

Programme Specification for MSc Physician Associate

This document applies to Academic Year 2024/25 onwards

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	General Medical Council (awaiting confirmation)
4.	Final award or awards	MSc
5.	Programme title	MSc Physician Associate
6.	Pathways available	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Taught programme - University of Worcester Practice placement – In GP practices and a range of community and hospital NHS trusts.
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	Full time programme lasting 2 years. Practice element may include working some unsocial hours (evenings, nights, weekends, and public holidays).
9.	UCAS Code	BB96
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	<u>Department of Health (2006, Revised 2012) Competence and Curriculum Framework for Physician Assistants (2012)</u> <u>GMC Physician Associate and Anaesthesia Associate Generic and Shared Learning outcomes (September 2022).</u> Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA) Content Map <u>Final Version of FPA Curriculum (September 2023).</u>
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	Course re-approved August 2024 including new modules MSPA4027 and MSPA4028

12. Educational aims of the programme

The MSc Physician Associate course is aimed at graduates in life/biological/biomedical sciences, healthcare professions and science, engineering and social sciences who have studied appropriate biological sciences at degree level, and who aspire to become Physician Associates.

The MSc Physician Associate programme is a pre-registration healthcare course, delivered at post-graduate level (Level 7). The programme aims to equip individuals to be able to function in a multi-disciplinary team, under the supervision of a registered medical practitioner (doctor). On completion of the programme, graduates should be patient-centred healthcare practitioners who are safe, competent and reflective. Before graduates can work clinically, they are currently required to pass the Physician Associate National Examination (PANE).

The PANE is developed and delivered by the Assessment Unit of the Faculty Physician Associates (FPA) on behalf of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP). The PANE is open to any candidate who has successfully graduated from a UK university postgraduate programme in Physician Associate Studies (either as a postgraduate diploma or a master's course). From Summer 2025 this examination will be renamed the Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA). More detail can be found within the course handbook.

The Physician Associate MSc programme is therefore designed to prepare students for the PARA with the knowledge and skills for a clinical career that will involve professional enquiry and health research. The programme is constructed around the published guidance provided by the GMC and FPA (see links in CH) on the appropriate learning outcomes which cover the breadth of clinical topics in primary and secondary care and reflect an evolving workforce agenda in the NHS.

Students will participate in an intensive and demanding programme of study over 2 extended academic years, [amounting to 90 weeks of study](#). Both the duration of the programme and the requisite high levels of knowledge and skill required are to ensure patient safety. This means that this is a rigorously assessed academic and clinical programme.

The programme aims to meet the educational requirements set out by the GMC and the FPA as summarised in the following overarching aims.

The course aims to:

- Enable graduates to provide patients with safe, high quality, compassionate clinical care within their scope of practice, in-line with current legal frameworks for the physician associate profession.
- Provide graduates with sound scientific knowledge to inform their clinical skills and decision-making, including when dealing with complexity and uncertainty.
- Prepare graduates to safely undertake a comprehensive clinical assessment of patients and service users, utilising clinical reasoning and diagnostic skills, to formulate and execute a management plan.
- Equip graduates with the necessary understanding of the safe prescribing of medications, including proposing appropriate medications to prescribers, and evaluating the impact of patient medication history on the clinical situation.
- Enable graduates to work effectively within an integrated multidisciplinary team and with delegated autonomy.
- Equip graduates with the capability to apply a biopsychosocial understanding of health and illness safely and effectively across a range of healthcare settings
- Prepare graduates to become leaders of their profession through self-management, role modelling, and education, and by contributing to the evolution of the Physician Associate profession in the UK.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

These overall learning outcomes for the MSc Physician Associate course are taken directly from the Faculty of Physician Associates (FPA) General and Clinical Capabilities in Practice (CiPs) which map onto the GMC's outcomes. These outcomes are incorporated into the relevant modules' intended learning outcomes.

Knowledge and Understanding			
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s	Award
1	Appreciate and apply to practice ethical and legal parameters as set out by the FPA and GMC (FPA General CiP 2, GMC LO T1-1)	MSPA4022 MSPA4028	PGDip MSc
2	Demonstrate the knowledge required to formulate appropriate differential diagnoses and clinical decision-making using effective clinical reasoning and judgement. (FPA Clinical CiP 1 GMC LO T3-1)	MSPA4027 MSPA4022 MSPA4023 MSPA4025 MSPA4028	PGDip MSc

Knowledge and Understanding			
3	Recognise the role of health promotion and illness prevention from both a population and individual complete person perspective. (FPA Clinical CiP 6, GMC LO T2-1)	MSPA4027 MSPA4022 MSPA4023 MSPA4025 MSPA4028	PGDip MSc
4	Devise care plans in collaboration with other health professionals and support from their supervising doctor, including understanding the safe prescribing of medications. FPA Clinical CiP 2, GMC LO T3-1, LO T3-2)	MSPA4027 MSPA4022 MSPA4023 MSPA4025 MSPA4028	PGDip MSc

Cognitive and Intellectual skills			
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s	Award
5	Apply the findings of research and synthesise information and data safely. (FPA General CiP 6, GMCLO T4-1)	MSPA4022 MSPA4024 MSPA4028 MSPA4030	PGDip MSc
6	Develop as a learner and educator (FPA General CiP 8, GMC LO T2-4)	MSPA4022 MSPA4028 MSPA4030	PGDip MSc
7	To manage complexity and uncertainty and recognise when it is appropriate to escalate situations to senior colleagues (FPA Clinical CiP 5, GMC LO T3-2)	MSPA4027 MSPA4022 MSPA4023 MSPA4025 MSPA4028 MSPA4030	PGDip MSc

Skills and capabilities related to employability			
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s	Award
8	Demonstrate professional behaviour and probity and work within legal frameworks (FPA General CiP 1, GMC LO T1-2)	MSPA4022 MSPA4028	PGDip MSc
9	Assess and manage patients in a range of healthcare settings, including the management of long-term conditions (FPA Clinical CiP 4, GMC LO T3-1)	MSPA4027 MSPA4022 MSPA4023 MSPA4025 MSPA4028	PGCert PGDip MSc
10	Recognise and identify factors that suggest patient vulnerability and safeguard vulnerable patients (FPA General CiP 7, GMC LO T2-2)	MSPA4022 MSPA4025 MSPA4028	PGDip MSc
11	Participate in acute interventions for patients, recognising the acutely deteriorating patient, and the need for the delivery of resuscitation. (FPA Clinical CiP 3, GMC LO T3-1)	MSPA4027 MSPA4022 MSPA4023 MSPA4025 MSPA4028	PGDip MSc

Transferable/key skills			
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s	Award
12	Function effectively within healthcare organisational and management systems. (FPA General CiP 4, GMC LO T2-3)	MSPA4022 MSPA4028	PGDip MSc
13	Apply knowledge of patient safety and understand the role of quality improvement in patient care. (FPA General CiP 5, GMC LO T4-1)	MSPA4024 MSPA4022 MSPA4028 MSPA4030	MSc
14.	Communicate effectively and demonstrate interpersonal skills required to work as part of multiprofessional clinical team. (FPA General CiP 3, GMC LO T2-2)	MSPA4022 MSPA4028	PGCert PGDip MSc

Learning and teaching

This blended course utilising on-campus learning and teaching opportunities, combined with asynchronous recorded lectures and synchronous VLE activities, equips students with competencies for independent lifelong learning and future employment within a clinical environment. A variety of independent study, teaching, and academic support through the personal academic tutoring system, equips students to reflect on progress and build up a profile of knowledge, skills, achievements and experiences. As a level 7 – Master’s level – course, students’ skills in communication, collaborative working, critical thinking, analysis and project management will be extended. As such the following blended learning experiences ensure graduates will be confident working in complex, dynamic clinical situations that require reasoned, evidence-based approaches, often before all the clinical information is available, ensuring students are able to safely deal with uncertainty in the clinical environment.

The following table displays the variety of teaching occurring within specified modules:

Teaching

Module Code	Name	Mode of Delivery
MSPA4027 Year 1	Foundations of Medicine and Surgery	Recorded online lectures Seminars with case-based learning and workbooks Face to face interactive lectures Primary Care clinical simulation
MSPA4022 Year 1	Foundations of Clinical Practice	History taking sessions Clinical skills practical sessions A to E secondary care simulation Clinical placements
MSPA4023 Year 1	Clinical Medicine and Public Health	Recorded online lectures Sessions with case-based learning and workbooks Face to face lectures Primary Care clinical simulation
MSPA4024 Year 1	Research Methods in Health	Recorded online lectures Online synchronous seminars using VLE In-person tutorials
MSPA4025 Year 1	Clinical Specialities	Recorded online lectures Seminars with case-based learning and workbooks Face to face lectures E-learning for health units Primary and Secondary Care clinical simulation
MSPA4028 Year 2	Clinical Placements	Practice placements in a range of settings Academic study and revision in-days
MSPA4030	Dissertation	Online synchronous teaching using VLE

Year 2		Recorded online lectures Supervision tutorials
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Year 1

The first year of the course aims to lay down a foundation of knowledge about key illnesses and diseases, their pathophysiology, presentation, diagnosis, treatment and management, as well as providing a safe environment to learn and practice history taking, clinical examination and skills.

Topics are studied by body system or medical specialty, where appropriate. The teaching follows a spiral curriculum-like pattern, where a topic is introduced early in the week and then covered again with increasing levels of complexity and information added. This is repeated over the course as a whole, as conditions may be covered several times through different perspectives.

Students are taught through a blended learning approach of structured face-to-face lectures and asynchronous online lectures and seminars. Clinical simulation, clinical skills and practical sessions as well as case-based learning occur on campus. Students also have directed and independent study, group and individual tutorials, with the additional support of e-learning and material available through the virtual learning environment.

The theory-heavy topics such as physiology, pathophysiology and pharmacology are delivered using both asynchronous online recorded lectures for students to study at their own pace and then face-to-face and practical sessions which are interactive and involve higher order thinking and application of knowledge.

History taking, clinical skills and examinations are delivered in practical hands-on sessions and through the use of clinical simulation, incorporating both primary and secondary care scenarios. Clinical simulation is a key feature of the programme, giving opportunities to learn and practice clinical skills and clinical communication, including 'hands on' practical skills sessions using a range of simulation manikins. Formative feedback on performance is provided to facilitate safe and effective support for essential skills development, in simulation suites, replicating hospital and community practice learning environments. There is also input from other agencies, service users, simulated patients and professionals as appropriate.

In Year 1 of the course, students will be on clinical placements, which run in Terms 2 and 3 (January to July) for one day per week, either on a Wednesday or Thursday. These placements will be arranged in a variety of settings, including general practice, community and acute hospital services.

In preparation for the MSc dissertation, students will also receive teaching on research methods in healthcare, which is delivered via the VLE using asynchronous online lectures and in-person seminars.

Year 2

Year 2 is mainly set in clinical practice with regular academic days in the University. Practice learning experiences are clinical placements in primary and secondary care environments, including GP practices, hospitals, hospices, community hospitals and other out-patient and community settings. These are based predominantly in the Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and Warwickshire.

Year 2 clinical placements build upon students' Year 1 placements both in duration being longer and expectation in that students will be supervised to undertake higher level clinical activity. During Year 2, students will also return to the University for a combination of clinical skills and simulation teaching, formative assessment of progress, Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) and dissertation tutorials and summative assessments.

When on clinical placements, students are supported, supervised, and assessed by a named clinical supervisor. The named clinical supervisor will co-ordinate the clinical experience and the

student will be supervised by a range of appropriately qualified clinical staff within the healthcare team and clinical firm. Experience is verified in the final sign off by the clinical supervisor.

All clinical supervisors are provided with a clinical supervisor handbook to ensure standardisation of student supervision. Placements are visited by the Clinical Placement Lead and then assessed before adoption as a placement. Placements are routinely visited each year and this ensures that each second year student is visited at least once whilst on placement by the Clinical Placement Lead. The Clinical Placement Lead's role is to support both the student and clinical supervisor, and to review feedback on the placement given by the student and the clinical supervisor.

Clinical placement opportunities will be varied and reflect the generalist nature of the physician associate role. This ensures that our graduates are prepared both for their licensing examinations (PARA) which they sit following graduation and for their clinical careers. These will typically include emergency medicine, primary care and community medicine, mental health, surgery, general medicine and women's and children's health.

During their second year, students will also undertake their dissertation study. Students are allocated a dissertation supervisor who will support students in applying for ethics, conducting their research and submitting their dissertations.

Course Structure

Year 1		
Term	Module	
Term 1	MSPA4027 Foundations of Clinical Medicine and Surgery 15 credits	MSPA4022 Foundations of Clinical Practice 30 credits
Term 2	MSPA4023 Clinical Medicine and Public Health 15 credits	
	MSPA4024 Research Methods in Health 15 credits	
Term 3	MSPA4025 Clinical Specialities 15 credits	
Year 2		
Term	Module	
Term 1	MSPA4028 Clinical Placements 45 credits	MSPA4030 Dissertation 45 credits
Term 2		
Term 3		

Contact time

In a typical week in Year 1, teaching will be across five days, and consist of approximately 18 - 20 hours face-to-face with a maximum of a further 8 hours of asynchronous online lectures. In Year 2, students will be on placement for approximately 37.5 hours per week, over 40 weeks of the year, experiencing a variety of clinical attachments across both the community and acute setting. Students will have 4 weeks of academic in-days through the year.

The number of taught hours is higher than the recommended hours per credit usually awarded to a Masters programmes at the University of Worcester. The additional hours are to support the clinical and professional taught components of the degree programme especially where students are on placement. Students should be aware that these additional hours are required to ensure that students meet the learning outcomes and professional requirements (as specified by the FPA/GMC) within the course's 2-year duration.

Directed Study

In addition to direct contact time students are given approximately 10 additional directed study a week, using resources or materials set by module tutors. This can be undertaken at home or on campus and enables students to prepare for the clinical skills and simulation teaching.

Independent Self-study

In addition to the contact time and directed study, students are expected to undertake personal self-study per week. The quantity of this will vary according to the individual student, their pre-existing knowledge in this area, based on their first degree or relevant clinical experience but a minimum of 10 hours per week is to be expected. Typically, this will involve completing reading journal articles and books, undertaking research in the library and online, preparing coursework assignments and presentations, and preparing for examinations.

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources.

Teaching staff

Students are taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. All staff have or are working towards post-graduate teaching qualifications and are Fellows of Advanced HE. The teaching on the course is also supported by a wide range of professionals including staff on the MBChB degree programme, practicing healthcare professionals, practitioners and service users/carers.

14. Assessment and Assessment strategy

Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy is designed to test the required knowledge and its application alongside enabling students to demonstrate competence in individual, discrete skills, and the integration of those skills in the safe assessment and management of patients. It offers a robust approach to assure student competence. Students will have a range of formative or practice examinations to consolidate their learning before sitting summative examinations. Assessments will test knowledge and its application via Single Best Answer (SBA) multiple choice questions. Clinical skills, professionalism and applied knowledge will be assessed by Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and practical examinations. Students will be required to have a number of clinical skills observed and signed off enabling them to demonstrate their ability in a range of competencies, initially through simulation and then in clinical practice. These competencies will form part of students' placement portfolios alongside their placement assessment documents and case-based discussions. In the second year students will also undertake 3 Case Based Discussions which are in the form of written case reviews to integrate their skills of learning through reflection. As students are assessed on competences a pass/fail approach is used.

Feedback strategy

Feedback is offered to students individually following formative assessments to support revision techniques and to identify areas of concern. This is designed to accurately reflect the structure and pattern of the following summative exams. Feedback, post-exam reflection tools and one-to-one tutorials are offered to students following formative assessments by their PATs. In addition, there is structured feedback following summative exams to aid future revision. Students meet with their PATs regularly to received feedback and support on their academic

progress. Students also receive feedback from the dissertation supervisors and from their clinical supervisors whilst on placement.

Standardisation and Moderation

Standardisation is the process used to ensure that all assessors and markers are aware of the conventions of assessing students work on the PA programme, and those providing marks are familiar with, and have a common understanding of, the marking and feedback standards. Standardisation exercises take place prior to the assessment of students.

Work is moderated to ensure that the assessment criteria have been applied consistently and that assessment outcomes are fair and reliable for students. All summative assessed work is moderated. For example, the psychometrics of the SBAs and OSCEs are reviewed post exam and poorly performing items are reviewed by a post exam board, and removed if required. Other adjustments to assessment items may be made based on the psychometrics through consultation with the post-exam board and the external examiner. Furthermore, assessments of clinical examiner concordance and alignment is undertaken post exam and all failed clinical assessments are doubled marked. All written work is moderated according to the University guidance on standardisation and moderation, therefore, a percentage of all assessments are subject to moderation.

Blind second marking takes place for the dissertation module, however, a third marker maybe used where there is significant disagreement between the first and second marker. These procedures are aligned to the University of Worcester assessment policy <https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/AssessmentPolicy.pdf> and guidance on standardisation and Moderation.

15. Programme structures and requirements

Course Route

Year 1 is delivered 5 days per week, over 45 weeks per year. The first year is like a pre-clinical year, with students attending the University to receive teaching on anatomy and physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, clinical presentations of conditions, history taking, clinical examination and clinical skills and application of knowledge in clinical simulations.

This content is covered in the modules:

MSPA4027, MSPA4022, MSPA4023, MSPA4024, MSPA4025.

The students will also have the Research Methods module, MSPA4024.

The equates to 90 credits. During term three the students will also spend 10 single days on clinical placement.

All modules are mandatory.

Year 2 consists of clinical placements and some theory teaching in module MSPA4028.

Students also complete the Dissertation during this year, Module MSPA4030.

The equates to 90 credits.

All modules are mandatory.

In order to progress into the second-year modules MSPA4028 and MSPA4030, students must have successfully completed modules: MSPA4027, MSPA4022, MSPA4023, MSPA4024 and MSPA4025. There is no compensation allowed all modules must be passed to progress. These modules ensure that students have the required theoretical underpinning and simulated clinical skills required to provide the foundation knowledge, understanding and competence required for clinical placements, including aspects of patient safety.

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory or Optional		
			PG Cert	PG Dip	MSc

MSPA4027	Foundations of Medicine and Surgery	15	Optional	Mandatory	Mandatory
MSPA4022	Foundations of Clinical Practice	30	Optional	Mandatory	Mandatory
MSPA4023	Clinical Medicine and Public Health	15	Optional	Mandatory	Mandatory
MSPA4024	Research Methods	15	Optional	Mandatory	Mandatory
MSPA4025	Clinical Specialities	15	Optional	Mandatory	Mandatory
MSPA4028	Clinical Placement	45	n/a	Mandatory	Mandatory
MSPA4030	Dissertation	45	n/a	n/a	Mandatory
Total Credits		180			
PG Certificate To be awarded the PG Cert in Clinical Studies students must successfully complete 60 credits at Level 7 from any of the above Optional modules.					
PG Diploma To be awarded the PG Dip in Clinical Studies students must successfully complete the PG Certificate plus any other Mandatory modules to a total minimum of 120 credits at Level 7. To be awarded the PG Dip Physician Associate students must pass modules MSPA4027, MSPA4022, MSPA4023, MSPA4024, MSPA4025 and MSPA4028 inclusive.					
MSc Physician Associate To be awarded the MSc Physician Associate, requires students to successfully complete all Mandatory modules as indicated in the table above. The awards of PG Cert and PG Dip are only available as exit awards.					

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at level 7 of the OfS Sector recognised standards/FHEQ and reflects the QAA guidance on master's degree characteristics. The design of the curriculum has been informed by:

[QAA \(2020\) The characteristics statement for masters' degrees, Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.](#)

The Physician Associate curriculum as set out by the GMC in [Physician associate and anaesthesia associate generic and shared learning outcomes](#), and by the RCP FPA.

Once the GMC commences regulation of the Physician Associate profession, [Good medical practice: interim standards for physician associates and anaesthesia associates](#) will also take effect.

17. Support for students

The university offers a full range of pastoral and academic support services are available for students that can be accessed via the [Student Homepage](#). Support for a wide range of student issues from accommodation to welfare through a single point of access, FirstPoint, located in the Peirson Centre. Students with disabilities will be supported by the specialist services such as [Student Services](#) and the [Disability and dyslexia service](#), in conjunction with the programme team.

Prior to commencing the course, students are invited to attend a day that will familiarise them with the University and the course. They can meet representatives from Student Services, Registry and ILS and hear more about their services as well as meeting the programme team.

Induction

An induction programme is offered to all students in their first week of the course which provides students with the opportunity to meet the course leader, the course team, subject librarian and their personal academic tutor. Induction introduces students to the concept of learning and teaching at level 7 including study skills and academic writing, introduction to information and

learning systems including library resources, use of computer facilities, timetabling and access to teaching staff, an introduction to student services and the international office. There are also a range of study skills workshops, open to all students on a self-referral basis. Academic support is also offered by the [Disability and dyslexia service](#).

Personal Academic Tutors

Personal tutoring is at the heart of student support. All students are allocated a Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) who they meet with as a minimum of 3 x a year, within the Physician Associate team for the duration of the course. In addition, the course and module leaders are another source of support for students, especially in respect of overall guidance.

Whilst the Personal Academic Tutor will be the student's first point of contact for support with developing academic skills, it may also be useful for them to access some of the additional support the University provides for all its students. This includes a diverse range of study skill support including maths support, a writer in residence and referencing.

The Course Handbook contains information that is provided to all students. The handbook is reviewed, updated and reissued annually. Subject guides, and 'Libguides' are widely available both in hardcopy and on the university website. The programme has a course presence on the virtual learning environment (Blackboard) in addition to individual web pages for each module.

Support on Clinical Placements

Year 1 Clinical Placements

During Year 1, from Term 2, students attend clinical placements one day a week. These placements are observatory in nature and give the student an experience of a variety of clinical settings.

Whilst on placement the students are supported by the clinical supervisor at the placement, the module lead for MSPA4022 and their PATs. Feedback both about the placement and from the placement, are also monitored regularly and used to help support the students.

Year 2 Clinical Placements

During Year 2, students attend clinical placements across 40 weeks in a full-time capacity. They rotate through a variety of clinical specialties to ensure a range of clinical experiences and settings, preparing them for both the PARA exam and developing them as generalist clinicians. Whilst on clinical placements they are supported in a number of ways, which meet the University's Work Based Learning policy. These include, site visits to each student, roughly once per term by the Clinical Placement Lead/Module Lead of MSPA4028. There are academic in-days each month, during which students will return to the University. They will be given the opportunity to meet with their PATs and other academic staff to discuss their placement issues and concerns and carry out their case-based discussions. Students also undertake formative SBA exams and OSCEs, and receive additional teaching that supports placement skills and clinical reasoning. Students can also meet with dissertation supervisors to discuss their research projects.

18. Admissions

Admissions Policy

We seek to recruit graduates with a strong science or healthcare background as well as experienced clinicians in other healthcare disciplines, as our teaching assumes a level of prior knowledge in the biological sciences. The University of Worcester is committed to widening participation, equality and diversity, and inclusion. Hence candidates will be selected on ability, potential, commitment to become a Physician Associate, and those who can demonstrate the values and attitudes compatible with professional healthcare practice.

Entry requirements

Applicants should have: GCSE (or equivalent) grade A-C/4 in Maths and English

EITHER

Minimum of a 2:1 honours degree (relevant life sciences subject) and 150 hours of health or care experience

OR

A 2:1 in a physical science or social work and completed degree level biology modules and 150 hours of health or care experience

OR

A 2:2 honours degree in a relevant life sciences subject (to include a transcript with no more than 4 modules graded at less than 50%) with 150 hours of health or care experience.

Relevant degree subjects can include the following (this list is not exhaustive)

Life Sciences	Health Sciences	STEM + biology	Miscellaneous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biology • Human Biology • Biomedical science • Biochemistry • Anatomy • Medical Science • Pharmacology • Any degree majoring in one of these subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paramedicine • Physiotherapy • Audiology • Radiography • ODP • Nursing (Adult and MH branches) • Clinical physiologist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering • Physical Sciences • Social Work • AND degree level biology modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport and Exercise science • Sports Therapy • Psychology • Public Health

In addition:

Relevant work experience in healthcare or an allied health profession which will be assessed during the admissions process.

Two satisfactory references must support the application, both dated within the last year. One must be a recent academic reference and the other should be either a second academic reference or a relevant professional/employer reference.

for applicants whose first language is not English, you will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in English and would normally be expected to have an IELTS score of 7.0 with a minimum of 7.0 in the speaking component and 6.5 in all other components.

Students can check their qualification with the International Recruitment Team at:

international@worc.ac.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

All applicants must undertake an enhanced DBS check and occupational health clearance, this will be at the applicants' own expense.

Admissions procedures

All applications will be processed by the Admissions office and following initial screening, reviewed by the programme team.

Candidates who meet the entry criteria will be invited to participate in a selection day that involves a multi-mini interview consisting of several one-to-one short interviews designed to assess your aptitude to become a PA.

Students are then offered a place based upon their performance provided they meet the entry criteria. Any offer of a place is conditional upon you providing a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and receiving Occupational Health clearance. Satisfactory health clearance and an agreement to undergo appropriate blood tests and immunisations.

If you are or have been a member of a registered professional body please provide details with your application submission. Although we encourage applications from other healthcare professionals, we do not accept applications from candidates with medical degrees or those who have previously studied for, but not completed, a medical degree. This course is not open to applicants previously enrolled on a Physician Associate course or individuals wishing to transfer from other Physician Associate courses.

We do not accept deferred applications, and any places we offer will need to be taken within that year.

19. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#)

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- All assessments and the dissertation are marked on a pass/fail basis
- Pass marks for written SBA exams are 50%.
- OSCEs pass marks are set at 60%.
- Dissertation proposals and the dissertation have a pass mark of 50%.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Clinical placement modules MSPA4022 and 4028 have placement attendance requirements as part of the summative assessment of the module.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit an assessment item after the due date that is marked on a Pass/Fail basis or submitted for reassessment and subject to being capped at the minimum pass mark will not have the work marked. A grade of "L2" will be used to indicate that work had been submitted. Students who have a claim of mitigating circumstances upheld and have submitted the assessment item within fourteen days of the deadline, the original assessment item will be marked.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#).

Retrieval of failure

- A student who fails a summative assessment is entitled to one reassessment, to be taken at the next reassessment opportunity which is during the same academic year (usually during the reassessment period).
- Reassessments will be a new exam or piece of work)
- A student who fails a placement in relation to MSPA4028 will have one reassessment opportunity only for that placement
- If all attempts at reassessment are exhausted, they can retake the module with re-registration, full fees and attendance.
- A student resitting a module (with full fees and attendance) has 1 reassessment opportunity if they fail the initial assessment.
- If a student retakes a module with fees and attendance and exhaust all reassessment attempts, they cannot retake a module a second time.

- All assessment and reassessments are planned in advance and students are informed of the assessment schedule at the start of the academic year.
- Students who fail the dissertation (MSPA4030) at first attempt are required to pay 20% of the module fees to resubmit. If the resubmitted dissertation fails, they may retake the module with full fees and attendance. If they choose not to resubmit the dissertation, they will graduate with a PgDip Physician Associate.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University, as per the taught course regulatory framework.

Requirements for progression from year 1 to Year 2 module MSP4028

- A student must have successfully passed all modules 2027, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025, before they commence the clinical practice module MSPA2028.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert Clinical Studies	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map
PG Dip Clinical Studies	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map
PG Dip Physician Associate	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7, MSPA4027, MSPA4022, MSPA4023, MSPA4024, MSPA4025 and MSPA4028 inclusive, but not including the dissertation module MSPA4030.
MSc Physician Associate	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map

The awards of PG Cert, PG Dip and MSc are unclassified.

This course is subject to the University of Worcester's Fitness to Practice Policy.

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate Destinations

Graduates of the course are working as Physician Associates in a diverse range of clinical settings, including emergency medicine, general medical specialities, transplant and general surgery, primary care and psychiatry.

Student Employability

A very high percentage of graduates who were successful in the professional certification examination have found employment as Physician Associates.

Links with Employers

Practice partners are engaged in the writing, development and delivery of the programme. They provide clinical placements and are closely involved in the on-going monitoring of the programme.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if their takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, and learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module outlines and the course handbook provided to all students at the start of the course.

