



MSc in Physician Associate Studies: Guide to Completing Your Personal Statement

Your Personal Statement is the opportunity for you to demonstrate that you have the enthusiasm and aptitude required to be a successful student and Physician Associate. This guidance will tell you what the Admissions Team look for in a personal statement.

Use this opportunity to demonstrate your enthusiasm and aptitude for studying the Physician Associate programme. It is also an opportunity to provide an insight to the research you have carried out to develop your understanding of the role of the Physician Associate. We wish to hear about:

General principles

The MSc in Physician Associate Studies is aimed at students who have prior experience in health sciences or the health sector and who wish to undertake a clinical career in healthcare/medicine in the UK. As well as academic achievement, applicants for the Physician Associate Studies programme will need to be able to demonstrate they have the right skills and values to support effective team working in delivering excellent patient care and experience.

Your qualifications will provide an insight to your academic ability but your personal statement will tell us about you as a unique individual. Try to make it as specific and personal as you can. Whenever possible you should only make claims which can be verified - vague statements such as “I’m a people person” do not tell us anything useful.

Avoid making “tick-box” lists like “I have two weeks work experience, a Silver Duke of Edinburgh’s Award and I am a Cub/Scout leader, but do show us what your experiences meant to you. “During work experience I discovered...”, “On our expedition, I had to...”, “Working with Cubs and Scouts requires commitment and patience ...”

What are we looking for?

The purpose of our course is to develop excellent Physician Associates who can support doctors in the diagnosis and management of patients. Our teaching is based on the core values of the NHS Constitution and this is also reflected by our selection processes.



The values being recruited to are: working together for patients; respect and dignity, everyone counts, commitment to quality of care, compassion and improving lives.

Working together for patients.

Patients come first in everything we do. We fully involve patients, staff, families, carers, communities, and professionals inside and outside the NHS.

Respect and dignity.

We value every person – whether patient, their families or carers, or staff – as an individual, respect their aspirations and commitments in life, and seek to understand their priorities, needs, abilities and limits.

Commitment to quality of care.

We earn the trust placed in us by insisting on quality and striving to get the basics of quality of care – safety, effectiveness and patient experience – right every time.

Compassion.

We ensure that compassion is central to the care we provide and respond with humanity and kindness to each person's pain, distress, anxiety or need. We find time for patients, their families and carers, as well as those we work alongside.

Improving lives.

We strive to improve health and well-being and people's experiences of the NHS. We cherish excellence and professionalism wherever we find it.

Everyone counts.

We maximise our resources for the benefit of the whole community, and make sure nobody is excluded, discriminated against or left behind.

Accurate spelling and grammar are of paramount importance when completing your personal statement. You have plenty of time to prepare and perfect your statement before submission, so any errors which slip through make it look as if you have not taken much care over it – which doesn't look attractive to an Admissions Team.

Be especially careful to avoid plagiarism i.e. the words must be your own. There are two important reasons for this. Firstly, a personal statement must be personal, i.e. it must be about you. A plagiarised statement only tells us about someone else. Secondly, plagiarism (presenting the work of another person as your own) is a form of dishonesty, something we do not regard as an attractive quality in applicants. Do not be tempted to copy another person's application materials, or download your personal statement from a website. We are likely to reject any such application immediately.



What do we want to read?

It is essential that you use this opportunity to demonstrate your enthusiasm and aptitude for studying the MSc in Physician Associate Studies. It is also an opportunity to provide an insight to the research you have carried out to develop your understanding of the role of the Physician Associate. We wish to hear about:

- Why have you chosen this particular profession and what led you to this?
- What and how have you researched about it?
- What is your knowledge and understanding of the role of Physician Associates and their contribution to the wider healthcare team?
- What are the current issues affecting Physician Associates or healthcare?
- How have your current studies prepared you for studying the programme?
- What transferable skills do you have – for example, work experience, positions of responsibility through paid employment, volunteering or university activities?
- What caring experience do you have?
- Why have you chosen this particular profession and what led you to this?
- Be careful with spelling, grammar and plagiarism!

Note that as a condition of any offer, relevant work experience may be verified and deception in amount or type of work experience could result in an offer being withdrawn.

This is also a good chance to mention any other academic awards, prizes and achievements you may have that fall outside traditional academic awards, especially if they are relevant to your career choice. This could include any achievements gained during your time at university. It is also a chance to mention anything that may have adversely affected your level of achievement, e.g. illness or change in personal circumstances.

Evidence that you can take responsibility

Physician Associates have a responsibility for their patients and applicants should be able to demonstrate that they have begun to develop this aspect of their character. Demonstration of responsibility through paid employment, within school/university, and through family or leisure activities are desirable. Activities connected to and independent of school/university are given equal merit.

Evidence of social and cultural awareness

Before embarking on a career so dependent on interacting with all members of society, usually under difficult situations, it is useful for applicants to have some experience on a



regular basis of society beyond their immediate environment. Preferably this experience should have been gained over a period of several months, and it is not necessarily required to be directly related to healthcare. Many applicants gain this insight through caring experience, voluntary work, part-time employment and organised community schemes. Again, activities connected to and independent of school are given equal merit.

Your interests, activities and achievements

The School of Medicine believes that people who have developed interests outside their career and who try to lead a balanced life are more likely to be effective members of the healthcare team. Also, we encourage students to contribute to the sporting, artistic, cultural and community aspects of the University. Successful applicants will have found time to pursue non-academic interests whilst still meeting the necessary academic requirements.

What we do not need to read?

The area for your personal statement is limited. Do not waste space by telling us things we already know. In most cases, we want to hear what you have done, not what you plan to do, or would like to do.

One exception to this suggestion relates to work experience. We know it can be difficult to get experience in time before the application deadline, so if you have work experienced arranged which you have not yet done, do tell us about it. But be aware that we will ask about it, if you are invited to interview, so if it has to be cancelled you should let us know as soon as possible.

Try to avoid general statements—“Physician Associates is a career which involves life-long learning” - unless you explain why that applies to you specifically for example “Physician Associates is a career which involves life-long learning and I have always loved learning new things.” If a comment doesn’t tell us about you, it probably doesn’t belong in your personal statement.

What now?

This is your chance to tell us about yourself. We cannot advise what will work for you because we do not know you, but we want to. So write a personal statement 1-2 sides of A4, telling us about you and why you want to be a Physician Associate.