

Programme Specification

MPAS Physician Associate Studies

For students entering Part 1 in September 2023

UCAS Code: BB96

UFMPAS

This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	4 years
Accreditation	No accreditation currently

Programme information and content

The programme aims to produce graduates who have the knowledge, skills and professional behaviours to function as Physician Associates (and to have their qualification nationally and internationally recognised) and the personal and intellectual attributes necessary for life-long professional development. Such graduates will be:

- safe practitioners under medical supervision in a wide variety of clinical settings, with patients from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds
- 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
- 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 C&IT (Communication and Information Technology) skills for healthcare
- capable and motivated lifelong learners 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
- skilled at using research, enquiry and scholarship to identify and address the challenges facing clinical practice and/or the health sciences.

Part 1:

Students are introduced to core concepts of science, and professional skills and experiences. You are taught using a variety of teaching and assessment methods that enable you to develop independent and reflective learning skills. The year is made up of a range of 10 and 20 credit modules that provide you with core medical sciences knowledge whilst also introducing you to the role of a physician associate and its place within a multidisciplinary team, and through this you will begin to develop key professional skills.

Part 2:	You will build on your Part 1 medical science knowledge, which will be developed in a way that encourages integration of learning across the medical science and clinical practice topics. You will also be encouraged to use your science training in the development of your professional practice. You will be introduced to the workplace through structured placements in hospitals and GP practices, and will develop a CPD portfolio where you will reflect on experiential learning and identify your own learning needs. You will also learn with and from other students undertaking different healthcare degree programmes.
Part 3:	To enable you to begin clinical training, Part 3 is taught over a 45-week year and you will spend up to 2 days each week on placement in hospital or a GP surgery. You will learn from academic and clinical lecturers as you learn about disease management and prevention, patient management and promoting public health. During the year you will develop a portfolio of practice to record your clinical development and this will form part of your end of year assessment. Research skills training will be provided to help you prepare for your final year research project.
Part 4:	Your programme will align with the MSc in Physician Associate Studies in your final year, and you will spend the majority of your time on placement across a 45-week placement programme. You will also complete a workplace-based research project where you will be supported by a clinician and an academic supervisor.

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
BI1AP12	Anatomy & Physiology	20	4
BI1BEC1	Building Blocks of Life	20	4
BI1BP2	Pathology	20	4
BI1S1	Introductory Microbiology	10	4
PM1MPAS1	Clinical and Metabolic Biochemistry	10	4
PM1MPAS2	Professional Skills for Healthcare A	10	4
PM1MPAS3	Public Health & Nutrition	20	4
PM1PCOL1	Principles of Drug Action	10	4

Part 2 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
BI2AP12	Anatomy & Physiology 2	30	5
BI2BCB5	Clinical Biomedicine	20	5
PM2MPAS1	Professional Skills for Healthcare B	20	5

PM2MPAS2	Medicines in Health Care	20	5
PM2PCOL1	Molecular Drug Targets	10	5

Students must select a further 20 credits of optional modules from a list provided that includes modules from within the School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy and other Schools.

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
PM3PPA	MPAS Clinical Module 1	90	6
PM3RMP	Medical Research and Enquiry	30	6

All Part 3 modules are compulsory and are taught across a 45-week teaching year to enable students to undertake all required NHS based placements

Part 4 modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
PM4PPA	MPAS Clinical Module 2	120	7

Part 4 module is compulsory and is taught across a 45-week teaching year to enable students to undertake all required NHS based placements

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your Programme is set out in the Further Programme Information. Details of optional modules for each part, including any Additional Costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Additional costs of the programme

- 1) Required text books: A wide variety of text books is available from the library. Students are advised to purchase own copies of some core texts at varying costs.
- 2) Specialist equipment or materials: Professional standard stethoscope at approximately £90-£160. A lab coat will cost approximately £10.

3) Printing facilities are available on campus at approximately £0.05 per page

4) Travel, accommodation and subsistence: Students will need to travel to placements in the community and this will incur additional travel costs if they visit venues geographically further away (when significantly further away, the programme currently supports travel costs by reimbursements).

5) As part of ensuring the safety of students, patients and the public, you will be required to undergo police (Disclosure & Barring Service) and health checks. The initial DBS check costs approximately £51.20. The health check is carried out free of charge, but you will be required to pay for any vaccinations that you may need.

Costs are indicative and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. The estimates were calculated in 2022.

Placement opportunities

Study abroad will not be available for students on this programme. However, placements in the healthcare environment form a key part of the learning activities that students will undertake. You will therefore be provided with credit-bearing placements as part of your Programme. You will also be encouraged to gain work experience beyond that provided by the university. The university will provide advice and support in achieving this.

Teaching and learning delivery:

Teaching and learning is delivered in a variety of ways, including interactive lecture-based style, practical skills workshops, case-based learning and small group work, simulated clinical skills training sessions, and seminars.

During Parts 1 and 2 students will take part in short structured placements and maintain a CPD portfolio, which will develop skills needed for the unsupervised clinical placements that begin in part 3. During the clinical training, in Parts 3 and 4, students will be required to maintain a portfolio of learning which includes a record of patient encounters and acquisition of core clinical skills. Students will be required to include reflective accounts of critical learning encounters as well as formal case reports. The portfolio will also contain evidence provided by other healthcare practitioners regarding the performance of the students.

Total study hours for each Part of your programme will be 1200 hours. The contact hours for your programme will depend upon your module combination; an average for a typical set of modules on this programme is approximately 400 hours in Part 1 and 2, and 650 hours/year for Part 3 and 4. In addition to your scheduled contact hours, you will be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

The oversight of education and training of Physician Associates is currently shared by the Department of Health, the Physician Associate Schools Council (PASC) and the Faculty of Physician Associates (FPA), Royal College of Physicians. PASC peer reviews programmes prior to their commencement. Graduates who pass a programme must then pass the Physician Associate National Certification Examination and then will be able to register with the FPA who maintain the Managed Voluntary Register (PAMVR).

Assessment

Assessment methods used will be according those stated in the module descriptors to align to the learning outcomes. This means the programme is assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework, oral examinations, and practical examinations.

Progression requirements

University Threshold Performance Requirements

The University-wide rules relating to 'threshold performance' are as follows:

Part 1

- (i) achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1, where all the credits are at Level 4 or above; and
- (ii) achieve a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken in Part 1.

MPAS specific progression requirements

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance and:

- (iii) a mark of at least 40% in individual modules; and
- (iv) successful completion of specified coursework and /or examination components of relevant modules, as described in the module descriptions.

Students who have failed or are not qualified to progress to Part 2 are permitted one re-sit examination in each module (or failed required coursework element of a module) in which they fail to meet the progression requirements. The mark used for the purposes of progression will be the higher of the mark obtained in the original examination and the mark obtained in the re-examination.

For the compulsory coursework element of Part 1 (the clinical calculations test), students will be permitted 3 attempts (named attempt 1A, 1B and 2) to demonstrate competence, as described in the module description. The mark used for the purposes of progression will be

the higher of the mark obtained in the original examination and the mark obtained in the re-examination.

Students who do not meet the above requirement but gain a University threshold performance at Part 1 may be eligible to transfer to another programme or to leave with a CertHE.

Part 2

University Threshold Performance Requirements

To gain a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken at Part 2; and
- (ii) achieve a mark of at least 40% in 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) achieve a mark of at least 30% in 120 credits taken in Part 2, except that a mark below 30% may be condoned in no more than 20 credits of modules owned by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

MPAS specific progression requirements

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance and:

- (iv) a mark of at least 40% in individual modules; and
- (v) successful completion of specified coursework and / or examination components of relevant modules, as described in the module descriptions.

Students who have failed or are not qualified to progress to Part 3 are permitted one re-sit examination in each module (or failed required coursework element of a module) in which they fail to meet the progression requirements. The mark used for the purpose of progression will be the higher of the mark obtained in the original examination and the mark obtained in the re-examination.

Students who re-sit examinations at Part 2 and meet the MPAS progression criteria will have their marks in those modules capped at 40% for degree classification purposes in accordance with the University regulations.

Students who do not meet the above requirements for progression to Part 3 but gain a threshold performance may be eligible to transfer to another programme or leave with a DipHE.

Part 3

University Threshold Performance Requirements

To gain a threshold performance at Part 3 a student shall normally be required to achieve:

(i) an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 3

MPAS specific progression requirements

In order to progress from Part 3 to Part 4, a student shall normally be required to achieve the following in Part 3:

(i) an overall weighted average of at least 50% over 120 credits; and

(ii) a mark of at least 40% in individual modules; and

(iii) successful completion of specified coursework and examinations of relevant modules, as described in the module descriptions.

Students who have failed or are not qualified to progress to Part 4 are permitted one re-sit examination in each module (or failed required coursework element of a module) in which they fail to meet the progression requirements. The mark used for the purposes of progression will be the higher of the mark obtained in the original examination and the mark obtained in the re-examination. Students who re-sit examinations at Part 3 and meet the MPAS progression criteria will have their marks in those modules capped at 40% for degree classification purposes in accordance with the University regulations.

Students who do not meet the above requirements for progression to Part 4 but gain a threshold performance will be eligible for the award of BSc Clinical Science.

The classification for this exit award will be based upon an overall weighted average ratio of 1:2 (Part 2: Part 3)

Part 4

To obtain the MPAS Degree, a student shall normally be required to have satisfied all of the above progression requirements and to achieve the following in Part 4:

(i) an overall weighted average of at least 40% in Parts 2, and at least 50% at Part 3; and

(ii) successful completion of specified coursework (including experiential learning activities) and examinations of relevant modules, as described in the module descriptions.

Students who fail the degree are permitted one re-sit examination in each Part 4 module, or failed required coursework element of a passed module, in which they have achieved less than 50%. Students who re-sit examinations at Part 4 and meet the MPAS progression criteria will have their marks in those modules capped at 50% for degree classification purposes in accordance with the University regulations.

Students who do not meet the above requirements for obtaining the MPAS degree will be eligible for the award of BSc Clinical Science. The classification for this exit award will be based upon an overall weighted average ratio of 1:2 (Part 2: Part 3)

Classification

Integrated Masters' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

Mark Interpretation

70% - 100% First class

60% - 69% Upper Second class

50% - 59% Lower Second class

40% - 49% Third class

0% - 39% Fail

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is: Integrated Masters Programmes (e.g. MEng, MMath, MChem, MPharm, etc.)

Part 2: 20%

Part 3: 30%

Part 4: 50%

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

MPAS Physician Associate Studies for students entering Part 1 in session 2023/24

16 June 2022

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