

End-point assessment plan for Physician associate apprenticeship standard

Apprenticeship standard number	Level of this end-point assessment (EPA)	Integrated
ST0518	7	Statutory integrated

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Introduction and overview

Physician associates are subject to statutory regulation by the General Medical Council (GMC). The GMC set the standards of competence required for entry to the professional register and these are the occupational standards for Physician associates. The GMC also has the statutory duty to set requirements of programmes necessary to support the achievement of the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the occupational standard. The apprenticeship standard and the delivery of the apprentices training must be aligned to all relevant GMC standards to ensure that apprentices are eligible for registration with the GMC on completion. It is against the law for anyone to work as a Physician associate without being registered with the GMC. The end-point assessment (EPA) assesses whether apprentices have also passed the apprenticeship, and is based on the same professional knowledge, skills and behaviours as the occupational standard.

This document sets out the requirements for EPA for the Physician associate statutory integrated apprenticeship standard. It is for the end-point assessment organisations (EPAO), that must be the Royal College of Physicians and education providers who need to know how EPA for this apprenticeship must operate. It will also be of interest to apprentices and their employers.

Apprentices will typically spend 30 months on-programme working towards the occupational standard.

The EPA period should only start, and the EPA be arranged, once the employer and education provider are satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard and all of the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met. It is expected that the gateway will be reached on completion of a qualification for Physician associate approved by the GMC.

The EPA period is expected to last a maximum of 4 months beginning when the apprentice has passed the EPA gateway.

The EPA will determine the overall apprenticeship standard and grades of:

- fail
- pass

This apprenticeship has an aligned EPA. The EPA will use the assessment arrangements in use for other entry routes into this occupation and will be completed simultaneously, as outlined in this end-point assessment plan. Alignment of the integrated EPA is permitted because the following criteria are met:

1. the occupation (profession) must be regulated by a statutory regulator that carries out a range of functions in relation to the occupations they regulate, including making sure individuals have the necessary qualifications and/or experience to practise the occupation and taking any necessary enforcement action
2. the occupational standard and statutory integrated EPA meet the apprenticeship requirements

EPA summary table

On-programme (typically 30 months)	Training to develop the occupation standards knowledge, skills and behaviours (aligned to the GMC Physician associate and anaesthesia associate generic and shared learning outcomes)
End-point assessment gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprentice has met the knowledge, skills and behaviours • Employer and education provider delivering a GMC approved qualification are satisfied the apprentice has consistently demonstrated they meet the KSBs of the occupational standard • Achieved all required modules from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a qualification for Physician Associate approved by the GMC • The apprentice must have achieved English and maths qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.
End-point assessment (which would typically take place within 4 months)	The EPA is the Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA)
Professional recognition	Registration with: General Medical Council

Gateway

The EPA period should only start once the employer and the education provider delivering a GMC approved qualification are satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard.

The EPA starts with the Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA).

The apprentice must have completed the following gateway requirements prior to beginning their EPA:

- Achieved English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules
- Achieved a qualification for Physician Associate approved by the GMC

EPA

The EPA is:

Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA) which is the means by which qualified Physician associates can demonstrate their readiness to practice in the UK. It comprises a written assessment and Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) which can be passed in either order. The PARA is set at the level of a newly qualified Physician associate and is general in nature. The PARA is conducted by the Royal College of Physicians on behalf of the General Medical Council.

Independence of the EPA will be assured through:

- The EPA will be conducted by the Royal College of Physicians

Grading

Name of grade	Grade descriptor
Pass	Has passed the Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA)
Fail	Does not pass the Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA)

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Apprentice	As a minimum, the apprentice should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete the constituent parts of the programme successfully • meet all apprenticeship gateway requirements • understand the structure and requirements of the apprenticeship
Employer	As a minimum, the employer should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the apprentice to achieve the KSBs outlined in the occupational standard • determine when the apprentice is working at or above the level of occupational competence outlined in the occupational standard and has met all apprenticeship gateway requirements, taking account of the advice of the GMC Approved Education Provider
The EPAO	As a minimum the EPAO (Royal College of Physicians) should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conform to the requirements of the apprenticeship provider and assessment register • work with the employer to ensure that the apprentice is given the opportunities to develop the KSBs outlined in the standard and monitor their progress during the on-programme period • confirm to the employer that gateway requirements have been met • use appropriate recording documentation to ensure a clear and auditable mechanism for recording the decision of the PARA • maintain robust internal quality assurance (IQA) procedures and processes, and conduct these on a regular basis • submits required documentation to the GMC • conform to the requirements of the nominated external quality assurance body • conduct standardisation events and activities in accordance with GMC external quality assurance (EQA) requirements • have, and operate, an appeals process • arrange for apprenticeship certification
External examiner/ Independent Assessor	Independent Assessor who as a minimum should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the occupational standard and end-point assessment plan • comply to the requirements of the EPAO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be independent of the apprentice, and the employing organisation who are involved in delivering the apprenticeship • not have been involved in the teaching or on-programme assessment of the apprentice
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Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance refers to the requirements that EPAO's must have in place to ensure consistent (reliable) and accurate (valid) assessment decisions.

The Physician Associate National Exam Board quality assures the process and results of the Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA) and ensures it is robust and fair.

Re-sits and re-takes

In line with the EPAO's procedures.

Professional body recognition

This standard aligns with requirements for registration with the General Medical Council.

Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO must have in place clear and fair arrangements for making reasonable adjustments for this apprenticeship standard. This should include how an apprentice qualifies for reasonable adjustments and what reasonable adjustments will be made. The adjustments must maintain the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment decisions outlined in this EPA plan.