curriculum among the alumni (Appendix 38).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| Systematic evaluations of courses/practical lab sessions are performed on a regular basis. This ensures a continuous improvement in quality assurance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| <p>UNIGE, which has a quality policy, has experience in teaching assessment activity since the 1980's. In 1998, the Rectorate created the Unit Formation &amp; Evaluation to develop the teaching quality assessment. Then in 2007, the Rectorate created the Quality Office (development of institutional AQ tools, planification and organization of the assessments of units, programs and teachers).</p> <p>At UNIGE, a general quality policy has been defined in which quality criteria have been implemented. In addition to this, ethics rules have been established. In 2009, it has been decided by the Rectorate and supported by the Deans of faculties to proceed to a systematic assessment of programs (Bachelor, Master) and to move from a formative to an indicative and systematic teaching quality assessment. SPS periodic evaluation is included in the planning of evaluations.</p> |  |
| STRONG POINTS UNIL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| Students of the BPharm-1 program, as well as teachers are involved in the evaluation of teaching. This high involvement leads to improvements and developments.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |
| STRONG POINTS UNINE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |
| All courses of the BPharm-1 program are regularly evaluated online by the students; the student feedback is communicated to the teachers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |

| POINTS TO BE IMPROVED SPS                                                  | POSSIBLE ACTIONS                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The success rate at the federal exam at the first attempt can be improved. | Several initiatives were implemented, such as formative exams, as well as MCQs exams (federal exam style) starting in BPharm-2. |

## 5. Experts group's overall evaluation and accreditation recommendation

### *Strengths:*

- The study programme is strongly research-based and fully aligned with the Swiss Catalogue of Learning Objectives.
- The programme manages to train all pharmacists in French-speaking Switzerland, even with limited resources.
- The SPS maintains a strong network of partners at both national and international level and in different pharmaceutical fields as community, hospital and humanitarian pharmacy, in research and industry.
- The programme's integration of new teaching and learning methods, as well as practical, interprofessional and simulation training, is commendable.
- With the capsule structure, the programme provides students with a progressive learning pathway by teaching pharmacology, pharmaceutical chemistry and practical pharmacy simultaneously from an integrated and longitudinal perspective and in relation to different disease fields.
- The teaching staff involved in the programme come from a variety of speciality fields and contribute their clinical or research work to it.
- The programme covers a wide range of assessment formats.

### *Challenges:*

- In the first year of the Bachelor's programme, students from the three different sites do not have the same exam conditions, so this selection year does not guarantee equal opportunities for all students.
- During insight sessions on exams, students are not permitted to take notes.
- The training on preparing small quantities of drugs, which is completed in the first year of the Master's programme, lacks a reinforcement course (refresher session) at a later stage.
- The increased number of students is not sufficiently covered by the budget allocated to the SPS, particularly with regard to laboratory spaces and teaching and supervision staff. The situation will become even more acute in the near future, as a large number of professors at SPS are due to retire, and the impact on teaching staff remains unclear to date, as there does not seem to be a detailed enough plan or strategy regarding the renewal of the teaching staff in order to maintain the current high level.
- Different committees of the SPS only have a consultative role, meaning they can make suggestions to the College of Professors, the body responsible for making decisions, and therefore cannot contribute actively to decision-making processes regarding the curriculum (i.e. teaching methods and content).
- The programme does not collect feedback on the exams.
- The response rate to the module evaluation surveys is very low, which is correlated with the necessary improvements to the evaluations in terms of their frequency, timing, length,

themes and the types of questions covered, as well as the lack of systematic feedback to students on the results of the evaluations.

On the basis of the self-assessment report of the study programme in Pharmaceutical Sciences of the University of Geneva, dated 9 February 2026, and the on-site visit on 26 and 27 March 2026, the expert group recommends the accreditation of the study programme in Pharmaceutical Sciences of the University of Geneva subject to the following conditions:

Condition 1 on standard 2.04:

The SPS offers adequate opportunities for students to further practise and rehearse compounding under exam conditions towards the end of the Master's programme to ensure that students acquire the necessary skills for manufacturing medicinal products, thus supporting them in preparing for the Swiss federal exam.

Condition 2 on standard 2.07:

The SPS, together with its partners at the Universities of Neuchâtel and Lausanne, ensures comparable exam conditions at all three sites during the first year of the Bachelor's programme, thereby offering all students equal opportunities.

Condition 3 on standard 3.02:

The University of Geneva allocates sufficient financial and personnel resources to its study programme in Pharmaceutical Sciences in alignment with the number of students, enabling the SPS to support students' learning pathways with adequate laboratory infrastructure, teaching and supervision in the long term.

The expert group also formulates the following recommendations for the further development of the programme:

Recommendation 1 for standard 2.07:

The expert group recommends that the SPS allows students to take notes during exam review sessions.

Recommendation 2 for standard 4.01:

The expert group recommends that the SPS actively involves its various committees in decision-making processes relating to the curriculum.

Recommendation 3 for standard 4.02:

The expert group recommends that the SPS firstly reviews the frequency and timing of module evaluations and the topics and questions covered, as well as the options for gathering feedback on the exams and presenting evaluation results to students systematically, and secondly implements the identified improvements in the context of the reform of the evaluation system planned by the University of Geneva.

## 6. AAQ's accreditation proposal

### Starting point

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The School of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Geneva offers the study programme in pharmaceutical sciences, consisting of the Bachelor of Science (BSc) in pharmaceutical sciences, requiring 180 ECTS, and the MSc in pharmacy, requiring 120 ECTS. Having successfully graduated from the MSc, students are allowed to take the Swiss federal licensing examination.

The first year of the study programme is offered also at University of Neuchâtel and University of Lausanne. From year 2 onwards, all students are taking classes at the University of Geneva. There are approximately 90 – 100 students per cohort.

The programme is structured as follows. After the BSc including basic natural sciences in year 1, biomedical sciences in year 2 and pharmaceutical sciences in year 3, the MSc continues with interdisciplinary and advanced pharmaceutical sciences as well as public health modules, the Master Thesis and an internship in years 4 and 5.

The School of Pharmaceutical Sciences is applying for the reaccreditation of the study programme in pharmacy for another seven years. The study programme has already been accredited in 2019 and 2012.

### Considerations

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The expert group highlights the programmes strong base in research and its vast network both on the international and the national level, as well as in various fields. The programmes structure with capsules, the application of a variety of teaching and learning methods and the competences and background of the teaching staff are also praised by the expert group.

The expert group makes recommendations concerning exam review sessions (recommendation 1, Standard 2.07) and the decision-making regarding the curriculum (recommendation 2, Standard 4.01). The expert group further encourages the programme to review the module evaluation's frequency, timing and topics covered and to implement adjustments with the reform of the university-wide evaluation system (recommendation 3, Standard 4.02).

In total, the expert group judges three standards to be partially fulfilled and makes three conditions.

Firstly, the expert group evaluates standard 2.04a to be partially fulfilled. The standard is as follows:

The study programme sets the following educational objectives:

The graduates

- a) know and understand in particular the scientific basis for the manufacture, dispensing, distribution, documentation and disposal of medicinal products and pharmaceutical excipients and the corresponding legal regulations [...].

The expert group considers the existing courses on the scientific basis, principles, technical fundamentals and legal regulations concerning the manufacture, dispense, distribution, documentation and disposal of drugs to be adequate. The same is true for the courses treating the preparation of drugs in small quantities, apart from the fact that the experts judge it necessary to add another possibility for students to practise the preparation of drugs in small quantities just before the Swiss federal licensing examination, under similar conditions.

Accordingly, the expert group formulates the following condition:

Condition 1:

The SPS offers adequate opportunities for students to further practise and rehearse compounding under exam conditions towards the end of the Master's programme to ensure that students acquire the necessary skills for manufacturing medicinal products, thus supporting them in preparing for the Swiss federal exam.

The agency considers the expert's analysis and condition to be coherent with the standard.

Secondly, the expert group evaluates standard 2.07 as partially fulfilled. The standard demands that:

The form of assessment of the students' performance is adapted to the learning objectives.

The expert group finds that conditions for students regarding examination during the first year of the programme (year 1 of the BSc) differ in terms of options for compensation of grades, the number of possible attempts as well as the criteria for passing or failing an exam, depending on the site (University of Geneva, University of Neuchâtel, University of Lausanne) where the exams are taken. The expert group considers this to be a problem regarding equality and fairness, as there are less places available in the programme from year 2 onwards, meaning the examinations in year 1 are crucial.

Therefore, the expert group makes the following condition:

Condition 2:

The SPS, together with its partners at the Universities of Neuchâtel and Lausanne, ensures comparable exam conditions at all three sites during the first year of the Bachelor's programme, thereby offering all students equal opportunities.

The agency considers the expert's analysis and the condition to be coherent with the standard's requests, in that the SPS must ensure that the assessment of student performance is adapted in equal ways to the learning objectives at every programme's site.

Thirdly, the expert group evaluates standard 3.02 to be partially fulfilled:

The available resources (supervision and material resources) allow students to achieve the learning objectives. The higher education institution shall set out how the number of students in all phases of the curriculum is determined and to what extent it is aligned with the capacity of the educational institution.

At the on-site visit and from the self-evaluation report, the expert group has learned that the programme's budget has not increased since its first operational year that was in 2004, while student numbers have done so. As a result, today, there are less resources available per student than there have been originally. Furthermore, the expert group highlights the importance of a sustainable and detailed planning of the appointment of new professors that will be necessary after the retirement of a substantial part of today's teaching personnel in the near future.

Accordingly, the expert group formulates the following condition:

Condition 3:

The University of Geneva allocates sufficient financial and personnel resources to its study programme in Pharmaceutical Sciences in alignment with the number of students, enabling the SPS to support students' learning pathways with adequate laboratory infrastructure, teaching and supervision in the long term.

Considering SPS's statement, the expert group has adjusted its analysis and decided to uphold the condition. The agency judges the expert's analysis and the condition to be coherent with the standard and suitable to tackle the challenges in a sustainable way.

The expert group's analysis considers all relevant parts of the quality standards.

## Accreditation proposal

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On the basis of the self-assessment report of the study programme in pharmacy of the University of Geneva dated 9 February 2026, the expert report of 7 May 2026, the statement of the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences of the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Geneva of 22 May 2026 and the above considerations, the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ) proposes that accreditation of the study programme in pharmacy of the University of Geneva be granted with the following conditions.

- Condition 1 (Standard 2.04a):  
The SPS offers adequate opportunities for students to further practise and rehearse compounding under exam conditions towards the end of the Master's programme to ensure that students acquire the necessary skills for manufacturing medicinal products, thus supporting them in preparing for the Swiss federal exam.
- Condition 2 (Standard 2.07):  
The SPS, together with its partners at the Universities of Neuchâtel and Lausanne, ensures comparable exam conditions at all three sites during the first year of the Bachelor's programme, thereby offering all students equal opportunities.
- Condition 3 (Standard 3.02):  
The University of Geneva allocates sufficient financial and personnel resources to its study programme in Pharmaceutical Sciences in alignment with the number of students, enabling the SPS to support students' learning pathways with adequate laboratory infrastructure, teaching and supervision in the long term.

The AAQ considers 18 months to be a reasonable period for the conditions to be met. The AAQ proposes to have the condition assessed "sur dossier" by two members of the expert group.

## 7. Statement of the study programme in pharmaceutical sciences of the University of Geneva

The expert group has reviewed the SPS's statement and concluded that the accreditation recommendation and the conditions set out therein remain appropriate. However, the expert group has clarified its analysis of standards 3.02 and 3.03 regarding the succession plan, as well as the corresponding section of the overall evaluation. These amendments have been incorporated into chapter 3 of this report (pp. 51, 55 and 75).

The SPS's statement can be found below.



Prof. Muriel Cuendet  
Pharmacognosie

CMU  
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CH-1211 GENEVE 4



Agence suisse d'accréditation et  
d'assurance qualité-AAQ  
Mme Nicole Hublard  
Schwanengasse 9  
3001 Berne

Geneva, May 22, 2026

**Response of SPS to the report of the experts mandated for the accreditation of the study programme in pharmaceutical sciences at the University of Geneva**

Dear Ms. Hublard,  
Dear Members of the Expert Panel,

The members of the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences (SPS) at the University of Geneva (UNIGE) and the representatives of the associated universities Lausanne (UNIL) and Neuchâtel (UNINE) have appreciated the professional and open atmosphere characterising the exchanges and discussions during the on-site visit. We also appreciate the positive remarks of the experts' report and the strengths that were highlighted. We acknowledge receipt of the conditions to be fulfilled for full accreditation and recommendations issued by the expert panel. In the following, we would like to present our position on the points raised.

**Condition 1:**

Because the compounding course (preparation of drugs in small quantities) is held in the first year of Master and because students often do not have sufficient opportunities to practice compounding during their internships, nor the necessary supervision, the experts ask for the organization of an additional "refresher" session relatively close to the Swiss federal exam, under conditions similar to those of the exam. Mention is also made of offering laboratory access during the summer, to allow students to practice compounding.

SPS plans on implementing a refresher session under conditions similar to those of the federal exam and with the involvement of supervisors to enable students to learn the specific requirements of the federal exam, starting in summer 2027. This may be coordinated with asef and SwissYPG, who already organize FEDCamp and FEDLab sessions, which are activities offered to Swiss pharmacy students to rehearse for the compounding exam. Discussions with the two organizations are currently ongoing. However, free access to the laboratory during the summer will not be possible, as SPS does not have sufficient resources to ensure student supervision, which would be mandatory according to UNIGE security policy.

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**Condition 2:**

SPS is fully aware that there are differences in exam conditions at the end of the first year of studies among the three universities. In recent years, efforts have focused on harmonizing the curriculum for first-year preparatory courses across the three campuses. Courses common to students from all three universities were also implemented. However, so far, each university has maintained their own rules. SPS had already identified this to be an issue, which was discussed in March 2026 with the IPSO Coordination Council, where UNIL and UNIGE agreed to engage in discussions regarding this harmonization. UNINE is not a member of this council but has clearly expressed its willingness to participate in reaching an agreement among the three universities.

This harmonization is therefore already planned, and the aim is to be able to implement the new regulations by the start of the 2027 academic year.

**Condition 3:**

Resources of SPS have not been aligned with the increase in student numbers. During the visit of the experts, UNIGE Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs indicated that she was willing to work with SPS to identify solutions regarding laboratory infrastructure, teaching and supervision. A meeting with her is scheduled for June.

In relation to this, the panel report mentions that no detailed succession plan was available in view of the retirements of several professors in the coming years. This information may have been overlooked by the experts, as it is detailed in the SPS strategic plan for 2027-2030, which was attached to the SAR. Furthermore, a working group will be established to develop a detailed succession plan.

The recommendations for the development of the study programme will also be considered as follows:

**Recommendation 1:**

In the future, SPS students will be allowed to take notes during exam review sessions following the regulations governing the federal pharmacist examination which state that "Exam materials may be reviewed, and handwritten notes are permitted; however, any transcription, photography, or other form of reproduction—whether partial or complete—of the questions, answer keys, or checklist is prohibited. Handwritten notes will be checked and copied; those that do not comply will be redone."

**Recommendation 2:**

SPS already actively involves its various committees in decision making processes relating to the curriculum. These committees submit suggestions to the Collège des professeurs, which would need very strong arguments to reject a suggestion. Changes to regulations requested by students are being discussed within the Teaching Committee and then transferred to the Regulations and Equivalencies Committee. The committee then submits the proposals to the Collège des professeurs, which approves the requests. This organization follows the by-laws of SPS and the Faculty of Science.

**Recommendation 3:**

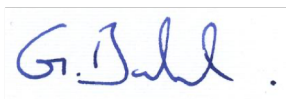
A new evaluation system is currently being implemented at UNIGE. SPS will wait for its full implementation to see how it aligns with this recommendation.

We thank again the experts and the AAQ for the constructive work and fruitful discussions. We believe that this accreditation will enable SPS to continue fulfilling its role as a centre of excellence for educating pharmaceutical scientists and pharmacists.

Sincerely,



**Prof. Muriel CUENDET**  
AAQ steering committee



**Prof. Gerrit BORCHARD**  
President of the School of pharmaceutical sciences

## 8. Hearing of the MEBEKO



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Eidgenössisches Departement des Innern EDI

Medizinalberufekommission MEBEKO  
Ressort Ausbildung

CH-3003 Bern, BAG **A-Priority**

Schweizerische Agentur für Akkreditierung  
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3001 Bern

Referenz/Aktenzeichen:  
Ihr Zeichen:  
Unser Zeichen: SOF/MAG  
Bern, 10. Juli 2026

### Akkreditierung des Studienganges Pharmazie an der Universität Genf

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren

Im Namen der Medizinalberufekommission (MEBEKO), Ressort Ausbildung, wird wie folgt Stellung genommen:

1. Rechtsgrundlagen der Akkreditierung:
  - Nach Artikel 12 Absatz 1 Buchstabe b des Bundesgesetzes vom 23. Juni 2006 über die universitären Medizinalberufe (Medizinalberufegesetz, MedBG, SR 811.11) erhalten namentlich diejenigen Personen Zutritt zur eidgenössischen Prüfung einer der universitären Medizinalberufe, die einen nach dem MedBG akkreditierten Studiengang absolviert haben.
  - Die Artikel 23 und 24 MedBG regeln die Akkreditierungspflicht und die Akkreditierungskriterien. Die Studiengänge müssen nach den Anforderungen des Hochschulförderungs- und Koordinationsgesetz (HFKG, SR 414.20) und des MedBG akkreditiert sein. Die anzuwendenden Qualitätsstandards sind entsprechend eine Kombination der Anforderungen dieser beiden gesetzlichen Grundlagen. Das Verfahren richtet sich nach Artikel 32 HFKG. Nach Artikel 19 der Verordnung des Hochschulrates über die Akkreditierung im Hochschulbereich (Akkreditierungsverordnung HFKG, SR 414.205.3) gilt die Akkreditierung für sieben Jahre ab Akkreditierungsentscheid.
2. Aufgaben und Vorgehen der MEBEKO, Ressort Ausbildung, im Akkreditierungsprozess:
  - Nach Artikel 50 Absatz 1 MedBG kommen der MEBEKO im Bereich der Akkreditierung zwei Aufgaben zu. Sie berät verschiedene Gremien (darunter auch das Akkreditierungsorgan) in Fragen der Aus- und Weiterbildung (Buchstabe a). Die MEBEKO nimmt zudem Stellung zu Akkreditierungsanträgen im Bereich der Aus- und Weiterbildung (Buchstabe b). Das Ressort Ausbildung der MEBEKO ist für die Akkreditierungsverfahren betreffend Ausbildungsgänge, das Ressort Weiterbildung der MEBEKO ist für diejenigen hinsichtlich Weiterbildungsgänge zuständig. Die Stellungnahme der MEBEKO, Ressort Ausbildung erfolgt nach Erhalt des Be-

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richtsentwurfs des Akkreditierungsorgans, welcher auf der Beurteilung der Selbst- und Fremdevaluation beruht.

- Jeweils zwei Mitglieder der MEBEKO, Ressort Ausbildung, bereiten gestützt auf sämtliche Dokumente der Selbst- und Fremdevaluation (inklusive Expertenvision) sowie des Berichtsentwurfs des Akkreditierungsorgans die Diskussionen der Kommission vor. Sie berichten der Kommission schriftlich und mündlich und schlagen ihr eine Stellungnahme vor.

3. Die MEBEKO, Ressort Ausbildung, stellt fest, dass das aktuelle Akkreditierungsverfahren (2025/2026) des Studienganges Pharmazie an der Universität Genf korrekt nach den geltenden Rechtsgrundlagen und Standards durchgeführt worden ist.
4. Stellungnahme der MEBEKO, Ressort Ausbildung, bezüglich Akkreditierung des Studienganges Pharmazie an der Universität Genf:
  - Der Selbstevaluationsbericht, der Bericht der Gutachtergruppe und der Antrag auf Akkreditierung der Akkreditierungsagentur AAQ werden zustimmend zur Kenntnis genommen.
  - Die Beurteilung des Studienganges Pharmazie der Universität Genf durch die Gutachtergruppe und die AAQ beruht auf einer sorgfältigen Evaluation, ist nachvollziehbar und adäquat formuliert. Gutachtergruppe und AAQ empfehlen die Akkreditierung mit drei Auflagen.
  - Die MEBEKO, Ressort Ausbildung, unterstützt die Empfehlung der Gutachtergruppe und der AAQ, den Studiengang Pharmazie an der Universität Genf unter den genannten Auflagen zu akkreditieren.

Die Stellungnahme wird auf Englisch verfasst:

*The School of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Geneva (SPS) offers one of the four accredited full curricula in Pharmaceutical Sciences (BSc) / Pharmacy (MSc) in Switzerland, preparing undergraduate students for the federal examination in pharmacy. While the University of Basel, the University of Bern and the ETH Zurich offer their curricula in German, the University of Geneva teaches the curriculum in French. Roughly one third of the pharmacists with a Swiss federal diploma graduate from the University of Geneva (<https://ind.obsan.admin.ch/indicator/obsan/pharmazie-anzahl-diplome>). The SPS thus contributes substantially to the education of the critically required experts in basic health care within the Swiss health system, in particular in the French speaking part of Switzerland. The success rate at the federal examinations of graduates from the SPS is similar to overall Swiss graduates and is constantly >90% for the 1<sup>st</sup> attempt. The pharmacy curriculum at the University of Geneva was accredited in the years 2012 and 2019.*

*The first year of the BSc Pharmaceutical Sciences can be completed at three sites in Western Switzerland, namely the University of Geneva, the University of Lausanne and the University of Neuchâtel. The remaining two years of the BSc and the two years of the MSc are completed at the University of Geneva. Teaching contents are aligned with the Swiss Catalogue of Learning Objectives (SCLO) and often go beyond these minimal requirements, to be fully competitive with other national and international programs. The SPS and its faculty members participate in international, national and regional networks and organizations dedicated to pharmaceutical education, research and practice.*

*The curriculum evolved since the last accreditation in 2019. Some of the changes were based on the recommendations of the 2019 expert panel: The compulsory training in vaccination, injection techniques and basic life support was introduced and is now considered state-of-the-art by the expert panel of the current accreditation process. The introduction of this compulsory training was a recommendation that was considered crucial by the MEBEKO in 2019. Interprofessional teaching was substantially expanded and strengthened. The quality of the 20-week internship in a community pharmacy is now addressed by trainings for the hosting pharmacists and evaluations by the students.*

*The expert panel rates the teaching skills and quality high, covering all aspects of Pharmaceutical sciences. Practitioners from various health care sections support the teaching and strengthen the link to the professional world, at the same time fostering interprofessional skills. The expert panel recognized a certain risk in the fact that a large proportion of the teaching staff is due to retire soon. The panel advised the SPS to keep the continuity of expertise under close review.*

*In Geneva, the preparation of drugs in small quantities, one of the topics of the federal examination, is practiced during the first MSc year, i.e., long before the federal examination. Not all internship-supervising community pharmacies are sufficiently equipped to support the students in preparation of this part of the federal examination. The expert panel thus agrees with the students, that opportunities to practice need to be provided by the SPS towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the MSc program (condition # 1 for the accreditation). As a note aside, the preparation of drugs in small quantities will remain essential for pharmacists in view of the current and future shortages in drug supply, challenging our health system.*

*Regarding learning assessments, the expert panel acknowledges the variety of examination formats, taking into account all levels of learning complexity. However, the expert panel located inequalities in the examinations of the first BSc year, when comparing the three examination sites. To avoid unequal opportunities for the students of the three participating Universities, the expert panel defined condition # 2, stipulating comparable examination conditions at the three sites.*

*The expert panel considers the available infrastructure and funding of the SPS critical in view of the increasing demand of pharmacists in Switzerland in the coming years. The experts thus defined condition # 3, asking the University of Geneva to allocate sufficient financial and personnel resources to its study program in Pharmaceutical Sciences/Pharmacy.*

*Summarizing the report of the expert panel, the experts rate the study program strongly research-based and fully aligned with the SCLO. Most standards were considered completely fulfilled, a few largely fulfilled. Three conditions were defined regarding three partially fulfilled standards. The expert panel recommends the accreditation of the study program in Pharmaceutical Sciences/Pharmacy of the University of Geneva subject to the three conditions mentioned above.*

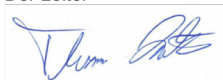
*The AAQ judges the experts' analysis and the expressed conditions coherent with the standards and concludes that the expert group considered all relevant parts of the quality standards. The AAQ proposes that accreditation of the study program in Pharmaceutical Sciences/Pharmacy of the University of Geneva be granted with the three expressed conditions. Conditions should be met within 18 months, and two members of the expert panel should assess the fulfillment "sur dossier".*

*The discussions with and evaluation by the expert panel and the AAQ were appreciated by the representatives of the SPS and considered constructive and fruitful. Regarding condition # 1, the SPS is planning a refresher session close to the federal examination, simulating the conditions of the federal examination. The harmonization of the examinations at the three sites of the first BSc year is in planning as well (condition # 2). The Vice-Rector of the University of Geneva is aware of the critical infrastructure, staff and finance conditions of the SPS and is in discussion with the SPS to find adequate solutions. The SPS representatives furthermore plan to implement most of the recommendations expressed by the expert panel.*

*Our statement proposed at the beginning of this report is based on these considerations.*

Freundliche Grüsse

Medizinalberufekommission  
Ressort Ausbildung  
Der Leiter



Prof. med. vet. Thomas Lutz

## 9. Accreditation decision by the Swiss Accreditation Council

The Swiss Accreditation Council publishes its accreditation decisions:  
<https://akkreditierungsrat.ch/en/decisions/>

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