

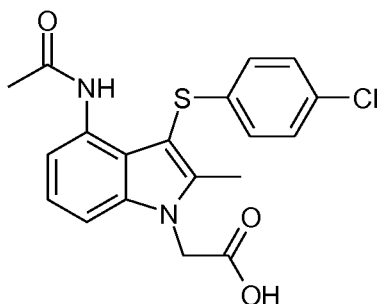
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INTERMEDIATES AND PROCESSES FOR THE PREPARATION OF 4- (ACETYLAMINO)) -3- [(4-CHLORO-PHENYL) THIO] -2-METHYL-L1 -INDOLE-1-ACETIC ACID

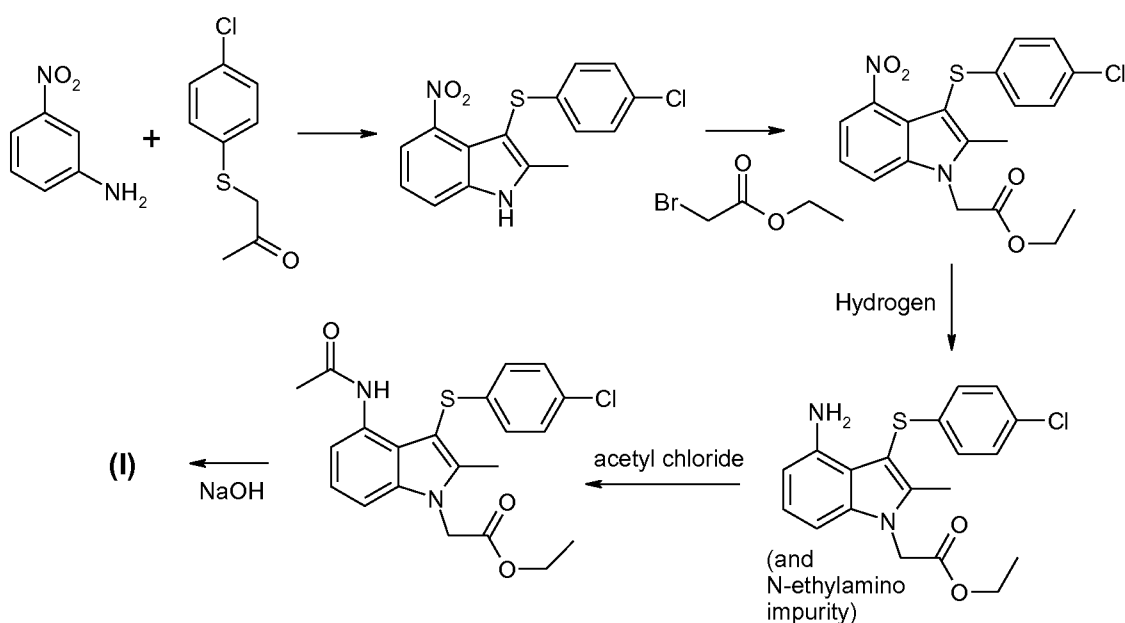
The present invention relates to the technical field concerned with the large-scale manufacture of pharmaceutical compounds.

International patent application PCT/SE2004/000808, (WO2004/106302) is
concerned with substituted indoles useful as pharmaceutical compounds for treating
respiratory disorders, pharmaceuticals containing them and processes for their preparation.
More specifically, page 25 of WO2004/106302 discloses 4-(acetylamino)-3-[(4-chloro-
phenyl)thio]-2-methyl-1*H*-indole-1-acetic acid, (hereafter referred to as the compound of
formula **(I)**) as Example 1.

10

**(I)**

The route disclosed on pages 25 and 26 of WO2004/106302 for the preparation of
the compound of formula **(I)** is shown in **Scheme (I)**, below.

**Scheme (I)**

15

The synthesis of the compound of formula **(I)** disclosed in WO2004/106302 has a number of potential disadvantages.

For example, the prior art process involves the use of very low temperatures
5 (-78°C). Such low temperatures can be difficult to achieve on large scale, requiring specialist plant equipment and a lot of energy.

The prior art process involves the use of *tert*-butyl hypochlorite, which is seen as undesirable for a large-scale manufacturing process.

The prior art process involves the use of dichloromethane, which is an undesirable
10 solvent for large-scale use because of its environmental impact.

The present inventors have established that one or more of the prior art reactions occur relatively quickly. Fast exothermic reactions can be disadvantageous for larger scale manufacture in a batch mode because of the need to control and adequately remove the heat evolved.

15 International patent application PCT/GB2006/000060, (WO2006/075139) is concerned with a novel process for the preparation of substituted indoles that are useful as therapeutic agents. More specifically, WO2006/075139 discloses processes for the preparation of the compound of formula **(I)**, where each process starts from 2-methyl-4-nitroindole.

20 The synthesis of the compound of formula **(I)** disclosed in WO2006/075139 has a number of disadvantages.

There is evidence to suggest that 2-methyl-4-nitroindole is not a good starting material for use in a large-scale manufacturing process. One of the methods known for the synthesis of 2-methyl-4-nitroindole appears to provide a low yield of the desired product
25 (*Tetrahedron*, 1990, 46(17), 6085; and *Tetrahedron Letters*, 1983, 24(34), 3665-8).

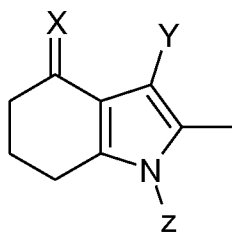
Another known method of synthesis of 2-methyl-4-nitroindole requires conditions that are undesirable for larger-scale synthesis because it involves the use of an atmosphere of air in the presence of organic solvents which may present control and safety difficulties.
(*Tetrahedron Letters*, 1999, 40, 5395; and *Tetrahedron*, 2004, 60, 347). Indeed, 2-methyl-
30 4-nitroindole itself has been found to be a highly energetic molecule (positive result in a Koenen tube test at 2 mm), a significant hurdle to its use on large scale. Furthermore, 2-methyl-4-nitroindole has been found to be relatively expensive as a starting material,

partly due to the large solvent volumes required and the need for multiple crystallisations to remove by products. Therefore the “cost of goods” for the prior art syntheses of the compound of formula **(I)** from 2-methyl-4-nitroindole is potentially disadvantageously high.

5 The compound of formula **(I)** is being developed as an active pharmaceutical compound. Appropriate methods for safe, cost-effective, efficient and environmentally sensitive manufacture of the compound of formula **(I)** are therefore desirable.

The present invention provides a solution to one or more of the above-mentioned disadvantages. Additional technical advantages of different aspects of the invention are
10 described herein below.

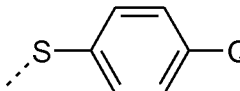
In the first aspect of the invention there is provided a compound of formula **(X)**:



(X)

wherein:

15 **X** is =O, =N-OH or =N-OC(O)Me;

Y is hydrogen or ; and

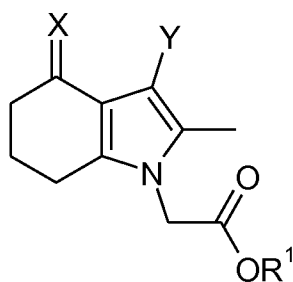
Q is hydrogen or chloro;

and **Z** is hydrogen or $-\text{CH}_2\text{COOR}^1$ where in **R**¹ is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted hydrocarbyl and optionally substituted heterocyclyl;

20 or a salt thereof.

In a further aspect there is provided a compound of formula **(X)** as defined herein.

In yet a further aspect of the invention there is provided a compound of formula **(II)**:

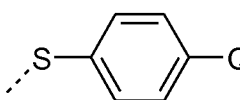


(II)

wherein:

R^1 is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted hydrocarbyl and optionally substituted heterocyclyl;

X is $=O$, $=N-OH$ or $=N-OC(O)Me$;

Y is hydrogen or ; and

Q is hydrogen or chloro;

or a salt thereof.

Surprisingly the inventors have found that the pharmaceutical compound of formula (I) may be prepared efficiently on large scale from the compound of formula (X) even though the compound of formula (X) does not even contain the core benzene ring that is ultimately present in the compound of formula (I).

In a further aspect there is provided the use of the compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of the compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as an intermediate for the manufacture of the compound of formula (I), or a salt thereof.

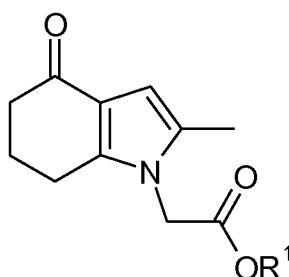
In a further aspect there is provided a compound of formula (II) as defined herein.

The skilled person will appreciate that a wide range of R^1 groups may be used for carrying out the present invention since the R^1 group is only a temporary feature that is not expected to play a key part in the process of the present invention. It is to be understood that the R^1 group may be removed using basic conditions, to release R^1OH and the compound of formula (I), or a salt thereof. In certain cases the R^1 group may be cleaved under acidic conditions or using hydrogen gas with a hydrogenation catalyst or using other established conditions for cleavage of a given type of ester group. The skilled person

understands which of the aforementioned conditions might be preferable depending on the nature of the **R**¹ group.

Alternative embodiments and values of variable groups are described below, and it is to be understood that such variable groups in any aspect or embodiment may be combined with any other variable groups or aspect or embodiment described hereinbefore or hereinafter. Embodiments and aspects of the invention encompass all such combinations of variable groups.

In one embodiment there is provided a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIa)**:



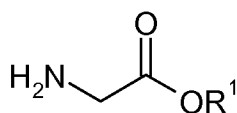
(IIa)

wherein **R**¹ is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted hydrocarbyl and optionally substituted heterocyclyl; or a salt thereof.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIa)**, or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIa)**, or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as an intermediate for the manufacture of the compound of formula **(I)**, or a salt thereof.

The compound of formula **(IIa)** may be prepared by reacting a compound of formula **(III)**:



(III)

with 2-(2-oxopropyl)cyclohexane-1,3-dione; wherein the values of **R**¹ are as defined herein.

2-(2-Oxopropyl)cyclohexane-1,3-dione is a known compound, and may be prepared using cyclohexane-1,3-dione and chloroacetone under basic conditions, as described hereinafter.

The compound of formula **(III)** is either commercially available or it may be prepared using well-known chemistry from commercially available starting materials. For example the NH₂-group of the compound of formula **(III)** may be introduced *via* displacement of a halo group from a 2-haloacetate ester, for example ethyl 2-chloroacetate.

5 The skilled person understands and that the use of a nitrogen protecting group may be beneficial for such a transformation.

Alternatively *N*-protected glycine may be coupled to an alcohol of formula R¹OH using a coupling agent such as EDCI or using other esterification conditions that are well known in the art.

10 The compound of formula **(IIa)** may be converted into the compound of formula **(I)** by carrying out the following transformations:
when R¹ is hydrogen:

(i) esterification – incorporating the R¹ group;

and then in all cases:

15 (ii) thioarylation - incorporating the thioaryl group;

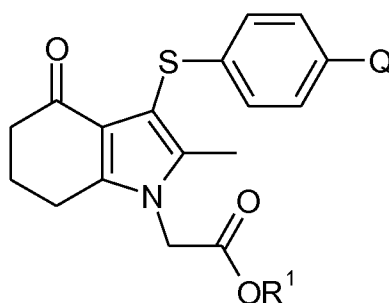
(iii) acetylation and aromatisation – creating the core benzene ring and incorporating the acetyl group;

and subsequently:

(iv) deprotection (de-esterification)- removing the R¹ group;

20 wherein steps (ii) and (iii) may be performed in either order.

In one embodiment there is provided a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIb)**:



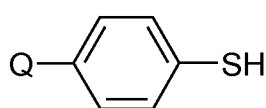
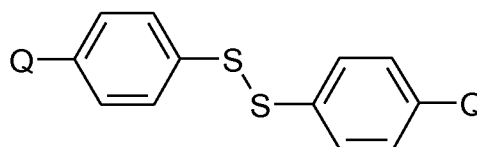
(IIb)

25 wherein R¹ is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted hydrocarbyl and optionally substituted heterocyclyl;
or a salt thereof.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIb)**, or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIb)**, or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as an intermediate for the manufacture of the compound of formula **(I)**, or a salt thereof.

The compound of formula **(IIb)** may be prepared by reacting a compound of formula **(IIa)** as defined herein, with a compound of formula **(IVa)** or **(IVb)**:

**(IVa)****(IVb)**

using a halogenating agent to activate the reactant or to convert to the sulfenyl halide. For example a chlorinating agent may be used. Examples of suitable chlorinating agents include trichloroisocyanuric acid (TCCA), sulphuryl chloride and chlorine.

The compound of formula **(IIa)** may be converted into the compound of formula **(I)** by carrying out the following transformations:

when **R¹** is hydrogen:

(i) esterification – incorporating an **R¹** group;

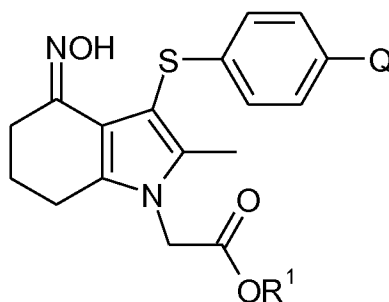
and then in all cases:

(ii) acetylation and aromatisation – creating the core benzene ring and incorporating the acetyl group;

and subsequently:

(iii) deprotection (i.e. de-esterification)– removing the **R¹** group.

In one embodiment there is provided a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIc)**:



(IIc)

wherein R^1 is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted hydrocarbyl and optionally substituted heterocyclyl; or a salt thereof.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIc)**, or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IIc)**, or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as an intermediate for the manufacture of the compound of formula **(I)**, or a salt thereof.

The compound of formula **(IIc)** may be prepared by reacting a compound of formula **(IIb)** with hydroxylamine or a salt thereof, for example hydroxylamine hydrochloride.

The compound of formula **(IIc)** may be converted into the compound of formula **(I)** by carrying out the following transformations:

when R^1 is hydrogen:

(i) esterification – incorporating the R^1 group;

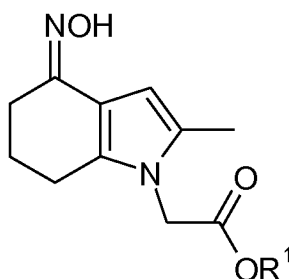
and then in all cases:

(ii) acetylation and aromatisation – creating the core benzene ring and incorporating the acetyl group;

and subsequently:

(iv) deprotection (de-esterification)- removing the R^1 group.

In one embodiment there is provided a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(IId)**:

**(IId)**

wherein R^1 is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted hydrocarbyl and optionally substituted heterocyclyl;

or a salt thereof.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(II_d)**, or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

In one embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)** of formula **(II_d)**, or a salt thereof, as defined herein, as an intermediate for the manufacture of the compound of formula **(I)**, or a salt thereof.

The compound of formula **(II_d)** may be prepared by reacting a compound of formula **(II_a)** with hydroxylamine or a salt thereof, for example hydroxylamine hydrochloride.

The compound of formula **(II_d)** may be converted into the compound of formula **(I)** by carrying out the following transformations:
when **R¹** is hydrogen:

(i) esterification – incorporating the **R¹** group;

and then in all cases:

(ii) thioarylation - incorporating the thioaryl group;

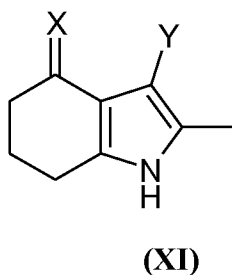
(iii) acetylation and aromatisation – creating the core benzene ring and incorporating the acetyl group;

and subsequently:

(iv) deprotection (de-esterification) - removing the **R¹** group;

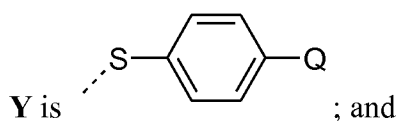
wherein steps (ii) and (iii) may be performed in either order.

In another aspect, there is provided a compound of the formula **(XI)**:



wherein:

X is =O, =N-OH or =N-OC(O)Me;

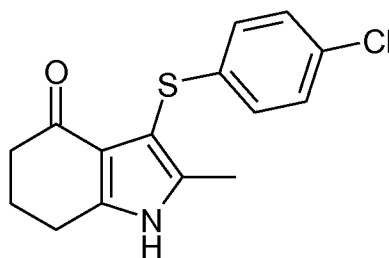


Q is hydrogen or chloro;

or a salt thereof.

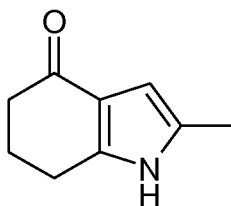
A compound of the formula (XI) may be used to prepare a compound of the formula (I), using, for example, the route described in Scheme VI below.

In one embodiment, there is provided a compound of formula (XIa):



(XIa)

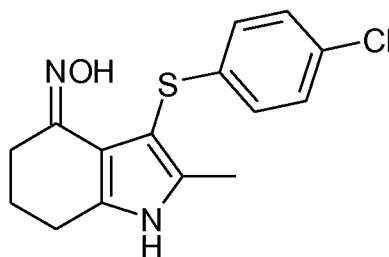
A compound of the formula (XIa) may be prepared from a compound of formula (XII):



(XII)

using similar methods to those described in the preparation of a compound of the formula (IIb) from a compound of the formula (IIa) and (IVa) or (IVb).

In another embodiment, there is provided a compound of formula (XIb):



(XIb)

A compound of formula (XIb) may be prepared from a compound of formula (XIa), using similar methods to those described for the preparation of a compound of formula (IIc) from (IIb).

In one embodiment a “hydrocarbyl” is a radical consisting of hydrogen atoms and from 1 to 15 carbon atoms, wherein the hydrocarbyl may be saturated, partially saturated or fully unsaturated, and may contain linear, branched or cyclic elements.

In one embodiment a “heterocyclyl” is a 4-12 membered monocyclic or bicyclic
5 ring system, wherein the heterocyclyl contains 1-4 heteroatoms each selected from N, S and O, wherein the heterocyclyl may be fully saturated, partially saturated or fully unsaturated.

Those skilled in the art will appreciate that certain compounds of the invention can exist as isomers, for example compounds of formula (II). The invention encompasses all
10 isomeric forms of compounds depicted herein and mixtures thereof unless indicated otherwise.

In this specification, the term “alkyl” includes both straight and branched chain alkyl groups.

References to individual alkyl groups such as “propyl” are specific for the straight
15 chain version only, and references to individual branched chain alkyl groups such as “isopropyl” are specific for the branched chain version only. This convention applies to other radicals described within this specification such as alkenyl radicals, alkynyl radicals, alkoxy radicals and alkanoyl radicals.

For example, “C₁₋₆alkyl” includes C₁₋₄alkyl, C₁₋₃alkyl, methyl, ethyl, propyl,
20 isopropyl and *t*-butyl.

In this specification “C₂₋₆alkenyl” includes C₂₋₃alkenyl, butenyl, isobutenyl, 1,5-hexadien-3-yl.

Examples of the term “C₂₋₆alkynyl” include C₂₋₃alkynyl, butynyl, propynyl and ethynyl.

25 Examples of the term “C₁₋₆alkoxy” include C₁₋₃alkoxy, *t*-butoxy, isopropoxy, butoxy, ethoxy and methoxy.

Examples of the term “(C₁₋₆alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0 to 2” include “(C₁₋₆alkyl)-S-”, “(C₁₋₃alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0 to 2”, “(C₁₋₃alkyl)-S(O)₂-”, isopropylsulfanyl, propylsulfonyl, mesyl and ethylsulfanyl, butanesulfinyl and
30 isopentylsulfinyl.

Examples of the term “C₁₋₆alkoxycarbonyl” include C₁₋₃alkoxycarbonyl, methoxycarbonyl, ethoxycarbonyl, isopropoxycarbonyl and isopentoxycarbonyl.

Examples of the term “C₁₋₆alkylsulfonyl” include C₁₋₃alkylsulfonyl, mesyl, ethylsulfonyl, isopropylsulfonyl and isobutylsulfonyl.

Examples of the term “C₁₋₆alkanoyl” include C₁₋₃alkanoyl, formyl, acetyl and propionyl.

5 Examples of the term “N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)amino” include N-(C₁₋₃alkyl)amino, methylamino, isopropylamino and isohexylamino.

Examples of the term “N,N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂amino” include N,N-(C₁₋₃alkyl)₂amino, N,N-dimethylamino, N-isopropyl-N-methylamino and N-pentyl-N-ethylamino.

10 Examples of the term “N-(C₁₋₆alkanoyl)-N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)amino” include N-(C₁₋₃alkanoyl)-N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)amino, N-propionoyl-N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)amino, N-propionoylamino, N-acetyl-N-methylamino and N-acetyl-N-cyclopropylamino.

Examples of “N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)carbamoyl” include N-(C₁₋₃alkyl)carbamoyl, N-isopentylaminocarbonyl, N-methylaminocarbonyl and N-ethylaminocarbonyl.

15 Examples of “N,N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂carbamoyl” include N,N-(C₁₋₃alkyl)₂carbamoyl, N-isopentyl-N-ethylaminocarbonyl, N,N-dimethylaminocarbonyl and N-methyl-N-ethylaminocarbonyl.

Examples of “N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)sulfamoyl” include N-(C₁₋₃alkyl)sulfamoyl, N-isopentylsulfamoyl, N-methylsulfamoyl and N-ethylsulfamoyl.

20 Examples of “N,N-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂sulfamoyl” include N,N-(C₁₋₃alkyl)₂sulfamoyl, N-isopentyl-N-ethylsulfamoyl, N,N-dimethylsulfamoyl and N-methyl-N-ethylsulfamoyl.

25 A salt formed from a compound of the invention where **R**¹ is hydrogen may be an alkali metal salt, for example a sodium or potassium salt, an alkaline earth metal salt, for example a calcium or magnesium salt, an ammonium salt or a salt with an organic base, for example a salt with methylamine, dimethylamine, trimethylamine, piperidine, morpholine or triethanolamine.

A salt of a compound of the invention where **R**¹ contains a basic group, is for example, an acid-addition salt with, for example, an inorganic or organic acid, for example hydrochloric, hydrobromic, sulphuric, phosphoric, trifluoroacetic, citric or maleic acid.

30 A salt of a compound of the invention where **R**¹ contains an acidic group, is for example an alkali metal salt, for example a sodium or potassium salt, an alkaline earth metal salt, for example a calcium or magnesium salt, an ammonium salt or a salt with an

organic base, for example a salt with methylamine, dimethylamine, trimethylamine, piperidine, morpholine or triethanolamine.

In one embodiment R^1 is hydrogen or an optionally substituted hydrocarbyl.

In one embodiment the optional substituents on a “hydrocarbyl” and “heterocyclyl”
 5 are selected from halo, nitro, cyano, hydroxy, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkanoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)amino, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂amino, N -(C_{1-6} alkanoyl)amino, C_{1-6} alkoxycarbonyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkanoyl)- N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)amino, carbamoyl, sulfamoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)carbamoyl, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂carbamoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)sulfamoyl, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂sulfamoyl and (C_{1-6} alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0-2.

10 In a further embodiment R^1 is hydrogen or an unsubstituted hydrocarbyl.

In a further embodiment R^1 is hydrogen.

In a further embodiment R^1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbyl.

In a further embodiment R^1 is an unsubstituted hydrocarbyl.

In a further embodiment R^1 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl,
 15 C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, optionally substituted phenyl and optionally substituted benzyl;

In a further embodiment R^1 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl; wherein the phenyl and benzyl are optionally substituted by one or more halo, nitro, cyano, hydroxy, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkanoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)amino, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂amino, N -(C_{1-6} alkanoyl)amino,
 20 N -(C_{1-6} alkanoyl)- N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)amino, carbamoyl, sulfamoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)carbamoyl, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂carbamoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)sulfamoyl, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂sulfamoyl or (C_{1-6} alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0-2.

In a further embodiment R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl; wherein the phenyl and benzyl are optionally substituted by one or more halo, nitro, cyano, hydroxy, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkanoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)amino, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂amino, N -(C_{1-6} alkanoyl)amino,
 25 N -(C_{1-6} alkanoyl)- N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)amino, carbamoyl, sulfamoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)carbamoyl, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂carbamoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)sulfamoyl, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂sulfamoyl or (C_{1-6} alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0-2.
 30

In a further embodiment R^1 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl.

In a further embodiment R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl.

In a further embodiment R^1 is selected from hydrogen and C_{1-6} alkyl.

In a further embodiment R^1 is selected from hydrogen and ethyl.

5 In a further embodiment R^1 is C_{1-6} alkyl.

In a further embodiment R^1 is ethyl.

In a further embodiment Q is chloro.

In a further embodiment X is $=O$ or $=N-OH$.

In a further embodiment X is $=N-OC(O)Me$.

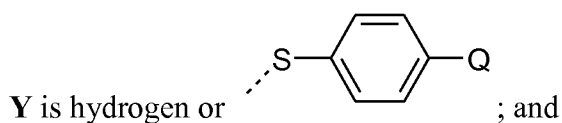
10 In a further embodiment X is $=O$.

In a further embodiment X is $=N-OH$.

Therefore, in one embodiment there is provided a compound of formula (II), as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

15 R^1 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl; wherein the phenyl and benzyl are optionally substituted by one or more halo, nitro, cyano, hydroxy, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkanoyl, $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)amino, $N,N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)₂amino, $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkanoyl)amino, $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkanoyl)- $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)amino, carbamoyl, sulfamoyl, $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)carbamoyl, $N,N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)₂carbamoyl, $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)sulfamoyl, $N,N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)₂sulfamoyl or $(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)- $S(O)_a$ - wherein a is 0-2;

20 X is $=O$ or $=N-OH$;



Q is hydrogen or chloro;

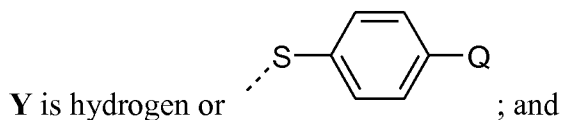
or a salt thereof.

25 In a further embodiment there is provided a compound of formula (II), as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl; wherein the phenyl and benzyl are optionally substituted by one or more halo, nitro, cyano, hydroxy, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkanoyl, $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)amino, $N,N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)₂amino, $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkanoyl)amino, $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkanoyl)- $N-(C_{1-6}$ alkyl)amino,

carbamoyl, sulfamoyl, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)carbamoyl, *N,N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂carbamoyl, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)sulfamoyl, *N,N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂sulfamoyl or (C₁₋₆alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0-2;

X is =O or =N-OH;



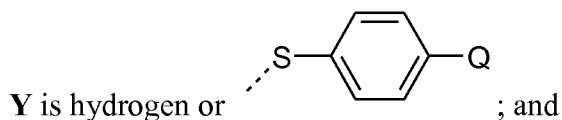
Q is hydrogen or chloro;

or a salt thereof.

In a further embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)**, as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R¹ is selected from C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, C₂₋₆alkynyl, C₃₋₆cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl; wherein the phenyl and benzyl are optionally substituted by one or more halo, nitro, cyano, hydroxy, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₁₋₆alkoxy, C₁₋₆alkanoyl, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)amino, *N,N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂amino, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkanoyl)amino, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkanoyl)-*N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)amino, carbamoyl, sulfamoyl, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)carbamoyl, *N,N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂carbamoyl, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)sulfamoyl, *N,N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂sulfamoyl or (C₁₋₆alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0-2;

X is =O or =N-OH;



Q is hydrogen or chloro;

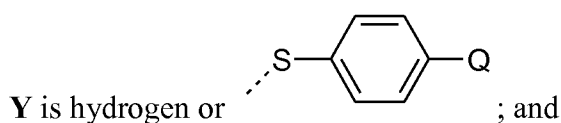
or a salt thereof;

as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

In a further embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)**, as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R¹ is selected from C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, C₂₋₆alkynyl, C₃₋₆cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl; wherein the phenyl and benzyl are optionally substituted by one or more halo, nitro, cyano, hydroxy, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₁₋₆alkoxy, C₁₋₆alkanoyl, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)amino, *N,N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂amino, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkanoyl)amino, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkanoyl)-*N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)amino, carbamoyl, sulfamoyl, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)carbamoyl, *N,N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂carbamoyl, *N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)sulfamoyl, *N,N*-(C₁₋₆alkyl)₂sulfamoyl or (C₁₋₆alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0-2;

X is =O or =N-OH;



Q is hydrogen or chloro;

or a salt thereof;

as an intermediate for the preparation of the compound of formula (I), or a salt thereof.

In a further embodiment there is provided a compound of formula (II), as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl;

X is =O or =N-OH;

Y is hydrogen or 4-chlorophenylsulfanyl;

or a salt thereof.

In a further embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula (II), as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl;

X is =O or =N-OH;

Y is hydrogen or 4-chlorophenylsulfanyl;

or a salt thereof;

as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

In a further embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula (II), as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl;

X is =O or =N-OH;

Y is hydrogen or 4-chlorophenylsulfanyl;

or a salt thereof;

as an intermediate for the manufacture of the compound of formula (I), or a salt thereof.

In a further embodiment there is provided a compound of formula (II), as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl;

X is =O or =N-OH;

Y is hydrogen or 4-chlorophenylsulfanyl;

or a salt thereof.

In a further embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)**, as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R¹ is selected from C₁₋₆alkyl;

X is =O or =N-OH;

Y is hydrogen or 4-chlorophenylsulfanyl;

or a salt thereof;

as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

In a further embodiment there is provided the use of a compound of formula **(II)**, as depicted hereinabove, wherein:

R¹ is selected from C₁₋₆alkyl;

X is =O or =N-OH;

Y is hydrogen or 4-chlorophenylsulfanyl;

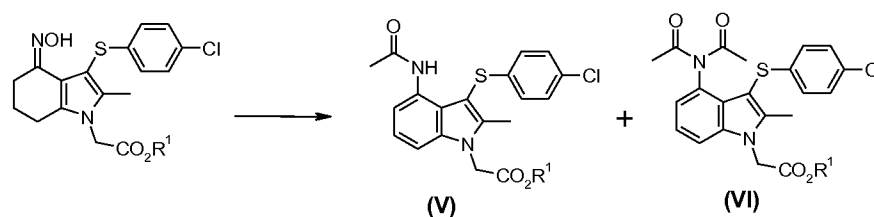
or a salt thereof;

as an intermediate for the manufacture of the compound of formula **(I)**, or a salt thereof.

A further aspect of the invention provides a process for the preparation of the pharmaceutical compound of formula **(I)**, or a salt or ester thereof, comprising reaction of a compound of formula **(IIc)**, as depicted hereinbefore, with an acetylating agent; wherein the values of **R**¹ is as defined hereinabove and wherein **Q** is chloro; and thereafter, optionally reacting with acid or base.

The reaction with an acid or base achieves hydrolysis of the ester group (when **R**¹ is other than hydrogen) to provide the compound of formula **(I)** or a salt thereof.

The intermediate product mixture may contain predominantly the desired amide of formula **(V)** or it may comprise a mixture of the amide of formula **(V)** and the imide of formula **(VI)** as shown in **Scheme (II)**:



Scheme (II)

The mixture of amide (V) and imide (VI) may be converted to predominantly amide (V) by treatment with aqueous acid in the presence of an organic co-solvent, for example ethanol. Alternatively the mixture may be subjected to de-esterification (hydrolysis) conditions under which the imide group is converted to the amide, and the product isolated is the compound of formula (I) or a salt thereof. Amide (V) may optionally be recrystallised from a solvent such as ethanol to increase purity prior to de-esterification.

In one embodiment there is provided a process comprising reaction of a compound of formula (II) of formula (IIc), as depicted hereinbefore, with an acetylating agent; wherein the values of R^1 are as defined in claims 1 to 8, and wherein Q is chloro.

Therefore in one embodiment there is provided a process for the preparation of the pharmaceutical compound of formula (I), or a salt thereof, comprising reaction of a compound of formula (IIc), as depicted hereinbefore, with an acetylating agent; wherein the values of R^1 is as defined hereinabove and wherein Q is chloro; and thereafter de-esterifying to provide the compound of formula (I), or a salt thereof.

The process to de-esterify may involve reaction with a base or with an acid or with hydrogen in the presence of a catalyst.

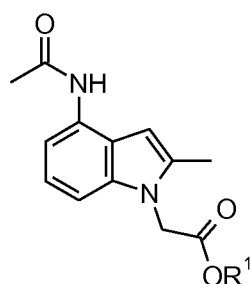
In one embodiment the process to de-esterify may involve reaction with a base.

Surprisingly it has been found that certain reaction conditions advantageously disfavour the formation of imide. For example, by reducing the amount of acetic anhydride to 4 molar eq. and using sodium iodide at 85 °C in order to keep the reaction time around 4.5 h.

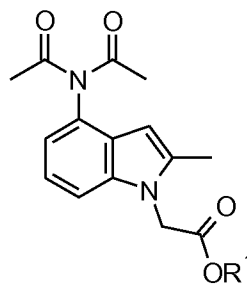
Examples of suitable bases are inorganic bases, for example metal hydroxides, for example LiOH, NaOH or KOH.

As discussed hereinabove, the compound of formula (IIId) has been found to be surprisingly useful as an intermediate for the preparation of pharmaceutical compound (I) or salts thereof. In a further aspect of the invention there is provided a process comprising the reaction of a compound of formula (IIId) as depicted hereinbefore, with an acetylating agent, wherein R^1 is as defined herein.

The products of this reaction are amide (VI) and imide (VII):



(VI)



(VII)

These products may be carried forward as a mixture to the next stage and the hydrolysis conditions used later in the synthesis causes conversion of imide to desired amide to deliver the compound of formula **(I)** or a salt thereof.

The acetylation processes involving the compound of formula **(IIc)** and **(IId)** may be carried out in a solvent such as an aromatic hydrocarbon solvent, for example toluene, xylene or mesitylene, or a ketone solvent, for example methylisobutylketone (MIBK), methylethylketone (MEK), carboxylic acid solvents, for example acetic acid, or ether solvents, for example 2-methyltetrahydrofuran.

The acetylation process involving the compound of formula **(IIc)** and **(IId)** works best at an elevated temperature, for example up to around 140°C.

A further aspect of the present invention provides an improved process wherein the reaction of a compound of formula **(IIc)** or **(IId)** with an acetylating agent is carried out in the presence of an iodide salt.

Surprisingly, the presence of an iodide salt in the reaction has been found to allow a reduction in the temperature required for the reaction to proceed efficiently. Examples of iodide salts are metal iodides, for example KI, NaI, LiI, and ammonium iodide salts, for example (C₁₋₆alkyl)₄NI, for example tetra-*N*-butylammonium iodide. The reaction temperature required for these processes can be reduced to 80-100°C from the usual much higher temperatures by inclusion of an iodide salt in the reaction mixture. A sub-stoichiometric quantity of iodide salt is sufficient to provide the beneficial effect.

Other conditions have been invented that allow efficient reaction at an advantageously reduced temperature without the presence of an iodide salt. Surprisingly the use of a carboxylic acid as a co-solvent in the reaction results in an efficient reaction at an advantageously reduced temperature.

Therefore, a further aspect of the invention provides an improved process wherein the reaction of a compound of formula **(IIc)** or **(IIId)** with an acetylating agent is carried out in the presence of a carboxylic acid co-solvent.

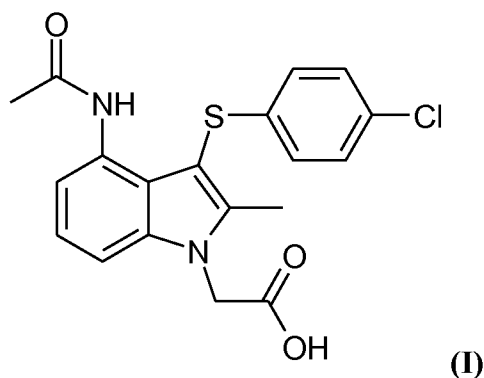
Suitable carboxylic acids co-solvents may be carboxylic acids containing from 1 to 5 7 carbon atoms, for example acetic acid.

For example, use of a 50:50 mixture of xylene or mesitylene and acetic acid allows the reaction to proceed in the absence of an iodide catalyst at a temperature of 105 – 110 °C whereas in the same solvent mixture in the presence of 5 mol% of either sodium iodide or tetrabutylammonium iodide, the reaction proceeds at the lower temperature of 95 – 100 10 °C.

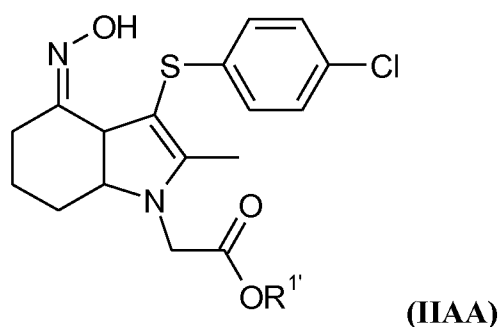
A further aspect of the present invention provides an improved process wherein the acetylation process involving compound **(IIc)** or **(IIId)** is carried out in the presence of a Lewis acid. One example of a Lewis acid is FeCl₃. Surprisingly the presence of a Lewis acid has been found to allow the acetylation reaction to proceed efficiently at much lower 15 temperature than is otherwise required. The presence of FeCl₃ allows the reaction to proceed at a temperature as low as 70°C.

Acetylating agents are well known to the skilled person. Acetylating agents that may be used for the acetylation process involving the compound of formula **(IIc)** and **(IIId)** include acetic anhydride, acetyl halides such as acetyl chloride, and thioesters such as 20 phenyl thioacetate. Phenyl thioacetate was found to give better conversion than with acetic anhydride alone under comparable conditions. Alternatively the process may make use of other acylating agents, for example benzoic anhydride or pivalic anhydride. The amide groups in the products of such reactions would then need to be hydrolysed and the resulting amines then acetylated using an acetylation agent.

25 In a still further embodiment the invention provides a process for the preparation of a compound of formula **(I)**:



which comprises reaction of a compound of formula (IIAA):



where **R^{1'}** is hydrogen or C₁₋₆alkyl with an acylating agent followed by de-esterification.

In one embodiment **R^{1'}** is hydrogen or ethyl.

In one embodiment the acylating agent is Ac₂O.

In one embodiment the process is carried out in the presence of xylene and sodium iodide.

In a still further embodiment the invention provides a compound of formula (I) prepared according to a process as defined in any one of claims 11 to 20.

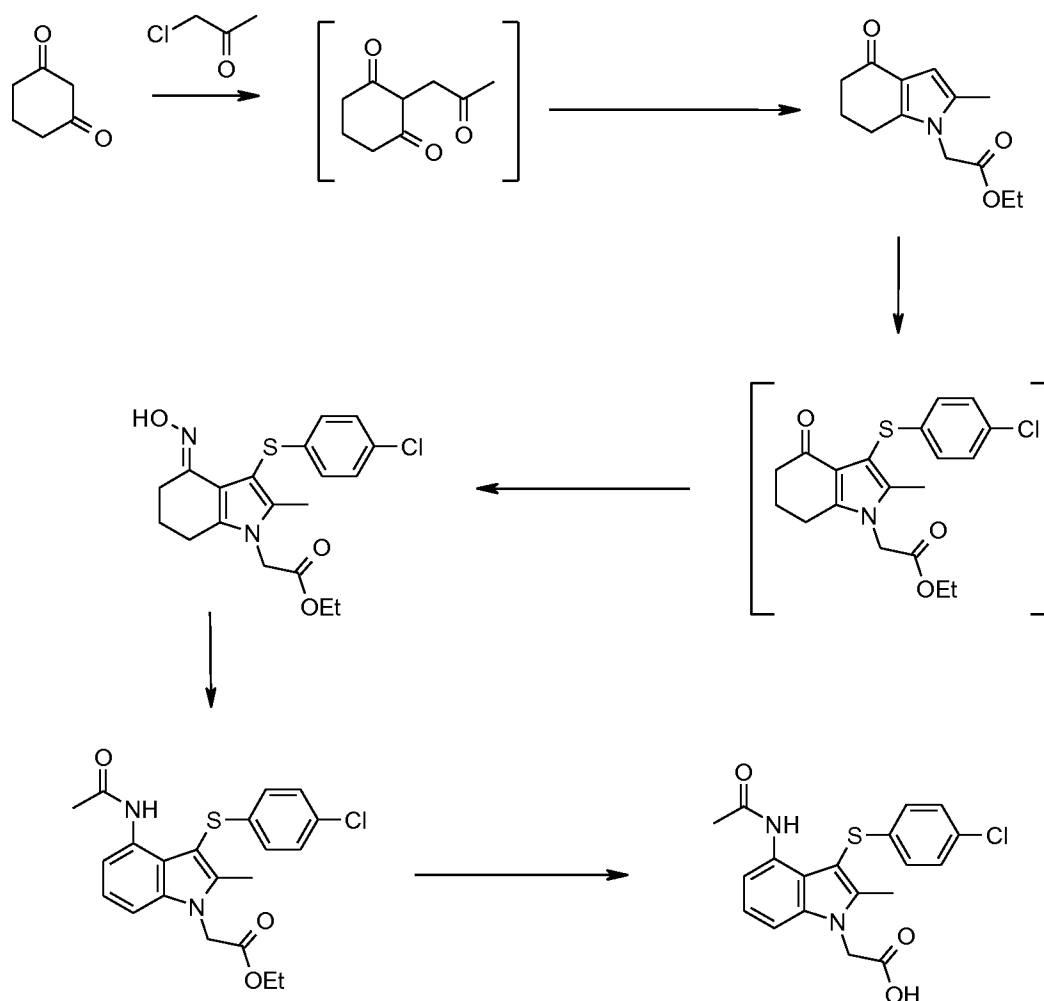
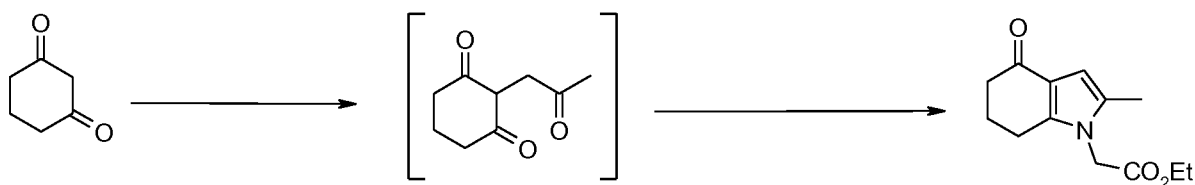
The various aspects of the invention are illustrated by the following Examples.

Three routes are illustrated in **Schemes (III), (IV), (V) and (VI)**, below.

Abbreviations and General Procedures:

The analytical techniques used include gas chromatography (GC), high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC), liquid chromatography – mass spectrometry (LC-MS) and ultra-high performance liquid chromatography – mass spectroscopy (UHPLC-MS). Mass spectrometry data (*m/z*) is provided together with an assignment of the peak(s) observed.

Nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) data was obtained at 300MHz, 400Mz or 500Mhz in d₆-dimethylsulfoxide unless otherwise specified. Standard abbreviations are used (s = singlet, d = doublet, m = multiplet, dd = doublet of doublets, t = triplet, q = quartet, br = broad). Solvents used include ethanol (EtOH), methanol (MeOH), tetrahydrofuran (THF), ethyl acetate (EtOAc), methylisobutylketone (MIBK), methyl *tert*-butyl ether (MTBE) and acetic acid (AcOH). Generally, reactions were carried out under an atmosphere of nitrogen. Unless otherwise stated, procedures were carried out at ambient temperature (room temperature, r.t.), with stirring, for a number of hours (h) or minutes (mins). Mole equiv represents the molar equivalents of the reagent relative to the specified limiting reagent. Rel vol (relative volume) represents the amount of solvent relative to a unit mass of the specified limiting reagent e.g. L/kg. Rel wt (relative weight) represents the amount of a material by weight relative to a unit weight of the specified limiting reagent e.g. kg/kg. Assays by HPLC, GC and NMR were performed against fully characterised reference standards using standard procedures that are well known in the art. TCCA = trichloroisocyanuric acid. GC analysis can be performed on a DB-1 column (30m x 0.25mm id, 0.25 µm) using nitrogen as carrier gas using an appropriate temperature gradient and flame ionisation detection. HPLC analysis can be performed on either a Waters Symmetry C18 column (150mm x 3.0mm, 3.5µm) or Zorbax SB-C8 column (150mm x 3.0mm, 3.5µm) or Hichrom Ace Phenyl column (50mm x 3.0mm, 3µm) eluting with an appropriate aqueous acetonitrile gradient buffered with TFA and UV detection (230 or 250nm). UHPLC was performed on either a BEH C18 column (100mm x 2.1mm, 1.7µm) or BEH Phenyl (100mm x 2.1mm, 1.7µm) eluting with an appropriate aqueous acetonitrile gradient buffered with TFA or ammonium acetate respectively with UV detection (250nm). UHPLC-MS can be done using +ve or -ve electrospray ionisation at a capillary voltage of 3.5kV and a cone voltage increasing from 10 to 60V. LC-MS can be performed on a Hichrom Ace Phenyl column (50mm x 3.0mm, 3µm) eluting with an appropriate aqueous acetonitrile gradient buffered with TFA and UV detection (230 nm) using combined APCI / +ve electrospray ionisation.

Route 1*Scheme (III)*5 **Ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl)acetate**

A solution of KOH (2.54kg, 2.26kg corrected for assay, 40.2 moles) in water (4.0L) was added over 30mins to a solution of cyclohexane-1,3-dione (4.53kg, 4.51kg corrected for assay, 40.2 moles) in EtOH (16.2L), while maintaining the temperature below 30°C. After stirring for 15mins at r.t., freshly distilled chloroacetone (4.39kg, 3.83kg corrected for assay, 41.4mol) was then added slowly to the mixture, maintaining a temperature of 25-

28°C. The resulting slurry was stirred at r.t. for 19h. Inorganic by-products were then removed by filtration and were washed on the filter with EtOH (4.5L). The filtrates were combined to provide 2-(2-oxopropyl)cyclo-hexane-1,3-dione as a solution in EtOH. Assay by GC 26.5% w/w; purity by GC: 82.3 area%). This solution was transferred to a reactor and glycine ethyl ester hydrochloride salt (6.41kg, 6.17kg corrected for assay, 44.2 moles) was added at r.t. with stirring followed by sodium acetate trihydrate (6.04kg, 6.02kg corrected for assay, 44.3 moles). The mixture was diluted with ethanol (28.9 L) then heated under reflux for 2h. EtOH was removed *in vacuo* (-0.850 to -0.900 bar) at 30°C until 40L of distillate had been collected. After cooling the residue to 0°C, water (15L) was added, while maintaining a temperature of 0-5°C. After stirring for a further 1h at this temperature, the solid that separated out was collected by filtration and was then dried *in vacuo* at 35°C with a nitrogen bleed to give the title compound as a solid; 6.7kg; assay by ¹H NMR: 86.6% w/w; weight corrected for assay: 5.80kg (61% over 2 steps); purity by GC: 96.0 area%; *m/z*: 235 (MH⁺); ¹H NMR: (CDCl₃) 1.27-1.32 (3H, t), 2.10-2.17 (2H, m), 2.19 (3H, s), 2.42-2.46 (2H, t), 2.65-2.69 (2H, t), 4.21-4.28 (2H, m), 4.51 (2H, s) and 6.27 (1H, s).

Alternative procedures for synthesising the ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl)acetate

Alternative procedure 1

A solution of potassium hydroxide (23.58g, 20.0g corrected for assay, 357 mmol) in water (36mL) at r.t. was added to a solution of 1,3-cyclohexanedione (39.97g, 356 mmol) in ethanol (144mL) with stirring (exothermic addition). After stirring for 15mins at 20°C, redistilled chloroacetone (37.62g, 33.9g corrected for assay, 366 mmol) was added in one portion and the reaction mixture stirred for 20h at 20°C. The inorganic by products were removed by filtration, washing the filter cake with ethanol (40mL) and the filtrates were combined to provide 2-(2-oxo-propyl)cyclohexane-1,3-dione as a solution in aqueous ethanol. To this solution were added glycine ethyl ester hydrochloride (54.73g, 392 mmol) and anhydrous sodium acetate (32.19g, 392 mmol). The reaction mixture was heated to reflux (75°C internal temperature) for 1h then cooled to 20°C and stirred for 19h. The mixture was heated to reflux (internal temperature 75°C) and water (116mL) added, then

cooled to 20°C over 30 mins. A small amount of 2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl)-acetic acid, ethyl ester was added as a seed (10mg) and, after a few minutes, crystallization of the product was observed. The slurry was stirred for 30mins, then cooled to 5°C and stirred for 18h. The solid was collected by filtration, washed with water (2 x 80mL) followed by *tert*-butyl methyl ether (2 x 80mL) and then dried *in vacuo* at 40°C for 20h to provide ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl)acetate as a pale yellow crystalline solid, 41.77g (49.8% yield). MP 105.1 to 105.4°C. Assay by ¹H-NMR 99.3% w/w. Purity by GC 100 area%.

Alternative Procedure 2

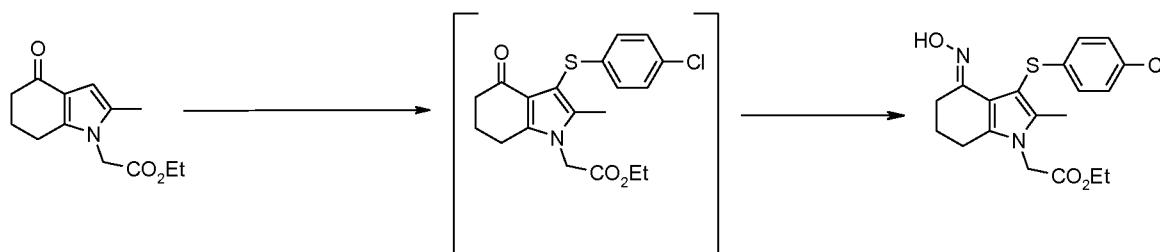
In reaction vessel 1, potassium hydroxide (11.78g, 10.0g corrected for assay, 178mmol) was dissolved in water (72mL) with stirring (highly exothermic) then the solution was cooled back to 20°C. 1,3-cyclohexanedione (20.0g, 178 mmol) was added (exothermic addition) and the resulting dark red solution was stirred at 20°C for 5 mins. Redistilled chloroacetone (18.9g, 17.0g corrected for assay, 184 mmol) was added in one portion, rinsing in with ethanol (18mL) and the reaction mixture was stirred overnight at 20°C. The resulting solution of 2-(2-oxopropyl)cyclohexane-1,3-dione, volume 124mL, was split into 4 equal portions. Glycine ethyl ester hydrochloride (6.85g, 49.0 mmol), anhydrous sodium acetate (4.02g, 49.0 mmol), water (26.5mL) and ethanol (5.0mL) were charged to reaction vessel 2 and stirring started. One portion of the solution of 2-(2-oxopropyl)cyclohexane-1,3-dione prepared above (31mL) was then added to the contents of reaction vessel 2 with stirring and the resulting mixture was heated to 75°C, held at this temperature for 2h, then cooled to 20°C over 55 mins. After stirring overnight at 20°C, the solid was collected by filtration, washed with water (10mL), *tert*-butyl methyl ether (2 x 10mL) and then dried *in vacuo* 40°C for 20h to provide (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl)-acetic acid ethyl ester as a beige solid, 5.88g (56.0% yield). MP 101.2 to 103.5°C. Assay by ¹H-NMR 95.3%w/w. Purity by GC 99.25 area%.

Alternative Procedure 3

A solution of potassium hydroxide (1.0 mole equiv) in water (0.9 rel vol) was added to a suspension of 1,3-cyclohexanedione (1.0 mole equiv, limiting reagent) in water (1.1 rel vol) with stirring over approximately 1 hour maintaining the temperature below 30 °C.

After a further 15mins, chloroacetone (1.03 mole equiv) was added over approximately 4 hours then the reaction mixture was stirred overnight at 20°C. Glycine ethyl ester hydrochloride (1.1 mole equiv) and ethyl acetate (2 rel vol) were added followed by sodium acetate (1.1 mole equiv) and water (2 rel vol). The reaction mixture was heated at 60°C for 2h, then cooled to 50°C where the aqueous phase was separated off and discarded. MTBE (4 rel vol) was added to the organic phase, the solution was warmed back up to 50°C and then cooled to 35°C over 20mins. A seed of ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate (0.0001 mole equiv) was added and the mixture cooled to 5°C over 60mins and aged overnight. The solid product was collected by filtration, washed with water (2 rel vol), followed by MTBE (2 x 2 rel vol) and then dried at 40°C under vacuum to provide the title compound in 62% yield; purity 98% w/w.

Ethyl [3-(4-chloro-phenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate



TCCA (1.16kg, 5.01moles) was added to a solution of bis-(4-chloro-phenyl)disulfide (4.83kg, 4.80kg corrected for assay, 16.7 moles) in EtOAc (56L). The mixture was cooled to 0°C and held at this temperature for 45mins. Ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate (6.48kg, 5.61kg corrected for assay, 23.9 moles) was then added in three portions (mildly exothermic). After stirring for 30mins a sample was removed for analysis by HPLC then a solution of NaHCO₃ (1.12kg, 13.3 moles) in water (22.5L) was added. The mixture was warmed to r.t. over 30mins and after stirring for a further 15mins, a solid by-product was removed by filtration and washed with EtOAc (6.5L). The filtrates were combined and the phases were allowed to separate. The aqueous layer was separated and extracted with EtOAc (11.2L). The organic layers were combined and analysed which showed an assay by HPLC of 9.2% w/w and a purity by HPLC of 77.7 area%. The organic

solution was then concentrated *in vacuo* until a volume of ~10-12L remained (distillate volume ~60L). EtOH (38.9L) was added to the residue and distillation continued until ~35L of distillate had been collected to leave the intermediate ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate as a solution in EtOH. Further EtOH (6.5L) was added to this solution followed by hydroxylamine hydrochloride (2.15kg, 30.9 moles) and anhydrous sodium acetate (2.60kg, 2.55kg corrected for assay, 31.1 moles) and the mixture was heated under reflux for 4h. After cooling to r.t. over 1h, the solid product was collected by filtration. The reactor was rinsed with 50% v/v ethanol:water (13L) which was transferred to the filter. After drying briefly on the filter, the damp product was then transferred to a reactor and water (42L) was added. The mixture was heated to 50°C and stirred for 30mins, then cooled back to r.t. The solid product was collected by filtration then charged back into the reactor damp and slurried in ethanol (19.4L) at r.t for 30mins. The solid was collected by filtration, washed with ethanol (9.7L) followed by fresh ethanol (6.5L) and then dried *in vacuo* at 40°C to give the title compound as a solid; 7.00kg; assay by ¹H NMR 87.5% w/w; 6.1kg corrected for assay (65% over 2 steps); purity by HPLC: 88.4 area%; *m/z*: 393 (MH⁺); ¹H NMR: 1.20-1.25 (3H, t), 1.79-1.86 (2H, m), 2.14 (3H, s), 2.50-2.51 (2H, t), 2.54-2.59 (2H, t), 4.15-4.22 (2H, m), 4.83 (2H, s), 6.92-6.95 (2H, d), 7.21-7.24 (2H, d) and 10.22 (1H, s). Data for an isolated sample of the intermediate ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate: ¹H NMR: (CDCl₃) 1.33-1.37 (3H, t), 2.14-2.23 (2H, m), 2.27 (3H, s), 2.45-2.49 (2H, t), 2.74-2.78 (2H, t), 4.27-4.35 (2H, m), 4.64 (2H, s), 7.03-7.08 (2H, d) and 7.13-7.17 (2H, d).

Alternative procedure for synthesising the intermediate ethyl [3-(4-

chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate

Bis-(4-chlorophenyl)disulfide (7.39g, 25.7 mmol) was dissolved in EtOAc (86.5mL) in reaction vessel 1 whilst cooling the mixture to 5°C with stirring, resulting in a pale yellow solution. Sulfuryl chloride (2.1mL, 25.7 mmol) was then added in a single portion (slightly exothermic) giving an orange-coloured solution after 15 mins. In a second reaction vessel, ethyl 2-(2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate (8.65 g, 36.8 mmol) was slurried in EtOAc (34.6mL) with stirring whilst cooling the mixture to 5 °C. The pre-cooled solution in reaction vessel 1 prepared above was added to the second vessel in 4

equal portions over 10 mins maintaining the temperature within the range 5-10 °C, resulting in formation of a dark brown solution containing a small amount of insoluble material. The mixture was then allowed to warm to r.t. over 90 mins with stirring. A solution of sodium hydrogen carbonate (1.73 g, 20.6 mmol) in water (34.6mL) was added and the resulting biphasic mixture was stirred for 15 mins. The layers were allowed to separate and the aqueous phase was discarded. The upper organic phase was dried over magnesium sulfate, which was subsequently removed by filtration to provide a solution of ethyl 2-(2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate in ethyl acetate, weight 132.6 g. Assay by HPLC 8.4 % w/w, therefore 11.1 g ethyl 2-(2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate present (80%) yield.

Alternative Procedures for the Synthesis of ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate

Alternative Procedure 1

In vessel 1, bis-(4-chlorobenzene)disulfide (0.53 mole equiv) was suspended in ethyl acetate (3.5 rel vol) with stirring and the mixture was cooled to 0°C. Sulfuryl chloride (0.53 mole equiv) was added in one portion, the residues were washed in with ethyl acetate (0.5 rel vol) and the mixture stirred at 0°C for approximately 1h. Ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate (1.0 mole equiv, limiting reagent) and ethyl acetate (5 rel vol) were charged to vessel 2 and the mixture stirred at 20°C. The contents of vessel 1 were added to the mixture in vessel 2 over approximately 30mins, washing the residues in with ethyl acetate (0.5 rel vol). Aqueous sodium carbonate (1M, 1.45 mole equiv) was added slowly (gas evolution), the mixture was stirred then the layers were allowed to separate, discarding the lower aqueous phase. A solution of sodium chloride (1.45 mole equiv) in water (5 rel vol) was added to the organic phase, the mixture was stirred then the layers allowed to separate, discarding the lower aqueous phase. The organic layer was concentrated by distillation at atmospheric pressure to around 4 rel vol. Hydroxylamine hydrochloride (1.0 mole equiv) was charged to the concentrate at 20°C followed by tributylamine (1.0 mole equiv) and ethanol (2 rel vol) and the resulting mixture was heated at 60°C for 4h. The mixture was cooled to 20°C, the solid was collected by filtration, washed with ethyl acetate (2 x 2 rel vol) then dried at 40°C under vacuum to provide the title compound in 87.3 % yield; purity 99 % w/w.

Alternative Procedure 2

In vessel 1, bis-(4-chlorobenzene)disulfide (0.53 mole equiv) was suspended in ethyl acetate (4 rel vol) with stirring and the mixture cooled to 5°C. Sulfuryl chloride (0.53 mole equiv) was added in one portion and the mixture stirred at 5°C for approximately 1h. Ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate (1.0 equiv, limiting reagent) and ethyl acetate (5 rel vol) were charged to vessel 2 and the mixture stirred at 20°C. The contents of vessel 1 were added to the mixture in vessel 2 over approximately 30mins, washing in the residues with ethyl acetate (0.5 rel vol). Triethylamine (1.0 mole equiv) was added and the mixture stirred overnight. The solid by product was removed by filtration, the filter cake was washed with ethyl acetate (1 rel vol) and the combined filtrates evaporated *in vacuo*. The residue was dissolved in a mixture of ethyl acetate (4 rel vol) and ethanol (2 rel vol) then hydroxylamine hydrochloride (1.0 mole equiv) and tributylamine (1.0 mole equiv) added. The mixture was heated at 60°C for 4h, then cooled to 20°C. The product was collected by filtration, washed with ethyl acetate (2 x 2 rel vol) then dried at 40°C under vacuum to provide the title compound in 83% yield; purity by HPLC 95.95 area%.

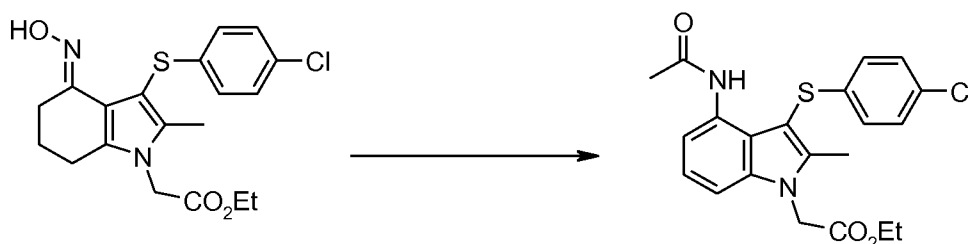
Alternative Procedure 3

In vessel 1, bis-(4-chlorobenzene)disulfide (0.53 mole equiv) was suspended in ethyl acetate (4 rel vol) and cooled to 5°C. The mixture was treated with chlorine at 5°C for 15 minutes, then purged with nitrogen and degassed under vacuum. Ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate (1.0 equiv, limiting reagent) and ethyl acetate (4.5 rel vol) were charged to vessel 2 and the mixture stirred at 20°C. The contents of vessel 1 were added to the mixture in vessel 2 over approximately 30mins, washing in the residues were with ethyl acetate (0.5 rel vol). Triethylamine (1.5 mole equiv) was added and the mixture stirred overnight. The solid by product was removed by filtration and washed with ethyl acetate (1 rel vol). Hydroxylamine hydrochloride (1.0 mole equiv) was charged to another vessel followed by the combined filtrates. Tributylamine (1.0 mole equiv) and ethanol (2 L/kg) were added and the resulting mixture was heated at 60°C for 4h. Further hydroxylamine hydrochloride (0.5 mole equiv) and tributylamine (0.5 mole equiv) were added then the mixture was heated at 60°C for 4h. The mixture was cooled to 20°C, the solid product was collected by filtration, washed with ethyl acetate (2 x 2 rel vol) then

dried at 40°C under vacuum to provide the title compound in 80.1% yield; purity by HPLC 96.5 area%.

Ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl]acetate

5



Method 1

A stirred slurry of ethyl [3-(4-chloro-phenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl]acetate (1.15kg, 1.00kg corrected for assay, 2.56 moles) and powdered NaI (191.5g, 1.28 moles) in xylene (7.0L) was heated to 85°C. Acetic anhydride (1.06kg, 1.05kg corrected for assay, 10.2 moles) was then added over 1h at 83-85°C. The acetylated oxime is expected to be an intermediate formed in this reaction. After maintaining at this temperature for 4.5h, the mixture was cooled to 45-50°C and solvent was removed *in vacuo* (-830 to -850 mbar). Xylene (7.0L) was added to the residue, followed by water (2.0L), and the mixture was heated to 60°C to give 2 clear phases. The aqueous layer was separated off, and the organic phase was concentrated *in vacuo* at 45-50°C until ~10L of distillate had been collected and crystallisation was observed in the residue. EtOH (2.0L) was added to the residue which was then concentrated *in vacuo* at 45-50°C. Further EtOH (2.0L) was added to the residue which was then cooled to 10°C over 30mins and held at this temperature for 1h. The solid product was collected by filtration, washed with EtOH (1.0L) then dried *in vacuo* at 40°C for 12h to afford crude ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl]acetate as a solid; 0.70kg; assay by ¹H NMR: 96.8% w/w; 0.68kg corrected for assay (64%); purity by HPLC: 97.9 area%. Crude ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl]acetate (0.50kg) was combined with the damp products from two similar preparations carried out at 2.00kg (corrected input) scale (4.88kg total weight) in EtOH (42.8L) and the mixture was heated to 75°C. After holding for 15 mins at this temperature, the resulting solution was then cooled to 15°C over 2.5h causing crystallisation. The solid

product was collected by filtration, washed on the filter with EtOH (4.76L) then dried *in vacuo* at 40°C to give the title compound as a solid; 3.25kg; assay by ¹H NMR 96.8% w/w; yield corrected for assay: 3.15kg (63%); purity by HPLC: 98.6 area%; *m/z*: 417 (MH⁺); ¹H NMR: 1.12-1.24 (3H, t), 1.87 (3H, s), 2.40 (3H, s), 4.15-4.22 (2H, q), 5.23 (2H, s), 6.97-7.00 (2H, d), 7.09-7.12 (1H, m), 7.28-7.38 (3H, m), 7.48-7.51 (1H, d), 9.50 (1H, br s).

Method 2

A stirred slurry of ethyl [3-(4-chloro-phenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (571mg, 500mg corrected for assay, 1.11mmol) in xylene (2.5mL) and acetic acid (2.5ml) was heated to 107°C. Acetic anhydride (481μl, 4.45mmol) was then added. After heating to 95-100°C for 2h, analysis by HPLC indicated presence of 79 area% of ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate in the reaction mixture (identified by comparison of retention time with a reference material).

Method 3

In flask 1, a mixture of sodium iodide (171.6mg, 1.14 mmol) in xylene (12.5mL), acetic acid (12.5ml) and acetic anhydride (4.2mL, 44.54mmoles) was heated to 97°C. In flask 2, acetic anhydride (4.2mL, 44.5 mmol) was added to a stirred slurry of ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (10g, 22.3 mmol corrected for assay) in xylene (12.5mL) and acetic acid (12.5ml) at ambient temperature. The mixture in flask 2 was added to the mixture in flask 1 over 2-3 hours maintaining the temperature at 97°C. The reaction was held at this temperature for a further 2 hours following the end of the addition. The reaction was cooled to 60°C and split into 2 equal size portions. One of these portions was cooled to r.t. and propan-1-ol (25mL) was added, following by water (25mL), added over 15 minutes, effecting a precipitation. After stirring for 1h, the solid product was collected by filtration, washed with propan-1-ol (2 x 10 mL) and dried *in vacuo* at 40°C to afford crude ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate as a solid; 4.32g (91% based on work up of half of the reaction mixture). Purity by HPLC 97.15 area%.

Method 4

A mixture of sodium iodide (0.05 mol equiv) in xylene (1.0 rel vol), acetic acid (1.0 rel vol) and acetic anhydride (1.2 mole equiv) was heated to 97-103°C in vessel 1 with stirring. In vessel 2, acetic anhydride (1.3 mole equiv) was added to a stirred slurry of

ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (1 mole equiv, limiting reagent) in xylene (1.0 rel vol) and acetic acid (1.0 rel vol) at 19 - 25°C. After stirring at this temperature for 2h, this mixture was added to the solution in reaction vessel 1 over 2.5h, maintaining the temperature at between 98 and 102°C. Vessel 2 was rinsed with a mixture of xylene (0.25 rel vol) and acetic acid (0.25 rel vol) which was added to vessel 1. The reaction was held at 98 to 102°C for a further 1.5h then cooled to 60°C. Xylene (0.9 rel vol) was added followed by a warm (60°C) solution of sodium chloride (0.19 rel wt) in water (1.5 rel vol) and the temperature adjusted to 60°C. The aqueous layer was separated and discarded. A warm (60 °C) solution of sodium thiosulfate (0.1 mole equiv) in water (0.5 rel vol) was added and after mixing, the aqueous layer was separated and discarded. The product was precipitated by the addition of heptanes (3 rel vol) to the organic layer, whilst maintaining the temperature at between 57 and 63 °C. The resulting slurry was cooled to 20°C over 1h then the solid product was collected by centrifugation, washed with ethanol (3.0 rel vol) and dried to afford crude ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate as a solid in 77% yield; purity by UHPLC 97.4 area%.

Crude ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (limiting reagent) was dissolved in a mixture of acetonitrile (9.1 rel vol) and water (4.5 rel vol) by heating to 80°C with stirring. The solution was cooled to 15 °C, after which the resulting solid product was collected by centrifugation, washed with ethanol (1.7 rel vol) then dried to afford ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate as a solid in 92% yield; purity by UHPLC 99.4 area%.

Method 5

A mixture of sodium iodide (0.0625 mol equiv) in xylene (1.99 rel vol), acetic acid (0.27 rel vol) and acetic anhydride (1.27 mole equiv) was heated to 102.5°C in vessel 1 with stirring. In vessel 2, acetic anhydride (1.27 mole equiv) was added to a stirred slurry of ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (1 mole equiv, limiting reagent) in xylene (2.24 rel vol) and acetic acid (0.27 rel vol) at 22°C. After stirring at this temperature for 30mins, this mixture was added to the contents of reaction vessel 1 over 50mins maintaining the temperature at 102.5°C. The reaction was held at this temperature for a further 2.5h. The reaction was cooled to

60°C and sodium thiosulfate (0.05 mole equiv) and water (0.5 rel vol) were added. After mixing, and allowing the layers to separate, the lower aqueous layer was discarded then the organic layer was distilled under vacuum, removing 1.8 rel vol distillate. The temperature

5 The suspension was cooled to 20°C over 1h then the solid product was collected by filtration, washed with ethanol (2 rel vol) and dried *in vacuo* at 40°C to afford crude ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate as a solid; 81% yield; purity by UHPLC 98.3 area%.

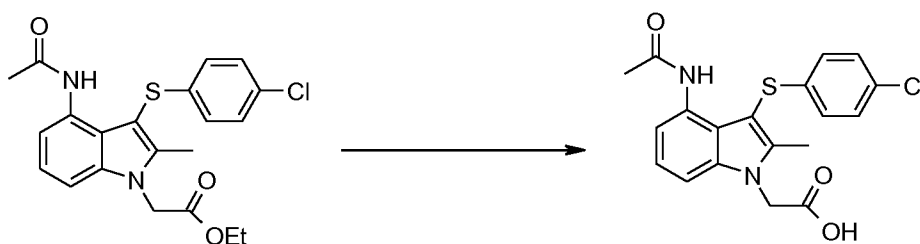
Preparation and isolation of a sample of the intermediate [3-[(4-

10 **chlorophenyl)sulfanyl]-1-(2-ethoxy-2-oxoethyl)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-4-ylidene]amino acetate**

Acetic anhydride (4.33mL, 45.8mmol) was added to a slurry of ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (15g, 38.2mmol) in xylene (33.75mL) and acetic acid (3.75mL) and the mixture
15 stirred at r.t. for around 20mins. A sample of the title compound was isolated by filtration and dried at 40°C. *m/z* 435/437 (MH⁺); ¹H NMR: 7.27 – 7.23 (2H, m), 7.00 – 6.96 (2H, m), 4.92 (2H, s), 4.19 (2H, q, J = 7.1Hz), 2.68 – 2.59 (4H, m), 2.19 (3H, s), 1.90 (3H, s), 1.89 – 1.81 (2H, m), 1.22 (3H, t, J = 7.1Hz).

[4-Acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetic acid

20



To a stirred slurry of ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (3.16kg, 3.05kg corrected for assay, 7.3moles) in 1-propanol (15.3L) was added aqueous NaOH (1M, 15.3L). The mixture was then heated at 70°C for 2h, cooled to
25 40°C then MIBK (30.5L) was added and the mixture reheated to 80°C. Approximately 20% of the resulting biphasic mixture was removed from the reaction vessel to be processed separately. To the remainder, aqueous hydrochloric acid (1M, 13.4L) was added to the solution over a period of 45mins then the resulting slurry was cooled to 15°C over 1h and stirring continued at this temperature for a further 30mins. The solid product was collected

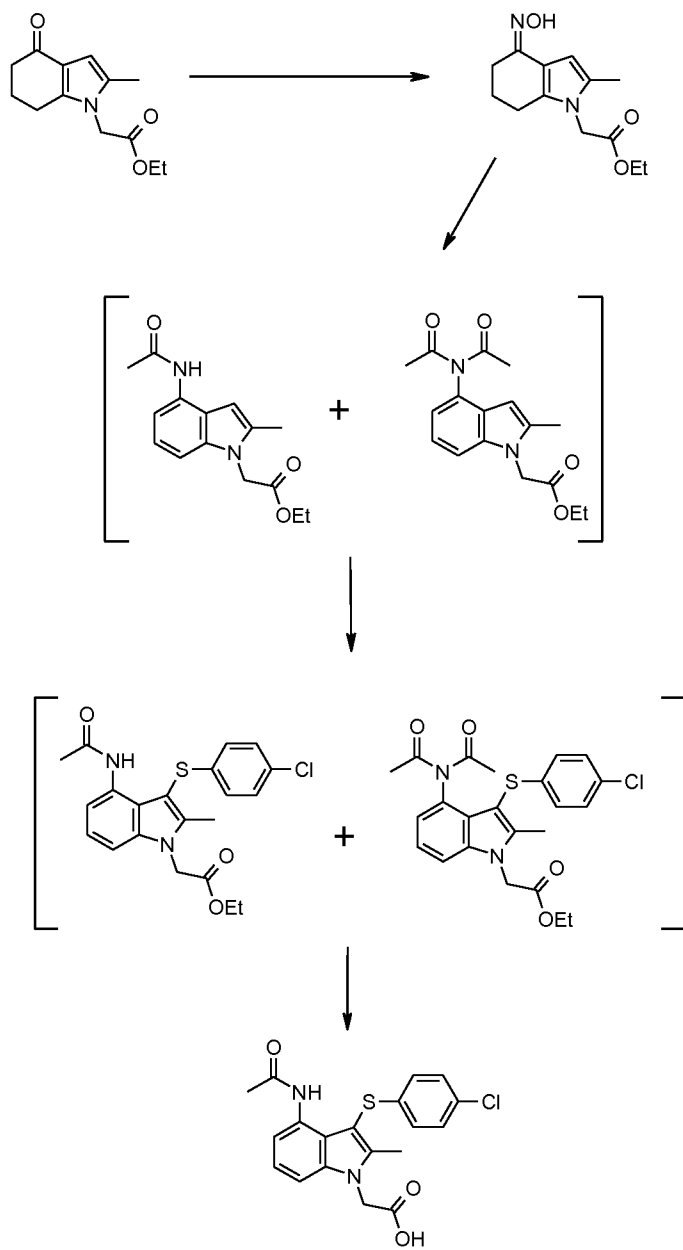
by filtration, washed with water (2 × 9.8L) followed by EtOAc (7.3L) then dried on the filter for 10mins then *in vacuo* at 45°C to give the title compound as a solid; 2.15kg; assay by ¹H NMR: 99.4% w/w; 2.14kg corrected for assay (94%); purity: 99.5 area% by HPLC; *m/z*: 389 (MH⁺); ¹H NMR: 1.86 (3H, s), 2.34 (3H, s), 5.11 (2H, s), 6.97-7.00 (2H, d), 7.08-7.11 (1H, m), 7.27-7.30 (3H, m), 7.47-7.50 (1H, d), 9.50 (1H, br s).

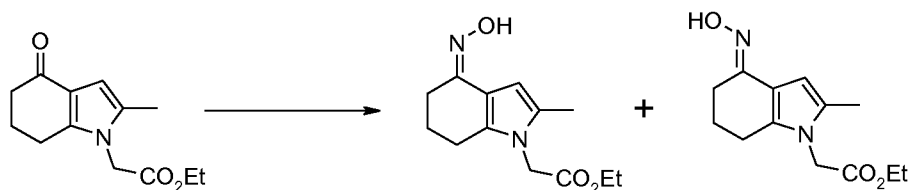
Alternative procedure 1

A mixture of ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (30.0kg, 72.0moles), 1-propanol (120.6kg) and aqueous NaOH (1M, 150.1kg) was heated to 68-72°C and held at this temperature for 16 mins. The resulting solution was cooled to 18-22°C then filtered to remove particulate matter and the filter rinsed with water (15.0kg). MIBK (240.3kg) was added to the combined filtrates and the bi-phasic mixture heated to 83-87°C. Aqueous hydrochloric acid (1M, 60.0kg) was added to the hot solution over a period of around 15 mins, maintaining the reaction temperature between 83 and 87°C followed by two further portions of the same (52.6kg over approximately 20mins and 52.6kg over approximately 20mins). The resulting slurry was cooled to between 13 and 17°C over 2h and stirring continued at this temperature for a further 15mins. The solid product was collected by filtration, washed with water (2 × 60kg) followed by EtOAc (81.1kg) then dried on the filter using nitrogen at 40°C to give the title compound as a white solid; 25.2kg (90%)

Alternative procedure 2

A mixture of ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate (99.9kg, 240moles), ethanol (393kg), water (450kg) and aqueous NaOH (10M, 72.3kg) was heated to 59-65°C and held at this temperature for 30mins. The resulting solution was cooled to 17-23°C then filtered to remove particulate matter and the filter rinsed with water (50.9kg). MIBK (403kg) was added to the combined filtrates and the mixture heated to 55-65°C. A mixture of aqueous hydrochloric acid (10M, 65.0kg) and water (496kg) was added to the hot solution over a period of around 45mins, maintaining the reaction temperature within the specified range. The resulting slurry was cooled to between 12 and 18°C over approximately 60mins and held at this temperature overnight. The solid product was collected by centrifugation, washed with water (396kg) followed by ethanol (249kg) then dried under vacuum at a maximum jacket temperature of 60°C to give the title compound as a white solid; 79.1kg (94%); purity: 99.5 area% by HPLC .

Route 2***Scheme (IV)***

Ethyl [4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl]acetate

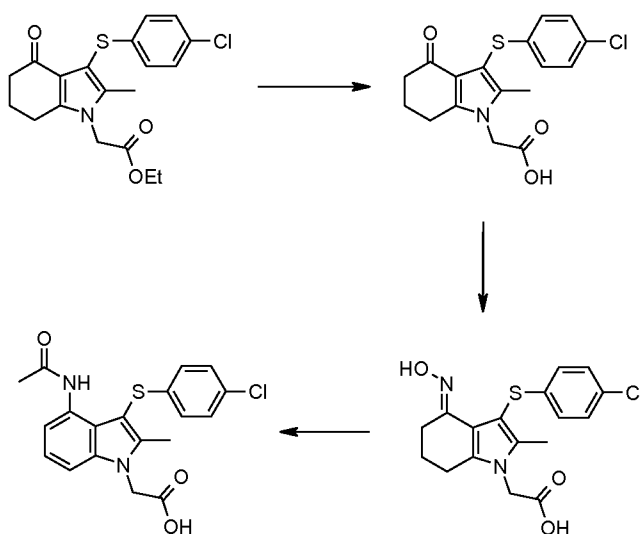
5 A stirred mixture of ethyl (2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl)acetate (59.55g, 54.06g corrected for purity, 0.23 moles), hydroxylamine hydrochloride (24.44g, 23.95g corrected for purity, 0.345 moles) and sodium acetate trihydrate (47.14g, 46.90g corrected for purity, 0.345 moles) in water (108mL) and EtOH (540mL) was heated under reflux for 2.5h. The mixture was then cooled to 10°C, the solid product was collected by
 10 filtration then dried *in vacuo* at 40°C to give the title compound as a mixture of *E*- and *Z*-isomers; 55.4g; assay by HPLC: 99.0% w/w; yield corrected for assay: 54.8g (95.3%); purity by HPLC: 98.9 area% as the sum of the 2 product peaks; LC-MS *m/z*: 250 for each of the product peaks.

[4-Acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl]acetic acid

15 A stirred mixture of ethyl [4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl]acetate (2.068g, 2.00g corrected for purity, 8.0 mmol), acetic anhydride (12.37g, 12.24g corrected for purity, 0.120 moles) and tetrabutylammonium iodide (2.997g, 2.953g corrected for purity, 8.0 mmol) in xylene (16mL) was heated under reflux for 2h. The acetylated oxime is expected to be an intermediate formed in this reaction. After cooling to
 20 r.t. acetic anhydride and xylene were removed *in vacuo* at 50°C. Water (10mL) was added to the sticky residue and the mixture was evaporated to dryness *in vacuo* at 50°C. After cooling to r.t., CH₂Cl₂ (20mL) was added to the residue and stirring continued for 10mins. Insoluble solid material was removed by filtration and the filtrate was concentrated *in vacuo*. Xylene (20mL) was added to the residue, stirring was continued for 10mins before
 25 some additional solid material was removed by filtration. The filtrate was concentrated *in vacuo* at 50°C and EtOAc (20mL) was added to the residue to give the product mixture as a solution in EtOAc; purity by HPLC: 9.67 area% ethyl (4-acetylamino-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl)acetate, and 74.79 area% ethyl (4-diacetylamino-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl)acetate; LC-MS showed *m/z*: 275 and 317, both consistent for MH⁺.

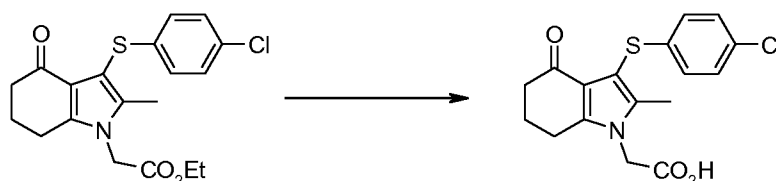
To a solution of TCCA (0.326g, 0.316g corrected for purity, 1.36 mmol) in EtOAc (10mL) was added bis(4-chlorophenyl) disulfide (1.18g, 1.14g corrected for purity, 4.0 mmol). The solution of ethyl (4-acetylamino-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate and ethyl (4-diacetylamino-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetate prepared above was added to the mixture,
5 dropwise, over 10mins. After stirring for 1h, the insoluble solid material was removed by filtration. The filtrate was concentrated *in vacuo* at 40°C and EtOH (10mL) was added to the residue to give the product mixture as a solution in EtOH; purity by HPLC: 87.47 area% as a mixture of ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate and ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-diacetylamino-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate; *m/z*: 417 and 459, both consistent for MH^+ . A solution of NaOH (0.326g, 0.319g corrected for purity, 8.0 mmol) in water (10mL) was added to the mixture of ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate and ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-diacetylamino-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate in EtOH prepared above. After 2h, EtOH was removed *in vacuo* at 35°C. The residual
15 aqueous layer was washed with EtOAc (10mL), diluted with water (10mL) then acidified to pH 4 with aqueous hydrochloric acid. The resulting product was collected by filtration then slurried in EtOH (10mL) at 50°C for 15mins. After cooling back to r.t., the solid was collected by filtration, washed with EtOH (4.0mL) then dried *in vacuo* at 40°C to give the title compound as a solid; 1.1g (35.4% over 3 steps); purity by HPLC: 98.24 area%.

Route 3



Scheme (V)

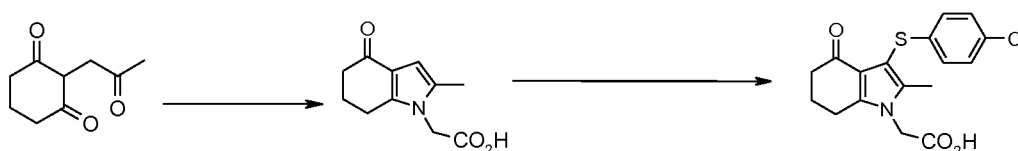
[3-(4-Chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl]acetic acid

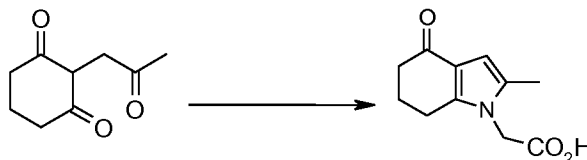


A solution of LiOH (1.79g, 1.77g corrected for assay, 42.2 mmol) was added to a stirred
 5 solution of ethyl [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-
 1-yl]acetate (7.5g, 5.33g corrected for assay, 14.1mmol) in a mixture of THF (27mL) and
 MeOH (27mL). The mixture was stirred for 1h. The solvents were removed *in vacuo* (45
 mbar) at 45°C until the volume of the mixture was ~20mL. Water (27mL) and CH₂Cl₂
 (27mL) was added and the mixture stirred for 5mins. The layers were allowed to separate,
 10 concentrated aqueous hydrochloric acid (5mL) was added to the aqueous layer and the
 resulting solid product was collected by filtration and washed with water (5mL). This
 crude damp product was slurried in a mixture of EtOAc (20mL), CH₂Cl₂ (20mL) and
 heptane (20mL) at r.t. The product was dried briefly on the filter to give the title
 compound; 4.64g; assay by ¹H NMR: 89.3% w/w; yield corrected for assay: 4.14g (84%);
 15 purity by LC 99.1 area%; *m/z*: 350 (MH⁺); ¹H NMR: 1.99-2.05 (2H, m), 2.16 (3H, s), 2.26-
 2.31 (2H, t), 2.73-2.77 (2H, t), 4.83 (2H, s), 6.95-6.99 (2H, d), 7.23-7.27(2H, d).

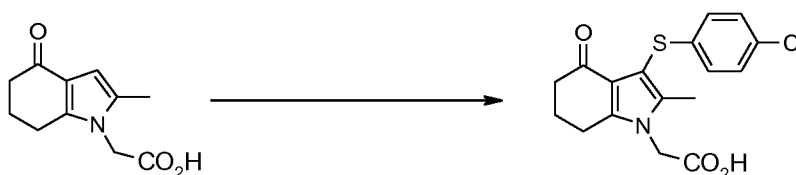
Route 3A

Alternative Synthesis of [3-(4-Chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl]acetic acid



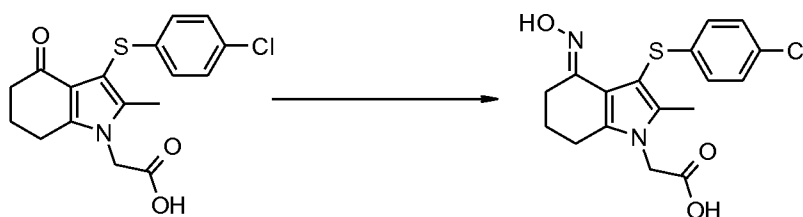
2-(2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl)acetic acid

- 5 A stirred mixture of 2-(2-oxopropyl)cyclohexane-1,3-dione (prepared by evaporation of an ethanolic solution to dryness under vacuum) (20.0g, 119mmol) and glycine (17.9g, 238mmol) in acetic acid (100mL) was heated under reflux for 1.5h then allowed to cool to r.t. Water (100mL) was then added and the mixture evaporated to a thick oil *in vacuo*. Acetone (200mL) and water (40mL) were added to the residue and the mixture stirred for
- 10 30mins at r.t., after which the solid was collected by filtration and the filtrates retained. The solid was slurried with further acetone (100mL) and water (20mL) at r.t. then removed by filtration. The combined filtrates were concentrated *in vacuo* then dissolved in aqueous sodium hydroxide (1M, 200mL), adding a small amount of 10M sodium hydroxide to bring the pH to 14. After washing with ethyl acetate (2 x 100mL), the mixture was
- 15 acidified by the addition of aqueous hydrochloric acid (5M, 60mL) then sodium chloride (50g) was added. After stirring for 4h, the solid product was collected by filtration, washed with acetone (2 x 25mL) then dried under vacuum at 40°C to afford the title compound as an orange-brown solid; 7.45g (30%); purity 99.1 area% by HPLC; m/z : 208 (MH^+); 1H -NMR: 13.2 (1H, br s), 6.02 (1H, s), 4.67 (2H, s), 2.65 (2H, t, $J = 6.2\text{Hz}$), 2.29 – 2.24 (2H, m), 2.10 (3H, s), 2.02 – 1.95 (2H, m).
- 20

[3-(4-Chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl]acetic acid

Sulfuryl chloride (0.2mL, 2.5mmol) was added slowly with stirring to a solution of bis-(4-chlorobenzene)disulfide (0.72g, 2.5mmol) in ethyl acetate (7.5mL) in reaction flask 1 at r.t. On completion of the addition, the mixture was allowed to stir for a further 60mins. The contents of reaction flask 1 were then added over a period of 5mins to a stirred suspension of 2-(2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetic acid (0.9g, 4.3mmol) in ethyl acetate (7.5mL) in reaction flask 2 at r.t. Reaction flask 1 was rinsed with ethyl acetate (2mL) which was transferred into reaction flask 2. Stirring was continued for 1h then the reaction was quenched by the addition of water (15mL). After leaving overnight, aqueous sodium hydroxide (1M, 25mL) was added to the biphasic mixture with stirring followed by a small amount of 10M sodium hydroxide to bring the pH to 14. The layers were separated, the aqueous phase was washed with ethyl acetate (25mL), then acidified using aqueous hydrochloric acid (5M, 7 ml). After stirring at r.t., the oil which had initially separated out solidified and was collected by filtration, then washed with water (2 x 10mL) and dried under vacuum at 40°C to leave the title compound as a pale brown solid; 1.0g (66%); purity: 79.5 area% by HPLC; m/z : 350/352 (MH^+); 1H -NMR: 13.3 (1H, br s), 7.25 (2H, d, $J = 8.3Hz$), 6.96 (2H, d, $J = 8.3Hz$), 4.84 (2H, s), 2.75 (2H, t, $J = 5.9Hz$), 2.28 (2H, t, $J = 6.1Hz$), 2.16 (3H, s), 2.03 – 1.97 (2H, m).

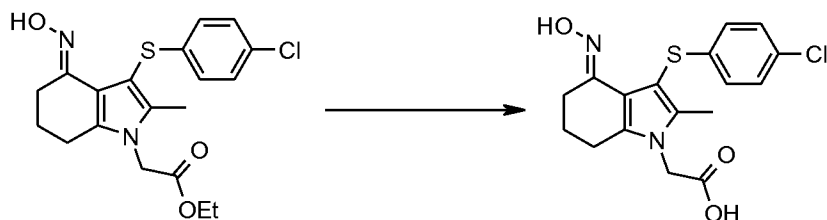
[3-(4-Chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxylimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetic acid



A mixture of [3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetic acid (4.0g, 3.57g corrected for assay, 10.2mmol), hydroxylamine hydrochloride (1.05g, 1.04g corrected for assay, 15.0mmol) and anhydrous sodium acetate (1.24g, 1.23g corrected for assay, 15.0mmol) in EtOH (40mL) was heated under reflux for 6h. After

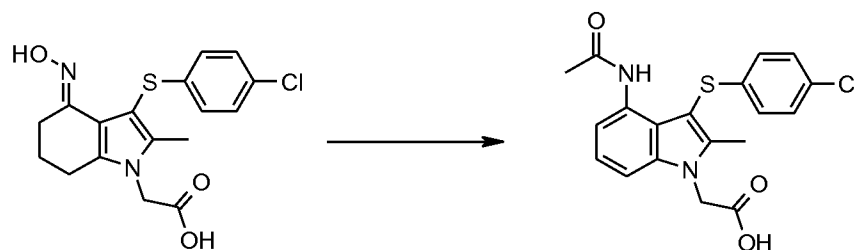
cooling to 0°C, the solid product was collected by filtration then slurried in a mixture of EtOH (14mL) and water (14mL) for 15mins at r.t. The solid was collected by filtration, washed with acetone (14mL) then dried on the filter to give the title compound; 3.42g; assay by NMR: 95.3% w/w; yield corrected for assay: 3.26g (87%); m/z : 365 (MH^+); 1.79-1.83 (2H, m), 2.13 (3H, s), 2.54-2.59 (4H, t), 4.73 (2H, s), 6.91-6.98 (2H, d), 7.20-7.25 (2H, d), 10.23 (1H, br s).

Alternative synthesis of [3-(4-Chlorophenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl]acetic acid



Aqueous sodium hydroxide (1M, 10mL, 10mmol) and water (20mL) were added to a stirred suspension of ethyl [3-(4-chloro-phenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-1-yl]acetate (4.0g, 10.2mmol) and ethanol 40mL) and the mixture was warmed up to 40°C. After 1.5h at this temperature, the reaction mixture was allowed to cool to r.t. and held overnight. The suspension was reheated to 33°C and acetic acid (1.7mL, 29.7mmol) added to the resulting solution. The mixture was allowed to cool to r.t., the solid product was collected by filtration, washed with water (2 x 20mL), then dried under vacuum at 30°C to provide the title compound as a solid; 2.94g (79%); purity by HPLC 98.9 area%

[4-Acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl]acetic acid

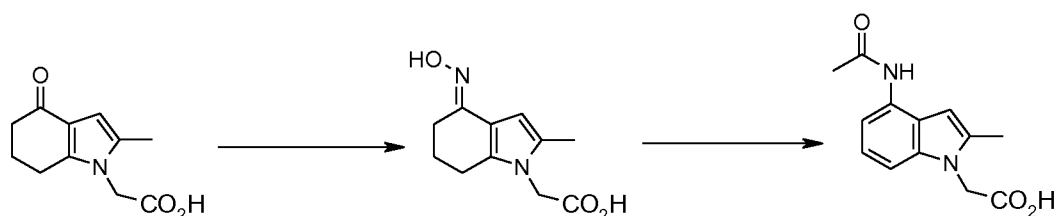


A mixture of [3-(4-chloro-phenylsulfanyl)-4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetic acid (1.0g, 0.9 g corrected for assay, 2.6 mmol), NaI (0.20g, 1.3mmol) and acetic anhydride (1.0mL, 10.6mmol) in xylene (6.7mL) was heated at 85°C for 5h. The acetylated oxime is expected to be an intermediate formed in this reaction.

- 5 After cooling to r.t., a sample was analysed by UPLC-MS showing 39 area% [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetic acid, at a retention time consistent with an authentic sample.

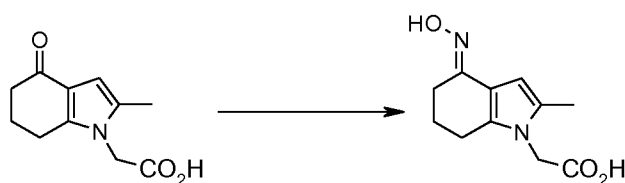
Synthesis of 2-(4-acetamido-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetic acid

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2-[4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetic acid

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A mixture of 2-(2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetic acid (4.0g, 19mmol), hydroxylamine hydrochloride (2.0g, 29mmol) and anhydrous sodium acetate (2.4g, 29mmol) in ethanol (40mL) was heated under reflux for 6h with stirring. After cooling to r.t. and holding overnight, the mixture was further cooled to 4 °C. The solid product was collected by filtration, washed with water (15mL) followed by ethanol (15mL) then dried under vacuum at 40 °C to afford the title compound as a pale brown solid; 3.68g (86%); purity: 96.7 area% by HPLC; *m/z*: 223 (MH⁺); ¹H-NMR: 9.82 (1H, br s), 6.48 (1H, d, J = 0.90Hz), 4.58 (2H, s), 2.56 – 2.51 (2H, m), 2.29 – 2.24 (2H, m), 2.09 (3H, s), 1.86 – 1.79 (2H, m).

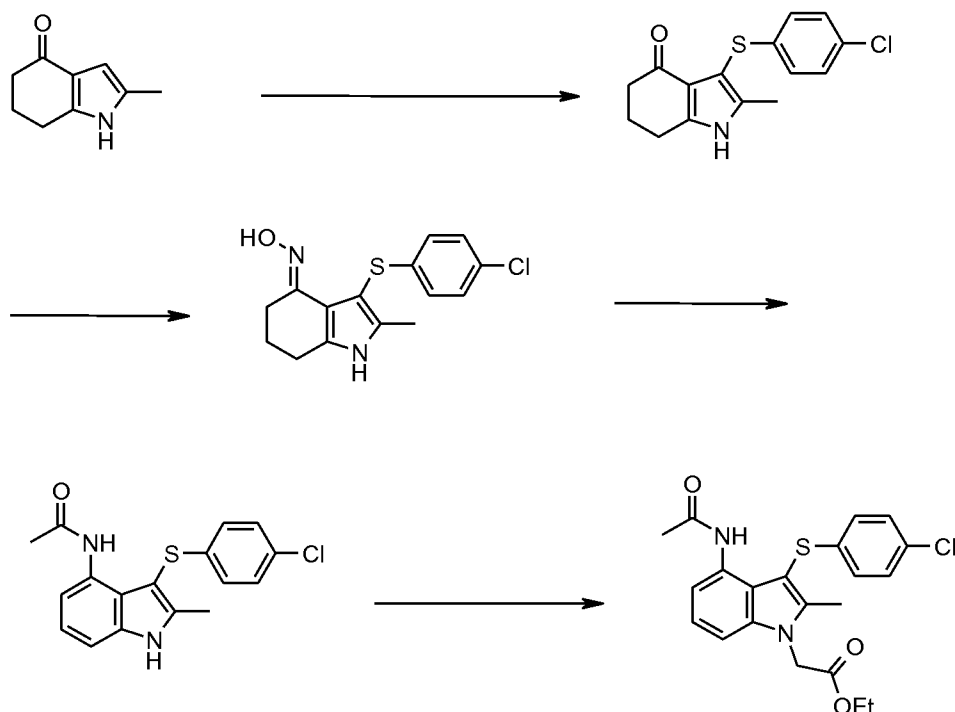
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2-(4-Acetamido-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl)acetic acid

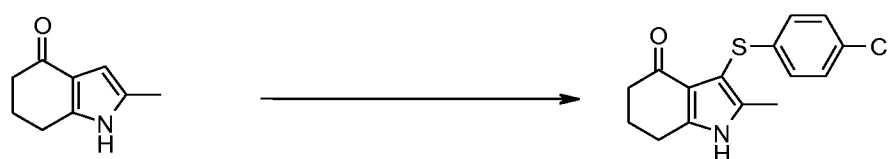
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Acetic anhydride (1.0mL, 10.6mmol) was added to a stirred slurry of 2-[4-(hydroxyimino)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetic acid (2.0g, 9.0mmol) in a mixture of acetic acid (10mL) and xylene (10mL) at r.t. in reaction flask 1 (mildly exothermic addition) then the mixture was held with stirring for 75mins. Meanwhile, reaction flask 2 was charged with acetic acid (5mL), xylene (5mL), acetic anhydride (2.6mL, 27.5mmol), and sodium iodide (270mg, 1.80mmol) and the mixture was heated to 90-100°C with stirring. The contents of reaction flask 1 were transferred to reaction flask 2 in aliquots over a period of 1.5h, whilst maintaining the reaction temperature at 90-100 °C. Reaction flask 1 was rinsed with a mixture of xylene (2mL) and acetic acid (2mL) which was transferred into reaction flask 2. Subsequently, the reaction mixture was maintained at 100°C for a further 2.5h and was then allowed to cool to r.t. The liquid phase was decanted off from a thick residue in the reaction flask and the residue was washed with acetic acid (5mL) followed by xylene (5mL). The decanted liquid and washes were combined and evaporated to dryness *in vacuo* to leave a dark brown residue. Analysis by HPLC and LC-MS showed 29.2 area% of a peak giving *m/z* 247 (MH^+).

25

Route 4*Scheme (VI)*

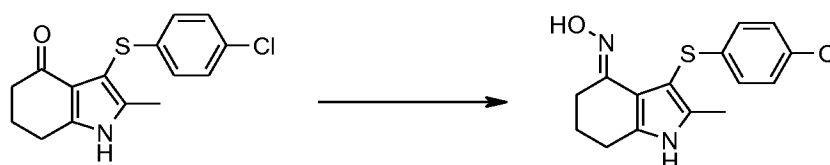
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3-(4-Chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-4-one

- 10 Sulfuryl chloride (1.7mL, 21mmol) was added slowly with stirring to a solution of bis-(4-chlorobenzene)disulfide (6.0g, 21mmol) in ethyl acetate (45mL) in reaction flask 1, which was cooled in an ice-water bath. On completion of the addition, the mixture was allowed to stir at r.t. for 30mins. The contents of reaction flask 1 were then added over a period of 1h to a stirred suspension of 2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-4-one (5.0g, 33.5mmol) in ethyl acetate (22.5mL) in reaction flask 2, cooled in an ice-water bath, adding further ethyl acetate during the course of the addition to keep the heterogeneous reaction mixture mobile. Reaction flask 1 was rinsed with ethyl acetate (10mL) which was transferred into
- 15

reaction flask 2. Stirring was continued overnight whilst the thick, heterogeneous mixture was allowed to warm to r.t. The solid product was collected by filtration, washed with ethyl acetate (2 x 15mL) then dried under vacuum at 40°C to provide the title compound as a pale yellow solid; 8.62g (88%); purity: 94.3 area% by HPLC; m/z : 292/294 (MH^+); 1H -
 5 NMR: 11.77 (1H, s), 7.24 (2H, d, $J = 8.1\text{Hz}$), 6.95 (2H, d, $J = 8.1\text{Hz}$), 2.80 – 2.74 (2H, m), 2.29 – 2.21 (2H, m), 2.16 (3H, s), 2.05 – 1.95 (2H, m).

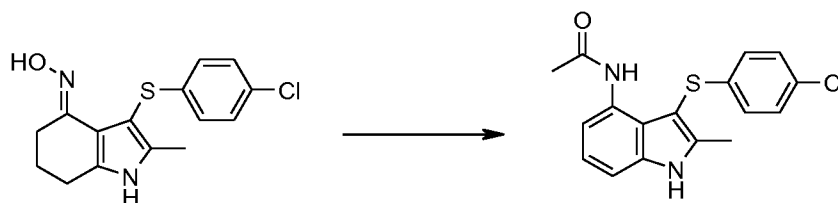
N-[3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-4-ylidene]hydroxylamine



Tributylamine (6.6mL 28mmol) was added to a stirred suspension of 3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indol-4-one (8.0g, 27mmol) and
 15 hydroxylamine hydrochloride (1.9g, 27mmol) in ethanol (40mL). The mixture was heated to 65°C and maintained at this temperature for 4h then allowed to cool to r.t. and left overnight. Additional hydroxylamine hydrochloride (0.15g, 2.2mmol) and tributylamine (1.0mL, 4.2mmol) were added and the mixture was re-heated to 65°C for a further 2h. After cooling to r.t., the solid product was collected by filtration, washed with ethanol (2 x
 20 10mL) then dried in a vacuum oven at 40°C to give the title compound as an off-white solid; 5.71g (68%); purity: 96.3 area% by HPLC; m/z : 307/309 (MH^+); 1H -NMR: 11.26 (1H, s), 10.20 (1H, s), 7.23 (2H, m), 6.92 (2H, m), 2.62 – 2.58 (2H, m), 2.56 – 2.52 (2H, m), 2.12 (3H, s), 2.83 – 1.76 (2H, m).

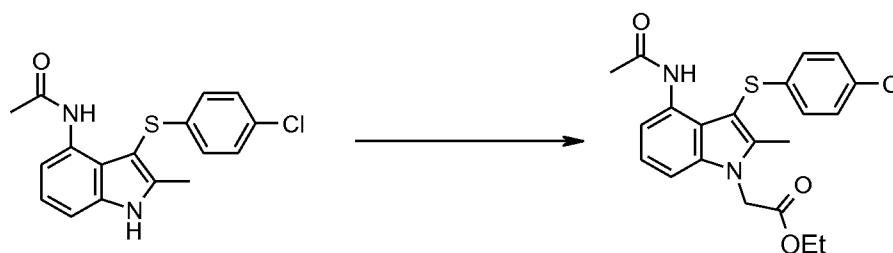
N-[3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1H-indol-4-yl]acetamide

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Acetic anhydride (1.1mL, 11.6mmol) was added to a stirred slurry of *N*-[3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1*H*-indol-4-ylidene]hydroxylamine (3.0g, 9.8mmol) in a mixture of acetic acid (15mL) and xylene (15mL) at r.t. in reaction flask 1 (mildly exothermic addition) then the mixture was held with stirring for 45mins. Meanwhile, reaction flask 2 was charged with acetic acid (7.5mL), xylene (7.5mL), acetic anhydride (1.1mL, 11.6mmol), and sodium iodide (70mg, 0.47mmol) and the mixture was heated to 110°C with stirring. The contents of reaction flask 1 were transferred to reaction flask 2 in aliquots over a period of 2h, whilst maintaining the reaction temperature at 110°C. Reaction flask 1 was rinsed with a mixture of xylene (2mL) and acetic acid (2mL) which was transferred to reaction flask 2. Subsequently, the reaction mixture was maintained at 110°C for a further 3h then allowed to cool to r.t. and held overnight. The reaction mixture was evaporated to dryness *in vacuo* to leave a dark brown solid residue. This was purified by chromatography on silica gel, eluting with dichloromethane / ethyl acetate to provide the title compound as an off-white solid; 2.74g (85%); purity 95.6 area% by HPLC; *m/z*: 331/333 (MH^+); 1H -NMR: 11.84 (1H, s), 9.45 (1H, s), 7.45 (1H, d, *J* = 7.7Hz), 7.29 (2H, d, *J* = 8.3Hz), 7.17 (1H, d, *J* = 8.0Hz), 7.04 (1H, t, *J* = 7.9Hz), 6.98 (2H, d, *J* = 8.2Hz), 2.40 (3H, s), 1.84 (3H, s).

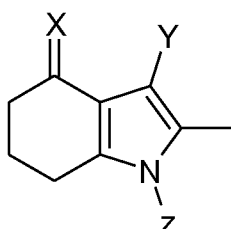
Ethyl [4-acetylamino-3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-1-yl]acetate



A mixture of *N*-[3-(4-chlorophenylsulfanyl)-2-methyl-1*H*-indol-4-yl]acetamide (1.0g, 3.0mmol), anhydrous potassium carbonate (0.63g, 4.6mmol), acetone (10mL) and ethyl bromoacetate (0.50mL, 4.5mmol) was heated under reflux for 1.5h then cooled to r.t. and left stirring at this temperature overnight. After heating under reflux for an additional 1h, the mixture was cooled to r.t. Water (2 x 10mL) was added, the solid product was collected by filtration, washed with water (10mL), then dried in a vacuum oven at 40°C to afford the title compound as an off-white solid; 1.16g (92%); purity 95.4 area% by HPLC; *m/z*: 417/419 (MH⁺); ¹H-NMR: 9.52 (1H, s), 7.45 (1H, d, J = 7.9Hz), 7.33 (1H, d, J = 8.2Hz), 7.29 (2H, d, J = 8.6Hz), 7.11 (1H, t, J = 8.0Hz), 6.97 (1H, d, J = 8.6Hz), 5.24 (2H, s), 4.18 (2H, q, J = 7.1Hz), 2.39 (3H, s), 1.86 (3H, s), 1.22 (3H, t, J = 7.1Hz).

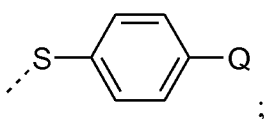
CLAIMS

1. A compound of formula (X):



wherein:

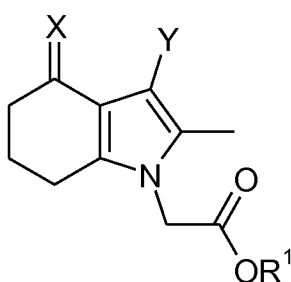
X is =O, =N-OH or =N-OC(O)Me;

Y is hydrogen or  ;

Q is hydrogen or chloro; and

Z is hydrogen or $-\text{CH}_2\text{COOR}^1$ wherein **R**¹ is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted hydrocarbyl and optionally substituted heterocyclyl; provided that when **Y** is hydrogen, **Z** is not hydrogen. or a salt thereof.

2. A compound according to claim 1 of formula (II):

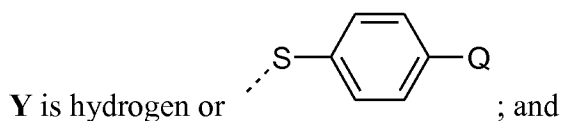


(II)

wherein:

R¹ is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted hydrocarbyl and optionally substituted heterocyclyl;

X is =O, =N-OH or =N-OC(O)Me;



Q is hydrogen or chloro;

or a salt thereof.

3. The compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

R^1 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, optionally substituted phenyl and optionally substituted benzyl.

4. The compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

R^1 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl; wherein the phenyl and benzyl are optionally substituted by one or more halo, nitro, cyano, hydroxy, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkanoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)amino, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂amino, N -(C_{1-6} alkanoyl)amino, N -(C_{1-6} alkanoyl)- N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)amino, carbamoyl, sulfamoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)carbamoyl, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂carbamoyl, N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)sulfamoyl, N,N -(C_{1-6} alkyl)₂sulfamoyl or (C_{1-6} alkyl)-S(O)_a- wherein a is 0-2.

5. The compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, phenyl and benzyl.

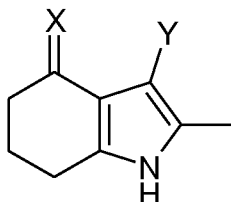
6. The compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in any of claims 2 to 5, wherein Y is hydrogen.

7. The compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in any of claims 2 to 5, wherein Y is 4-chlorophenylsulfanyl.

8. The compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in any of claims 2 to 5, wherein X is =O.

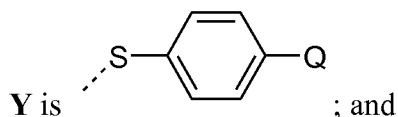
9. The compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in any of claims 2 to 5, wherein **X** is =N-OH.

10. A compound according to claim 1, which is of formula (XI):



wherein:

X is =O, =N-OH or =N-OC(O)Me;



Q is hydrogen or chloro;

or a salt thereof.

11. The compound of formula (XI), or salt thereof, as claimed in claim 10, wherein **Y** is 4-chlorophenylsulfanyl.

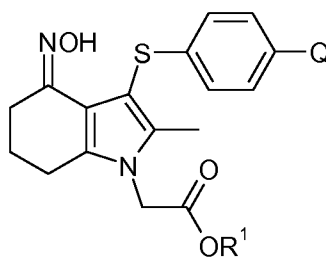
12. The compound of formula (XI), or salt thereof, as claimed in claim 10, wherein **X** is =O or =N-OH.

13. Use of the compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in any of claims 2 to 9 as a pharmaceutical intermediate.

14. Use of the compound of formula (II), or a salt thereof, as claimed in any of claims 2 to 9 as an intermediate in the manufacture of the compound of formula (I).

15. A process comprising reaction of a compound of formula (II) of formula (IIc):

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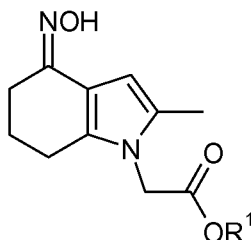
(IIc)

with an acetylating agent;

wherein the values of **R**¹ are as defined in claims 2 to 9, and wherein **Q** is chloro.

5

16. A process comprising the reaction of a compound of formula (II) of formula (IIId):



(IIId)

with an acetylating agent;

10 wherein **R**¹ is as defined in claims 2 to 9.

17. The process as claimed in claim 15 or claim 16 wherein the acetylating agent is acetic anhydride.

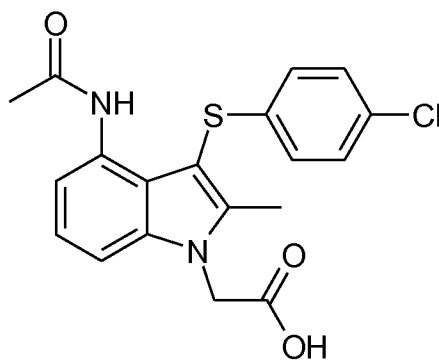
15 18. The process as claimed in any of claims 15 to 17, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of an iodide salt.

19. The process as claimed in any of claims 15 to 17, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of a Lewis acid.

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20. The process as claimed in any of claims 15 to 17, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of a carboxylic acid co-solvent.

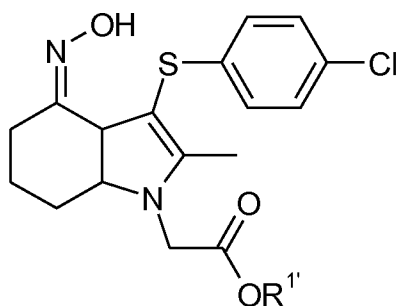
21. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (I):



(I)

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which comprises reaction of a compound of formula (IIAA):



(IIAA)

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where $R^{1'}$ is hydrogen or C_{1-6} alkyl with an acylating agent followed by de-esterification.

22. A process according to claim 21 in which $R^{1'}$ is hydrogen or ethyl.

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23. A process according to claim 21 or 22 in which the acylating agent is acetic anhydride.

24. A process according to any one of claims 21 to 23 which is carried out in the presence of xylene and sodium iodide.

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25. A compound of formula **(I)** prepared according to a process as defined in any one of claims 15 to 24.