

Programme Specification

Awarding Body/Institution	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching Institution	Institute of Health Science Education
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	Masters in Physician Associate Studies (MSc)
Name of Interim Award(s)	PG Diploma in Physician Associate Studies, PG Certificate in Physician Associate Studies
Duration of Study / Period of Registration	27 months
QM Programme Code / UCAS Code(s)	
QAA Benchmark Group	NA
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	
Date Programme Specification Approved	29 June 2016
Responsible School / Institute	Institute of Health Sciences Education

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

Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry

Institution(s) other than Queen Mary that will provide some teaching for the programme

Barts Health NHS Trust, Barking Havering and Redbridge NHS Trust

Programme Outline

The MSc in PA studies is delivered over 27 months (45 weeks per year) on a full-time basis. Roughly half of the course will be taught within the university and the remainder in work-place settings in hospitals and the community.

The Curriculum Framework is structured into 3 elements: knowledge, skills and themes. Each of the 8 modules that constitute the course contain these key elements to varying degrees. Each of the elements or domains are further divided into sub-domains which link to specific learning outcomes related to the module of study.

Aims of the Programme

The programme aims to equip graduates with the knowledge, skills and attitudes, in line with the professional standards expected of doctors by the GMC, that will distinguish them as an exemplary Physician Associate (PA). Graduates will be able to undertake many roles traditionally performed by doctors and as such will augment the existing medical work force. Graduates

will have 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 though 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 from other PA courses 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, in the following areas:

Academic Content:	
A 1	Physical, biomedical and social science concepts, principles, processes and mechanisms underpinning a systems-based approach to the body in health and disease.
A 2	Health and illness 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 Disease prevention and health promotion in relation to public health medicine

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	Apply problem-solving skills to the diagnosis and management of patients' clinical conditions.
B 4	Proficiency in a stipulated range of clinical and communication skills in Medicine (consistent with the GMC's recommendations).
B 5	Ability to work independently, with minimal supervision and as part of a team, including with other healthcare professionals.
B 6	Appropriate modes of interaction with patients and others involved in healthcare.
B 7	Communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals and groups, utilising a variety of means.
B 8	Record and evaluate his/her own academic, professional and clinical performance.
B 9	Apply problem-solving and numerical skills in a range of theoretical and practical settings.
B 10	Manage change and uncertainty effectively, and respond to changing demands.
B 11	Take responsibility for continuing personal and professional learning and development (CPD).

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B 12	Manage time, prioritise workloads, and recognise and manage personal emotions and stress.
B 13	Apply appropriate information management skills (e.g. IT skills).
B 14	Develop basic skills in teaching, and knowledge of effective educational practice.

Attributes:	
C 1	Caring and ethical attitudes towards the practice of Medicine
C 2	Attitude of independence towards planning and directing one's own learning, with capacity for self-assessment

How Will You Learn?

As an adult learner you should understand what learning methods work best for you. A large part of the course will be taught using videoed lectures and a flipped class room model where contact time can be spent explaining concepts and exploring issues raised in a collaborative fashion as a group.

A variety of methods will be employed to assist you learn and demonstrate the learning you have achieved: Lectures; problem-based learning; tutor-facilitated tutorials; practicals; formative assessment workshops; clinical demonstrations; multi-media presentations (Learning Centre); community placements; ward rounds; clinical skills simulator; multi-professional training ward; structured interactions with (simulated) patients. In addition, Student-Selected Components (SSC); study skills; personal portfolio.

Assessment: coursework, written unseen examinations (MCQs, EMQs), Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs).

How Will You Be Assessed?

The following methods will be used to assess your progress in achieving the designated learning outcomes. There will be regular in course assessment, which will be both formative and summative, based on course work, MCQ and OSCE.

An overview of assessment processes is provided in the PA Curriculum Framework, with full details in the module student guides. Students are advised to consult the Academic Regulations website for general rules concerning conduct of assessment at QMUL: <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy/index.html>

All assessments in the PA programme have a pass mark of 50%.

'Merit' is awarded at end-of-year examinations to those students who typically comprise the top quartile of the cohort. 'Distinction' is awarded in Clinical Science and in Clinical Practice, and is typically awarded to those students in the top decile of the cohort.

GRADE MARK INTERPRETATION

Module mark = Module grade

70.0 – 100.0 = Distinction

60.0 – 69.9 = Merit

50.0 – 59.9 = Pass

0.0 – 49.9 = Fail

External Examiners are appointed by the College, typically 2 Examiners for each year of the course. Their role is that of moderator, in line with QAA guidelines, to:

- approve all examination questions, and review coursework and examination scripts;

- comment on the academic and professional standards achieved by students
- where possible attend meetings of the examination sub-board.

How is the Programme Structured?

Please specify the full time and part time programme diets (if appropriate).

The course runs out of sync with the academic year, beginning in January (start of semester 2). This outline of the programme structure is best read in conjunction with the block timetable. The programme is composed of eight compulsory modules which are largely studied in a sequential manner with a single pathway of study. Some modules are taught across 2-3 years of the programme which allows students to develop and understanding of the longitudinal nature of healthcare, especially in the community, and an opportunity for spiraling or reinforcement of learning.

Where a module has specific components these are identified by a decimal. eg. PA4 Care of Women and Children is made up of PA4.1 Womens Health, PA4.2 Sexual Health, PA4.3 Care of Children and Young People. Where the same module is taught in multiple sections but each section does not represent a discrete component e.g. PA3 the separate sections are denoted by a the addition of a letter PA3a, PA3b, PA3c.

The care in the community module will run in tandem with the other modules throughout the programme with students typically spending a day a week during most weeks of the course in a community setting. The purpose will be to provide a primary care perspective and focus relevant to the module being studied.

The course begins with an induction week which has the intention of providing a broad overview of the course, orientation to the School of Medicine and Dentistry (SMD) and to services for students available within SMD and QMUL. As well as revision of study skills and tips to get the most out of the course.

Module one (PA1) Basic Medical sciences for the PA - is studied in full-time and lasts 5 weeks. The module will be completed in its entirety within the second semester.

Module two (PA2) Healthy People Healthy Society - The taught component of this module is predominantly delivered within the second semester with assessment in the third semester, just prior to the Summer vacation. The assessment takes the form of a marked piece of course work which takes the form of a health education/ promotion campaign. Students work collaboratively to develop and deliver the campaign.

Module two is followed by PA8a which represents the first part of PA8 Research, Evidence and Quality and consists predominantly of the taught component of research methodology and evidenced based practice (1 week). The remainder of PA8 is studied independently over the remainder of the course culminating with the submission of the dissertation at the end of the course to be awarded MSc in PA Studies

Module three (PA3) care of the Adult - This is a large Module and is taught over both the first and second years to provide an opportunity for reinforcement of learning in a 'spiral' fashion. The module commences in semester 2 with a 5 week taught component at the end of which there is a week spent studying the care of people with neurological problems. The students return after the Easter break at the start of Semester 3 to their first major clinical placement. Students will spend 5 weeks attached to a medical team (ideally taking part in unselected take).

PA6 Mind, Body and Health - Following on from the clinical attachment for Care of the Adult. Students begin a blended 7 week module focusing on psychiatry and substance misuse leading up to the Summer recess.

The final two weeks of Semester 3 is spent in an intensive period of preparation and delivery of the core assessment activity of Module PA2 (Healthy People Healthy Society). This time will be spent working in small groups to bring together deliver and mark the health promotion campaign.

Students return after the summer break to pick up their health improvement project. Projects should have been finalized by this stage. Over the 2 weeks of this component of the module, we will focus on learning the processes, tools and principles of quality improvement work.

Module PA6 will be completed by the end of week 35 which will be spent studying the effects of drug misuse on the individual, family units and wider society as well as clinical placements within drug misuse services.

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Week 36 will be spent studying end of life pathways in hospital, hospice and community settings which will lead on to PA7 Care in the community module, the final module before the end of year examinations. Although the care in the community module actually commences from week 2, However the purpose of this 7 week blended module will be to learn about topics/ specialties which present frequently to primary care e.g. ENT, dermatology, musculoskeletal medicine including rheumatology).

Students will have a 2 week private study break before the end of year exams. Students who successfully complete their year 1 exams will have the opportunity to undertake the first of a 3 week student selected component (SSC). It is expected that the students will use this as an opportunity to gain greater experience in a particular area of interest. Students may take up the option of spending this period as an elective in the US.

Students who have been unsuccessful at the end of year exams will be able to use this period for revision with Year 1 resit the week before Christmas vacation.

Success at the end of year 1 exams will be mandatory in order to progress to year 2 of the course.

Year 2

Year 2 begins with Health of Women and Children a 15 week module encompassing obstetrics, gynaecology, sexual health and paediatrics.

Followed by a further component of PA5 Care of the Older Adult, focusing on Mens Health.

Subsequently students move on to a 7 week component of PA3. This part of the module will focus on 'surgical problems affecting adults and will include a 3 week general surgery attachment in line with The Curriculum and Competency Framework for the Physician Assistant (CCF for the PA). Which leads into the second 3 week SSC before the summer break.

Students return to complete PA5 Care of the Older Adult including a 5 week clinical placement in Healthcare for the Elderly. Before completing PA3 Care of the Adult which with a 6 week clinical attachment focusing on acute settings or "Front door Medicine" including; intensive care, acute stroke, acute medical unit and Emergency Medicine. Which will lead into a 2 week study period for revision prior to the Year 2 finals exams.

Students who successfully pass Year 2 Finals will be entered into the National PA exam in January. Students will have 3 further months to complete their quality improvement project and write up their dissertation which will take the total course duration to 27 months. Students who fail Year 2 Finals will be required to resit the year and will not be recommended for the National Exam.

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Basic Medical Science for the PA	IHS7100	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 3
Healthy People Healthy Society	IHS7101	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2 & 3
Research, Evidence and Quality	IHS7109	30	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Care of the Adult I	IHS7102	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2

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Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Mind, body and health	IHS7106	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 3
Care of the Older Adult	IHS7105	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Care in the Community I	IHS7107	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 2

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Care of Women and Children	IHS7104	30	7	Compulsory	2	Semester 2 & 3
Care of the Older Adult	IHS7105	15	7	Compulsory	2	Semester 3 & 1
Care of the Adult II	IHS7103	15	7	Compulsory	2	Semester 3&1
Care in the Community II	IHS7108	15	7	Compulsory	2	

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 3

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Research, Evidence and Quality	IHS7109	30	7	Compulsory	3	Semester 2

What Are the Entry Requirements?

Direct Applications to QMUL will be made by the deadline of 15th October 2016.

Applications to the program are governed by the Admissions Policy and meet best practice with regards to Fairness in Admissions (SPA) and Values Based Recruitment. There are no age restrictions to the programme. Applications from mature students are welcome.

Applicants should satisfy the following minimum academic requirements.

Degree:

Applicants must have a Life Sciences or Health Profession Degree. This will usually be a Bachelors degree, and may be a four-year Masters, but the latter only if it is a first degree. The minimum academic entry requirements are an upper second class (2:1)

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Honours degree. If an applicant is offered a 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. Only an applicant's first degree is considered.

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 Bachelor (Honours) degree standard prior to making an application, which will be considered on a case by case basis.

Applications from candidates who are in their last year of the degree are accepted provided they are predicted to achieve an upper second class Honours (2:1) 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.

A levels:

A- level or AS level Chemistry or Biology with grade B or above. It is acceptable that graduate applicants retake their AS level Chemistry and Biology to achieve the required grades.

These are the minimum requirements. Candidates who do not meet these will be rejected.

UKCAT:

Applicants must sit the UKCAT prior to the September deadline in the year of application. All candidates must achieve the 3rd decile range or above

GCSE:

All eligible applicants must have the following subjects at GCSE level, at grades AAABBB or above (in any order) to include Biology (or Human Biology), Chemistry, English Language and Mathematics (or Additional Mathematics or Statistics). The Science double award may substitute all sciences at GCSE.

Experience in health care may contribute and compensate if the above requirements have not been fully met.

English Language qualifications:

One of the following English Language qualifications is required from applicants educated outside the UK (or educated within the UK but not in the English language) who meet our other academic criteria:

- IELTS with a score of 7.0 overall and a minimum of 7 in each domain (must have been taken within 2 years).
- GCSE/IGCSE/O-level in English Language at grade B All IGCSE must have a speaking and listening component in the exam Degree taught in the English Language.

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

How Do We Listen and Act on Your Feedback?

You will have a variety of ways to provide feedback. We will regularly ask for your feedback at the end of modules and taught components in order to refine and improve the effectiveness and experience of the components/ modules. You will be asked to provide feedback regarding your experiences in clinical placements, this is your opportunity to contribute to the development of the course.

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

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between Schools and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/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 operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. The process is normally organised at a School-level basis with the Head of School, or equivalent, responsible for the completion of the school's Annual Programme Reviews. Schools/institutes are required to produce a separate Annual Programme Review for undergraduate

programmes and for postgraduate taught programmes using the relevant Undergraduate or Postgraduate Annual Programme Review pro-forma. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations.

Academic Support

The course begins with an induction week to provide orientation to SMD and QMUL. 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 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 additional tutorial support for you either provided by themselves or another member of the faculty.

Programme-specific Rules and Facts

There is a progression hurdle between year 1 and Year 2. Students must pass all the components of the end of year 1 exams. There is also a progression hurdle between end of year 2 exams and the National Exam. If a student fails the end of Year 2 exams they will not be recommended for the National Exam. Resits are following the submission of the dissertation Student who are successful at the resit will need to wait until the May sitting of the National Exam.

Students will be able to submit their dissertation early if they choose in which case, subject to satisfactory performance at end of year 2 finals, students can be awarded an MSc after 24 months of study.

Specific Support for Disabled Students

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 perform the work of a PA will need to be considered on a case by case basis and will be dependent upon the nature and severity of their disability.

Links With Employers, Placement Opportunities and Transferable Skills

The 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. 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 practise, it is essential that you pass both the University's Exams (obtaining your MSc) as well as the National Certifying Exam.

Programme Specification Approval

Person completing Programme Specification

Dr Conor Byrne

Programme Title: MSc in PA Studies

Person responsible for management of programme

Dr Conor Byrne

**Date Programme Specification produced/amended
by School Learning and Teaching Committee**

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

29 June 2016