Training, development and regulation (physician associate)

Physician associate training usually lasts two years, with students studying for 46-48 weeks each year.

Although it involves many aspects of an undergraduate or postgraduate medical degree [1], the training focuses principally on general adult medicine in hospital and general practice [2], rather than specialty care.

Training will include significant theoretical learning in the key areas of medicine. There will also be 1,600 hours of clinical training, taking place in a range of settings, including 350 hours in general hospital medicine. You'll also spend a minimum of 90 hours in each of the following:

- community medicine
- front door (including experience in emergency medicine)
- mental health
- general surgery
- obstetrics and gynaecology
- paediatrics (acute setting)

Physician associates have to meet a nationally approved standard of training and practice. This is a requirement of the competence and curriculum framework for physician associates [3] as laid down by the Faculty of Physician Associates [4].

A 4-year integrated Master of Physician Associate Studies at the University of Central Lancashire will run, subject to approval. This would be the only undergraduate programme available at this time.

"The training I've received means I now have a varied role which is both exciting and refreshing." Kate Bascombe, physician associate at St George’s University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Read Kate's story in full [5]

Financial support during training

Currently, financial arrangements differ between universities offering physician associate
training. For example, some support may be offered through the local Health Education England office, a bursary covering some costs may be available, or you may need to take out a student loan.

It is therefore essential that you check the arrangements with each university individually.

**Regulation**

Professional regulation of physician associate and the other medical associate professions is currently being explored by the Department of Health

**Want to find out more?**

- Use our course finder to get a list of the universities running physician associate programmes [6]
- Find out more about the role of a physician associate [7]
- Find out more about entry requirements to become a physician associate [8]
- View our infographic about physician associates [9]

**Registration**

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It is recommended that all physician associates register on the Physician Associate Managed Voluntary Register (PAMVR). [10]

The Faculty of Physician Associates [4] and the UK and Ireland Universities Board for PA Education (UKIUBPAE) [11] also recommend employers make this a compulsory criterion for employment.

The aim of the profession is to have statutory registration in the future and work is underway to facilitate this.


**Links**