

## Programme Specification (PG)

Awarding body / institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Name of final award and title:	MSc Physician Associate Studies (Degree Apprenticeship)
Name of interim award(s):	PG Certificate in Healthcare Studies, PG Diploma in Healthcare Studies
Duration of study / period of registration:	33 months (includes EPA)
Queen Mary programme code(s):	PMSP-QMIHS11 - PSPYA (B962_
QAA Benchmark Group:	IFATE ref ST0518, LARS code 506
FHEQ Level of Award:	Level 7
Programme accredited by:	
Date Programme Specification approved:	27 July 2022 (For Jan 2024)
Responsible School / Institute:	Institute of Health Sciences Education

Schools / Institutes which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Collaborative institution(s) / organisation(s) involved in delivering the programme:

Barts Health NHS Trust, Barking Havering and Redbridge NHS Trust, Moorfields NHS Trust, Homerton University Hospital, University College London NHS Trust, Royal Marsden NHS Trust, Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust, General practices within NC and NE London.

### Programme outline

This is a degree apprenticeship, where students will be awarded an MSc Physician Associate Apprenticeship. Students require the permission and support of their employer.

The Physician Associate Apprenticeship is delivered over 33 months on a part-time basis.

The course will be taught via a variety of lectures delivered within the University.

The initial curriculum was based on the Competence and Curriculum Framework or the Physician Associate 2012 as well as the more recent GMC draft curriculum published in the Summer of 2021. It is structured into 3 elements: knowledge, skills and themes. Each of the 8 modules that constitute the course contains these key elements to varying degrees. Each of the elements link to specific learning outcomes related to the module of study.

## Aims of the programme

The programme aims to reskill graduates with the knowledge, skills and attitudes, in line with the professional standards set by the GMC's Outcome for Graduates (2018) in order to be licensed to practice as a professionally qualified physician associate in the NHS. The GMC is due to release new documentation regarding new standards, in Autumn 2023.

Graduates will be able to work autonomously under the supervision of doctors to undertake many roles traditionally performed by doctors and as such will augment the existing medical work force. Graduates will also have acquired the skills and attitudes for life-long learning and reflective practice, enabling them to meet the challenge of providing high quality health care, responsive to the changing needs of the population and the NHS.

These aims are met through an innovative, student-centred course of study, which is responsive to the needs of employers and the strategic aims of the NHS. Learning occurs in a variety of educational settings but is distinguished by the early exposure to clinical environments.

## What will you be expected to achieve?

Intended learning outcomes – the programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and appropriate attitudes, that support PA competencies.

The learning outcomes adhere to and align with the requirements of the GMC standard and regulation.

### Academic Content:

A 1	The physical, biomedical and social science concepts, principles, processes and mechanisms underpinning a systems based approach to the body in health and disease.
A 2	A curriculum with social accountability to empower Physician Associates to be more accountable in patient wellbeing, including managing risk, safeguarding, and 'never' events. Health and illness is studied in the context of the whole individual and his/her place in the family and community.
A 3	Patients' and carers' experience of ill-health and medical care in a multi-cultural society.
A 4	Disease prevention and health promotion in relation to public health medicine.
A 5	A diverse and equitable curriculum that examines and explores the impact of race, gender, disabilities and other minoritized groups on health and illness including inequities in healthcare and patient outcomes.

### Disciplinary Skills - able to:

B 1	Recognise normal and abnormal function of body systems.
B 2	Use effectively the various strands of knowledge and understanding in the context of treating patients.
B 3	Proficiency in a stipulated range of clinical and communication skills in Medicine (consistent with the GMC's recommendations).
B 4	Ability to work autonomously with appropriate supervision and as part of a team, including with other healthcare professionals
B 5	Appropriate modes of interaction with patients and others involved in healthcare.

B 6	Communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals and groups, utilising a variety of means.
B 7	Record and evaluate his/her own academic, professional and clinical performance.
B 8	Apply problem-solving and numerical skills in a range of theoretical and practical settings.
B 9	Manage change and uncertainty effectively, and respond to changing demands.
B 10	Take responsibility for continuing personal and professional learning and development (CPD).
B 11	Develop basic skills in teaching, and knowledge of effective educational practice.
B 12	Demonstrate the ability to communicate research findings and data through oral and written formats.

Attributes:	
C 1	Caring, compassionate and ethical approach towards the practice of Medicine.
C 2	Independent attitude towards planning and directing one's own learning, with capacity for self-assessment.
C 3	Manage time, prioritise workloads, and recognise and manage personal emotions and stress.
C 4	Apply appropriate information management skills (e.g. IT skills).
C 5	Equitable and respectful approach to patients and staff.

### How will you learn?

As an adult learner you should understand what learning methods work best for you. The course will be taught using a variety of learning methodologies including: mixed mode education, where knowledge and skills will be taught through different media including online platforms, hybrid technologies and in-person seminars and workshops; practicals; clinical demonstrations; multi-media presentations (Learning Centre); community placements; ward rounds; clinical skills simulator; multi-professional training ward; and structured interactions with (simulated) patients. In addition, study skills; personal portfolio.

Skills that are taught on the programme will be applied and reinforced in their day-to-day activities through their employment, at their workplace.

Some of the material will be delivered by a flipped class room model where contact time can be spent explaining concepts and exploring issues raised in a collaborative fashion as a group.

### How will you be assessed?

Assessment tools will be used to assess your progress in achieving the designated learning outcomes. These methods include but are not limited to: Applied Knowledge Test (AKTs) and Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), group work, presentations and essays (academic writing).

Even though the apprentices will come from a clinical background, many aspects of the theoretical component will be new, and they may have some competencies in some, but not all practical skills. They will not have studied these components at Level 7. The skills scan will be done prior to entering the course. It is unlikely that any apprentice would have fulfilled the competencies and specification of a whole core module prior to commencing the apprenticeship.

## How is the programme structured?

Please specify the structure of the programme diets for all variants of the programme (e.g. full-time, part-time - if applicable). The description should be sufficiently detailed to fully define the structure of the diet.

This 33-months apprenticeship programme will begin in January. The programme is composed of 7 taught modules comprising a total 180 credits at level 7 to enable apprentices to gain a MSc qualification at the end of their training.

The programme is constructed as a spiral curriculum, so that students are constantly referred to topics and themes they would have encountered and studied in previous modules/placements. This approach to clinical studies allows students to build layers of complexity to their learning through reviewing and refreshing existing knowledge and skills, whilst engaging with new learning over the 30 months.

The course begins with an induction week which has the intention of providing a broad overview of the course, orientation to the Institute of Health Sciences Education, within the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (FMD) and Queen Mary University of London, and to services for students available within the SMD and Queen Mary University of London. As well as revision of study skills and tips to get the most out of the course.

For each module it is expected for apprentices to attend QMUL for a duration of approximately 3 weeks, and the rest of the time they will spend at their workplace to consolidate their skills, knowledge, and behaviours to become a Physician Associate in the NHS.

The first module and the second module, Applied Medical Science (IHS7120) & Clinical Medicine: Physical and Mental Health (IHS7111) are studied across semester 2 & 3. IHS7120 module provides a foundation in anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, and introduction to clinical skills from which students can then proceed to learn about health and illness. This module will be assessed using a written exam.

The 2nd module in year 1 entitled Clinical Medicine: Physical and Mental Health (IHS7111) comprising classroom activity which includes demonstration and practical workshops where skills in clinical medicine, such as history taking, clinical examination and procedural techniques, are taught and practiced. The module also contains didactic teaching delivered via blended learning on common conditions affecting physical and mental health for individual, family units and wider society. This module will be assessed using a written and OSCE exam.

The Community Medicine modules (IHS7112 and IHS7115) focus on students learning about topics/ specialties which present frequently to primary care e.g. ENT, dermatology, ophthalmology, and musculoskeletal medicine. This module will be assessed using a written and OSCE exam.

Year 2 begins with a block of teaching that starts with the module Care of Women and Children (IHS7114) and Clinical medicine and surgery (IHS7113). Module IHS7114 encompasses obstetrics, gynaecology, sexual health, and paediatrics. Apprentices will learn using blended learning which includes lectures, clinical skill practical sessions, and group learning. This module will be assessed using a written exam.

The Clinical Medicine and Surgery module (IHS7113) includes a taught component on care of the older adult, End of life care, Surgery and Emergency Medicine and will predominantly focus on common emergency medical and surgical problems affecting adults. This module will be assessed using a written exam.

For the Healthcare Improvement & Evidence module (IHS7119), at approx month 25 of the programme apprentices will learn principles of quality improvement, understand research methodology and evidenced based practice, to equip them to think critically and design a research project that will enable them to explore these skills at their workplace.

Apprentices will have a tripartite meeting once per term to assess their progress and learning trajectory. After the successful completion at 30 months, apprentices will be able to take End point assessment run by the Royal College of Physician/ General Medical Council which will allow them to qualify as Physician Associate.

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Applied Medical Sciences	IHS7120	30	7	Core	1	Semesters 2 & 3
Clinical Medicine: Physical and Mental Health	IHS7111	30	7	Core	1	Semesters 2 & 3
Community Medicine I	IHS7112	15	7	Core	1	Semesters 3 & 1

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 2

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Clinical Medicine and Surgery	IHS7113	30	7	Core	2	Calendar Year
Care of Women and Children	IHS7114	30	7	Core	2	Calendar Year
Community Medicine II	IHS7115	15	7	Core	2	Calendar Year

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 3

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Healthcare Improvement & Evidence	IHS7119	30	7	Compulsory	3	Semesters 2 & 3
End Point Assessment (EPA)		0	7	Core	3	Semester 3

**What are the entry requirements?**

All applicants for the MSc Physician Associate Apprenticeship will be graduates.

UK graduates

- All candidates must have a BSc (honors) in Life Sciences, Biomedical or Health Profession Degree. This will usually be a bachelor's degree or may be a four-year Masters, but the latter only if it is a first degree. The minimum academic entry

requirements are:

- A second-class honours (2:2 minimum)

• If an applicant is offered place, he/she must have completed this degree prior to enrolment. Candidates are required to complete their degree within the prescribed period allowed by their University.

• Candidates whose native language is not English will need to provide evidence of their English language ability.

o First degree taught in the English Language medium

Non-UK graduates

• We accept British Bachelor (Honors) equivalent qualifications gained in other countries. Non-UK graduates are required to send a full transcript of their degree together with a statement of comparability from UK NARIC confirming their degree is comparable to a British BSc (Honors) degree standard prior to making an application, which will be considered on a case by case basis. Only an applicant's first degree is considered.

• Applications from candidates who are in their last year of the degree are accepted provided they are predicted to achieve a minimum of second-class lower honours (2:2) degree or above. If these applicants are offered a place, they must have completed this degree prior to enrolment. Applicants are not accepted from degree students in the first or second year of their degree.

• Candidates whose native language is not English, you will need to provide evidence of your English language ability.

Candidates must meet one of the following English Language qualifications from applicants educated outside the UK who meet our other academic criteria:-

o IELTS with a score of 7.0 overall (must have been taken within 2 years)

o First degree taught in the English Language medium

The offer of a place on the course will be conditional upon clearance by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Occupational Health checks.

Candidates must meet one of the following English Language qualifications from applicants educated within the UK but not in the English language medium who meet our other academic criteria:-

o IELTS with a score of 7.0 overall (must have been taken within 2 years)

## **How will the quality of the programme be managed and enhanced? How do we listen to and act on your feedback?**

You can utilise informal channels either via your course tutor or directly to the course director or their deputies.

The PA Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between the Institute and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year on the programme together with appropriate representation from staff within the Institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

All Schools and institutes are required to operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. The process is organised at a School/institute-level with the Head of School/institute, or equivalent, responsible for the completion of the final Annual Programme Report. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the PTES, module evaluations and participation.

The tripartite meetings will be run once at the end of each of the Semesters, to assess the apprentices' progress and to meet their learning needs.

## **What academic support is available?**

The course begins with an induction week to provide orientation to Queen Mary. You will be advised of the services available. As well as generic skills workshops to help you cope with this academically demanding course.

You will be allocated a course personal tutor who will meet with you regularly to discuss your progress and how you are coping with the course. During these meetings you will receive feedback on your performance devised from the regular in course assessment. If you are struggling with a particular area of the course, your tutor will arrange for you to be seen by the Senior Tutor.

The Senior Tutor will meet with apprenticeship students, as necessary, to determine if individual students' learning needs aren't

being met, and then signpost them accordingly to the relevant University services, in order to bolster the support they are receiving.

### Programme-specific rules and facts

**Exit Awards:**

Exit awards will be based on the number of credits that students have achieved.

If a student has achieved 60 credits, then they will be awarded a PG Certificate in Healthcare Studies.

If a student has achieved 120 credits, then they will be awarded a PG Diploma in Healthcare Studies.

In the event of either of the above situations, the apprenticeship student will not be eligible to sit the End Point Assessment.

**End Point Assessment:**

To qualify and practise as a Physician Associate, apprentices must undertake the End Point Assessment test (not part of the Queen Mary award). The EPA is delivered by a separate End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) It is anticipated that this will be run within the Faculty of Physician Associate at the Royal College of Physicians.

Only those apprentices who pass all the core modules by end of their 30 months and obtain a minimum PG Diploma in Physician Associate Studies will be recommended for the national exam.

### How inclusive is the programme for all students, including those with disabilities?

All students will have access to the Student Support Office for advice and guidance. Where appropriate, students will be supported by the Disability and Dyslexia Service. Due to the vocational nature of the course, a student's ability to achieve the learning outcomes for the course and therefore be in a position to perform the work of a PA will need to be considered with reference to the graduate outcomes outlined by the GMC as part of their regulation of the PA profession. The programme has addressed inequities in assessment in particular to ensure that the course is inclusive and supportive of all students, irrespective of their learning differences or disability.

Based on the outcomes of the tripartite meetings, we will make additional provisions regarding learning resources, such as access to clinical skills facilities, and access to library facilities, and additional online resources. We will also engage with an apprentice's employer, where necessary, to make arrangements (where possible) for similar provisions.

### Links with employers, placement opportunities and transferable skills

To practice as a Physician Associate, graduates need to be registered with the PAMVR. This is likely to be supplanted by the GMC as the regulator.

This programme has been devised in collaboration with a wide range of NHS employers. It is well supported by the local NHS trusts in North Central East London and Clinical commissioning groups, as well as a number of Trusts outside of the traditional placement providers for QMUL medical school, including; Lewisham and Greenwich Trust, UCLH NHS Trust, Royal Marsden NHS Trust and CCGs in South London. You will spend time in these workplaces as part of your course. This exposure will help you to decide your future field of medical practice. You will find that on completion of the course, your skills will be highly sort after. Employment opportunities are likely to be excellent. However, in order to practice, it is essential that you pass both the programme as well as the End Point Assessment exam.

---

## Programme Specification Approval

---

**Person completing Programme Specification:**

Dr. Vinodh Krishnamurthy, Mr. Jon Jezak, Dr. Brenda Mangat

Programme Title: Physician Associate Degree Apprenticeship

**Person responsible for management of programme:**

Vinodh Krishnamurthy / Jon Jezak / Brenda Manoharan

**Date Programme Specification produced / amended by School / Institute Education Committee:**

9th June 2022

**Date Programme Specification approved by Taught Programmes Board:**

27 July 2022 (For Jan 2024)