PHYSICIAN ASSOCIATE STUDIES
POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA

The University of Aberdeen School of Medicine and Dentistry has been providing clinical excellence and innovation since 1497, and are proud to be leading the way forward by being the only university in Scotland to offer this exciting Postgraduate Diploma in Physician Associate Studies.

The Pg Dip in Physician Associate Studies is fully embedded within the University of Aberdeen’s long established School of Medicine and Dentistry. In partnership with NHS Grampian and input from NHS Highland and NHS Lanarkshire, the programme provides students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to practise in the UK as part of the multidisciplinary clinical team.

This two year, full time programme combines the theoretical and scientific basis of medicine alongside the necessary communication and clinical skills needed in order to carry out a thorough clinical examination. Students consolidate their learning by completing 11 clinical attachments across a wide range of specialties including emergency medicine, acute medicine, respiratory medicine, cardiology, general surgery, orthopaedics, paediatrics and general practice.
WHAT IS A PHYSICIAN ASSOCIATE?

The concept of a Physician Associate (PA) was developed in the USA over 40 years ago and the model has been replicated throughout the world and more recently in the UK.

A PA is “a new healthcare professional who, while not a doctor, works to the medical model, with the attitudes, skills and knowledge base to deliver holistic care and treatment within the general medical and/or general practice team under defined levels of supervision.” (PA Managed Voluntary Register, 2012)

AIMS AND OUTCOMES

The programme aims to produce professionals who have the knowledge, skills and professional behaviours to function as Physician Associates and the personal and intellectual attributes necessary for lifelong professional development.

Such graduates will be:

- safe practitioners working in a wide variety of clinical settings within their scope of practice and agreed supervision;
- expert communicators who are empathic in a manner appropriate to a healthcare profession;
- aware of health inequalities and the challenges of working in a multicultural environment, with patients from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds;
- aware of the limits of their competence and determined to act within those limits;
- trained in the context of multi-professional working in a team environment;
- adept in the use of communication and information technology
- capable and motivated lifelong learners who are continually engaged in active professional development;
- understanding of the need to maintain and promote health, as well as to cure or palliate disease, and aware of their obligations to the wider community as well as to individuals;
- trained to integrate theoretical and clinical learning.
COURSE OUTLINE

Year 1
- Basic Medical Science
- Foundations of Clinical Method
- Foundations of Clinical Medicine
- Anatomy
- Clinical Method (Intermediate)
- Clinical Attachments A (Rotations 1, 2 & 3)

Year 2
- Clinical Attachments B (Rotations 4 – 11)
- National Examination

The programme requires 90 weeks of study and combines the theoretical and scientific basis of medicine with clinical experience. In year 1, there is an emphasis on communication skills and developing the clinical skills needed to carry out thorough clinical examinations. As the course progresses towards the end of the year 1 and through year 2, there are 11 clinical attachments. There is also an opportunity for a Remote & Rural placement in year 2.

During clinical attachments, students learn about common diseases, meet patients and learn from bedside teaching and clinical consultations as well as attending seminars and tutorials whilst working alongside a variety of healthcare professionals who are also in training.

ASSESSMENT

The University has a duty to ensure that its graduates have achieved a safe and satisfactory standard in all the elements of medical practice. Assessment is built in throughout the course and a variety of assessment methods are used including written and clinical exams.

Upon successful completion of University of Aberdeen assessments, students must take and pass the National Examination. This allows graduates to register with the UK Association of Physician Associates and work as a PA in the UK.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Physician Associate salaries are variable but on average a starting salary of Band 6 (NHS Agenda for Change) can be expected. Thereafter, career progression will be dependent upon competency, attributes and opportunities.
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- Achieved or predicted 2:1 (hons) or above in a science or medical/health related subject.
- Higher/A-Level Chemistry - Grade C or above.
- Standard Grade/GCSE English and Maths – Grades B or above.

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

Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to provide evidence of English language attainment in the form of a IELTS certificate with a minimum score of 7.0 in speaking and 7.0 overall.

Successful applicants will be required to join the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG) to allow regulated work with children and vulnerable adults and will be required to meet the requirements for fitness to practice including screening for hepatitis, B, hepatitis C and HIV infection.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications should be submitted online via the University of Aberdeen Postgraduate Application Portal – www.abdn.ac.uk/postgraduate/apply

The following documentation must be submitted alongside an application:

- A personal statement.
- Two references. One must be academic, the other should comment on your suitability to become a healthcare professional.
- Copy of both degree transcript and degree certificate.

Applications will be assessed and scored; those with the highest scores will be invited to attend an interview. Offers will then be made to candidates who achieve the highest total score after interview. Full details of the application process can be found at the webpage detailed below.

FUNDING

The tuition fee for the programme is £9,000 per annum. Graduates of the University of Aberdeen may be eligible for an alumni discount of 20%.

MORE INFORMATION

Contact: Miss Sarah Miller, Admissions Administrator, sarahmiller@abdn.ac.uk
Web: http://www.abdn.ac.uk/smd/physician-associate