

# PDA Student E-News

June 2021



## Welcome to the June 2021 PDA Student Newsletter

In this edition, read first-hand accounts of how MPharm students across the UK are coping with studying during a global pandemic.

### In this months issue:

LGBT+ Network continues to grow, including its student membership | PDA supports students at Kingston University | Dressing for the job | The importance of taking leadership opportunities as an MPharm student | Congratulations to all those who have finished their exams!

## LGBT+ Network continues to grow, including its student membership



By Soh Xi Ken, third-year Sunderland University, PDA student rep and Honorary Secretary of the LGBT+ Network

*"I cannot stress how important it is for LGBT+ pharmacists to have a safe space like this PDA network. It provides an amazing source of support and resources.*

*As a pharmacy student, it is great to be able to interact with pharmacists further in their career. It is crucial that the next generation of LGBT+ pharmacists fight to improve healthcare for LGBT+ people and eliminate discrimination within the sector and beyond."*



By Scott Rutherford, third-year Manchester University, PDA student rep and President of the LGBT+ Network

*"Curiosity was my main motivation for joining the PDA's LGBT+ Network. I wanted to gain some insight into the experiences of LGBT+ people in pharmacy, and how pharmacy could do better to support its LGBT+ patients. Since joining I have met a group of proud and inspirational LGBT+ pharmacists and pharmacy students that share a passion for advancing pharmacy education to be more inclusive, addressing issues that LGBT+ patients and professionals face in pharmacy, and connecting with each other to foster a sense of community.*

*From chatting in the WhatsApp group to writing articles for the newsletter, the network has given me a variety of invaluable opportunities to connect and learn."*

[Students click here to join the PDA LGBT+ Network](#)

## PDA supports students at Kingston University

The PDA were happy to lend their support to pharmacy student members and reps at Kingston University. The students had conducted a satisfaction survey and student reps fed back member concerns to PDA officials for advice.

One first-year pharmacy student said: *“The PDA team were able to discuss our concerns with the University regarding how online exams would be conducted and they were able to answer questions and resolve any insecurities we had. As first year students and in a new environment, we struggled with online learning and the thought of the exam format built up anxiety within our cohort, but we had the PDA ready to help us through it.”*

There had been a considerable increase in student concerns regarding online exams and academic misconduct cases. The PDA would like to remind all students that any communication with university faculty should be respectful and remember the difficulties that everyone has had to face this year. If in doubt then please speak to your PDA student rep in the first instance.

If you have issues at your university regarding academic misconduct, summer placements or queries regarding your exams, the PDA is available to answer questions, give advice, or support student members.

[Click here to join the PDA today!](#)

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## Dressing for the job

By Zahra Nawaz, third-year Wolverhampton University, PDA student rep



**Most employers will have dress codes to support health and safety and promote a professional image. Before attending an interview or beginning a new post, read up on the dress code policies. These can be accessed online or by contacting your future employer.**

Common in many dress codes is the exclusion of shorts, flip-flops, jeans, excessive jewellery, and heavy makeup. It is often advised to avoid wearing strong smelling perfumes or aftershaves. Shoes should be smart, comfortable and not make too much noise like high heels, especially in a hospital setting. Most hospitals also advise to not wear wrist watches and bracelets.

To comply with infection control, it is important to wear shirts where you can roll up the sleeves, make sure hair is tied back and religious head coverings are shoulder length and fastened securely. Have clean, short nails with no polish and neatly trimmed beards.

Some employers have uniforms; in some hospitals white coats are encouraged as these can be washed at high temperatures regularly. During the pandemic masks and/or visors along with other PPE have been compulsory in pharmacy settings.

There is a saying I often stick by, ‘*dress for the job you want, not the job you have*’. You are constantly being evaluated and re-evaluated by everyone around you. How you dress at work sends signals about how you view the environment and how much respect you have for your work. If you take your appearance seriously, people will take you seriously.

**Employers need to comply with the Equality Act 2021 and ensure that any dress code is not in breach of the legislation which is in place to protect workers from discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Click here to learn more: [Guide to: Discrimination in the Workplace](#)**

## The importance of taking leadership opportunities as an MPharm student

*By Jeffery Ohene, first-year University of East Anglia, PDA student rep*

**Studying pharmacy is difficult but rewarding. I have come to realise there is so much to becoming a pharmacist aside from clinical knowledge and a professional label. It involves attention to detail and rigorous repetitive learning, but also soft skills like creativity and communication. I have been challenged this year in many ways.**

One of these challenges has come from taking leadership roles. I am a pharmacy society president and PDA student representative. In both roles I am required to create events and engage students in useful and thought-provoking ways. I am expected to be a great communicator, to speak at events and answer questions at meetings.

Building yourself within any leadership role is about learning effective management skills. This is in managing people, your time and your own doubts and fears.

It is easy to feel unqualified for any role. I have come to realise it is not about being perfect, but practicing and honing skills as you go along the journey. The ability to challenge ourselves puts us on a path to growth and continuous improvement which will be essential to us throughout our careers. Pharmacy is changing daily, and my hope is that we are preparing ourselves well for the change which is coming.

**Click here and become a PDA student rep today!**

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### Congratulations to all those who have finished their exams!

**Also, good luck to all those embarking on the [Oriol recruitment process](#)!**

Fourth-years, congratulations on completing your MPharm degree and moving onto your trainee year. This is an exciting time, but it can also be a daunting one. The PDA exists so pharmacy students, trainee pharmacists and professionals do not have to go it alone. The PDA offers FREE PDA Trainee Pharmacist (Pre-reg) Membership, which includes PDA Education modules, indemnity insurance and independent legal advice.

First, second and third year students: congratulations on progressing onto the next stage of your MPharm degree. We want to continue supporting you throughout your studies. Register for FREE PDA membership to continue accessing free legal advice and professional development opportunities.

**PDA membership is FREE to pharmacy students and Trainee Pharmacists!**

**Let's stay connected. Follow us on social media. #PDAstudent**



**For more information or to join the PDA, visit: [www.the-pda.org](http://www.the-pda.org)**