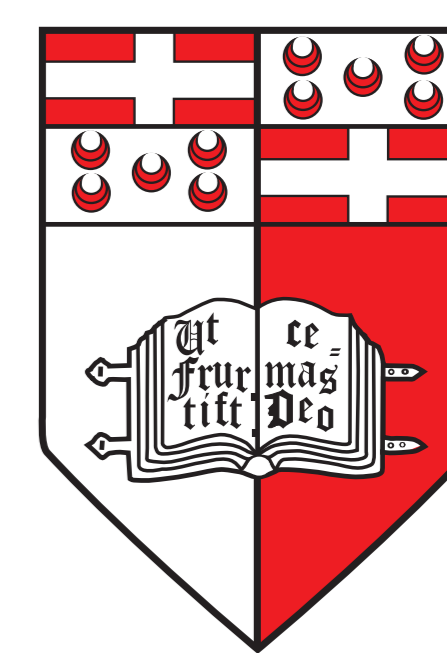


# DEVELOPING SKILLS FOR PATIENT MANAGEMENT IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CARE SCENARIOS

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## INTRODUCTION

The course leading to a degree in pharmacy is offered by the Department of Pharmacy at the University of Malta and consists of 5 years of full-time study. Since 1972 the course has been developing to include aspects of pharmacy practice. In 1996 the course was offered with a modular system and ECTS are assigned to each module where 1 ECTS is equivalent to 25 hours of study. A Pharmacy Practice module is today an integral component of the undergraduate curriculum leading to the degree in pharmacy.

## METHOD

Out of 300 ECTS required for the entire five year course, 92 ECTS (30.6%) are allocated for the Pharmacy Practice module. The remaining credits are distributed for a project in an area of pharmacy (40 ECTS), pharmaceutical technology which includes regulatory affairs and pharmaco-economic aspects (40 ECTS), pharmaceutical chemistry (38 ECTS), pharmacology (24 ECTS), and other credits in anatomy, biochemistry and physiology, mathematics and statistics.

## RESULTS

The Pharmacy Practice module is structured to include:

- aspects of pharmacotherapy: the use of medicinal products and medical devices in responding to minor ailments and in the management of acute and chronic disease requiring prescription medicines, pharmaceutical calculations with application to drug delivery, analyses of medication history, development of pharmaceutical care plans
- drug information: handling of pharmaceutical and medical literature, evaluation of rational cost-effective pharmacy systems
- pharmacy administration: management of equipment, medical devices, human resources, quality improvement processes, risk containment
- social, ethical and regulatory aspects: teamwork, legislation and practice standards, patient empathy, understanding, communication and counselling techniques

Students are evaluated through a continuous assessment for practical sessions and a written examination.

## CONCLUSIONS

The module provides knowledge and an experiential approach to professional practice so that by the end of the Pharmacy Practice module successful students achieve the competence and skills for effective patient management in primary and secondary care scenarios.

The Pharmacy Practice module aims to support students to develop skills

- to integrate principles of pharmaceutical sciences into applied pharmacotherapy
- to interact with patients from different socio-economic backgrounds
- to liaise and collaborate with other healthcare professionals
- to develop and document care plans for patient management in primary and secondary care scenarios

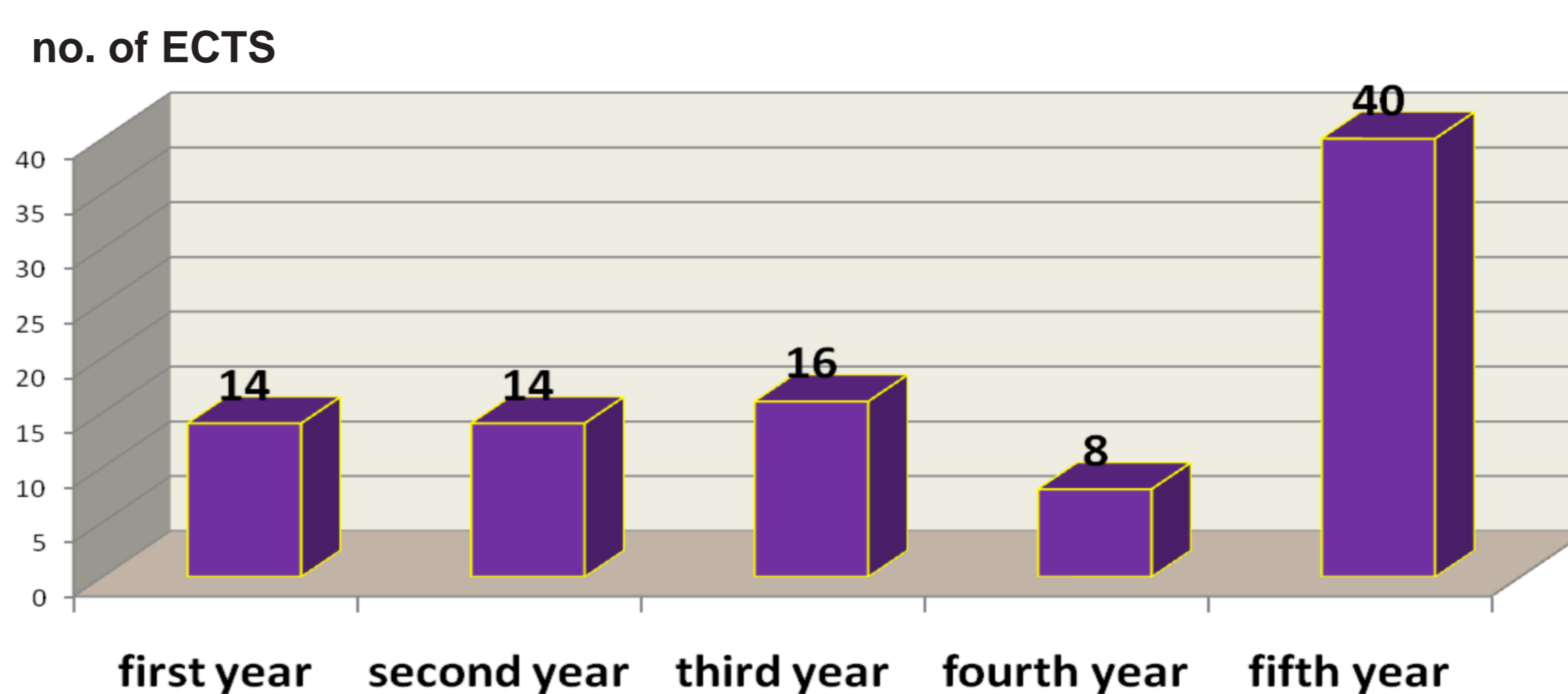


Figure 1: Distribution of credits in the Pharmacy Practice module over the five years of study (n=92)