

Physicians Assistant (Anaesthesia) Postgraduate Diploma

This programme is intended for existing health care practitioners or graduates with a science background who wish to work as part of the anaesthetic team. The Physicians' Assistant (Anaesthesia) is a health professional who will expand the anaesthetic service and make operating theatres work more efficiently. You will work alongside other members of the anaesthetic team and under the supervision of your anaesthetist.

[Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

Type of Course: Distance learning, taught

Duration: 27 months full-time - 24 months of academic study and clinical training, followed by 3 months of supervised practice.

Start date: October – Places for Physicians' Assistant Anaesthesia Trainee roles are advertised on NHS Jobs (www.jobs.nhs.uk). Applications are not made directly to the University for this course. This course is not open to international students.

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School of Clinical and Experimental Medicine ([/schools/cem/index.aspx](http://schools/cem/index.aspx))

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Details

This programme is intended for existing health care practitioners or graduates with a science background who wish to work as part of the anaesthetic team.

The programme will develop a practitioner role that enables the anaesthesia team to have more staff working differently. Presently in the UK only doctors who have had specialist training in anaesthesia can administer anaesthetics. The PA(A) is a health professional who will expand the anaesthetic service and make operating theatres work more efficiently. You will work alongside other members of the anaesthetic team and under the supervision of your anaesthetist.

Students who have satisfactorily completed the 120 taught credits of the Postgraduate Diploma: Physicians' Assistant (Anaesthesia) will have the option of transferring to the Physicians' Assistant (Anaesthesia) MSc Programme. Award of the MSc will require the completion of an additional 60 credit Dissertation module, which would take the form of a research project of their own choosing. The MSc is self funded costing £1980 in 2014/2015 (subject to change each year).

Related links

For further information about the role of PA(A)s, training and entry requirements please visit the Royal College of Anaesthetists website: www.rcoa.ac.uk (<http://www.rcoa.ac.uk>)

School of Clinical and Experimental Medicine website: www.clinexpmed.bham.ac.uk (<http://www.clinexpmed.bham.ac.uk>)

Although they have very similar names the Physicians' Assistant (Anaesthesia) and the Physician Associate programme are very different programmes. If you are interested in joining the [Physician Associate Postgraduate Diploma \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/med/physician-associate.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/taught/med/physician-associate.aspx) please visit the web pages for more information.

(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/pa>)

Fees and funding

This programme is part of a structured training programme for the role of Physicians' Assistant (Anaesthesia) or PA(A). It is fully funded by the individual NHS Trust that supports PA(A) training.

2015/2016

The course fees are £4140 per student per year which are funded through the NHS Trust. This includes:

- On-line handbooks
- On-line tutorial plans
- On-line electronic lectures
- On-line Canvas discussion boards
- Academic tutor support
- 8-month MCQ Exam
- 24-month MCQ Exam
- Support for clinical tutors

Note to the NHS Trusts: It is advisable for Trusts to plan for some additional travel costs both for attendance at mock examinations, simulation training days and final examinations.

Entry requirements

The programme is open to applicants from two different routes:

1. Registered health care practitioners (eg, nurses, operating department practitioners) require one or both of the following:

- At least three years' full-time, post-qualification work experience in a relevant area, and evidence of recent (within three years) and successful academic activity
- A first degree in a health-related subject

2. New entrants to health care (graduates or graduate equivalent) require:

- A biomedical science or biological science background
- Preferably a second-class Honours degree or better, or other evidence of recent and successful academic activity
- A demonstrable commitment to a career in health care

Learn more about [entry requirements](#)
([/postgraduate/requirements-pgt/index.aspx](#))

How to apply

The promotion of the course is carried out through the individual NHS Trusts that support Physicians' Assistant (Anaesthesia) training. Places are advertised on NHS Jobs (www.jobs.nhs.uk (<http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>)) and students apply directly to that Trust. Applications are individually assessed by the Trust and the University. Shortlisted applicants are interviewed by a Trust panel which includes consultant anaesthetists.

Students are and remain employees of the Trust throughout the 27 months of the programme and students whose employment with the Trust ceases are required to withdraw from the programme.

Related news and events

[Birmingham excels in world rankings](#) ([/news/latest/2014/08/birmingham-excels-in-world-rankings.aspx](#))

Learning and teaching

The programme is made up of 12 two-month blocks of teaching. Each block lasts for approximately 35 days to allow for holidays and is broken down as follows:

- Directed self study – 70 hours
- Small group teaching – 14 hours
- Clinical skills teaching – 21 hours
- Workplace experience – 140 hours

A typical week may consist of:

- 1 2-hour tutorial
- 2-3 days in the clinical area
- ½ day clinical skills training
- 1½ days self-directed study, e.g. working through the e-lectures

The blocks are as follows:

- Block 1 – Introduction to clinical practice (1)
- Block 2 – Introduction to clinical practice (2)
- Block 3 – Introduction to anaesthesia
- Block 4 – Physics in anaesthesia
- Block 5 – The anaesthesia machine and monitoring
- Block 6 – The heart and circulation
- Block 7 – The airways and lungs
- Block 8 – The kidneys, liver, endocrine system and blood
- Block 9 – The brain and nervous system
- Block 10 – Clinical history and examination
- Block 11 – Management of life-threatening emergencies
- Block 12 – Advanced practice

The programme is delivered primarily in the Trust to give maximum exposure to the clinical environment. Delivery of the academic component is largely through e-lectures using the University's virtual learning environment, Canvas. Key aspects of the e-lectures are discussed further in the tutorial sessions led by the clinical tutor, as well as issues encountered in the clinical area and the application of the theoretical component. Tutorial plans are supplied as part of the programme material.

Our facilities

The College of Medical and Dental Sciences houses state-of-the art facilities to support a range of teaching, learning and research activity.

Our facilities ensure that students receive the best possible learning experience by working in a modern environment. Among our most recent developments include a refurbishment of the Medical School foyer, Barnes library and Wolfson Centre for Medical Education.

Explore our facilities and take a tour by moving around our 360-degree panoramas:

ERROR:

Adobe Flashplayer 10.1 (or higher) or a
HTML5 Browser with CSS 3D Transforms or WebGL support are required!

Assessment methods

Students attend the University for an induction day, exams and the mock OSCE. The final OSCE examination takes place at the Royal College of Anaesthetists in London.

Employability

[Find out more about where our postgraduate students go \(/Documents/college-mds/courses/postgraduate/employability-info/employabilityinfo-cem-jan2014.pdf\)](/Documents/college-mds/courses/postgraduate/employability-info/employabilityinfo-cem-jan2014.pdf)

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