



University of Leeds

MSc Physician Associate Studies

CLASSROOM TO CLINIC - Year 2

DERMATOLOGY TUTOR GUIDE

2024 – 2025

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Introduction

Thank you for your continued involvement with the Physician Associate (PA) Students from the University of Leeds.

The students, who have now reached their second year of the course, will undertake a variety of different placements at acute trusts and with primary care providers, including up to 1 week in Dermatology. This placement sits within a 9 week block that includes Elderly Medicine, General Medicine, Paediatrics and Acute Medicine. There is flexibility in the length and timing of this placement because it is dependent on availability within your Trust.

In year 1, each of the PA students undertook a placement at a GP practice. This placement was 1 day a week for 33 days and concentrated on learning the basics of history and examination. They have since undertaken 3 weeks in Mental Health and 3 weeks "Introduction to General Medicine" the focus of which was to enhance student understanding of how secondary care differs from primary care, how inpatient medical care functions and how this relates to the roles and responsibilities of the members of the MDT and the patient journey.

The emphasis for this placement is on clinical experience and developing their skills. Whilst we're anticipating that our students will get a general grounding, their focus is narrower than the MBChB students and the majority of their activity could be done alongside non-doctor clinical colleagues.

Thank you once again for your continued support.

Best Wishes

The Physician Associate Team

Dr Katie Cunningham, Programme Director MSc Physician Associate Studies

Sarah Howarth, Academic lead for Physician Associate Placements

Dermatology Placement – Hours

There are no core stipulated placement hours for Dermatology as we anticipate that the students will gain experience of Dermatology across a range of placements in both primary and/or secondary care.

For any dermatology placement days during Rotation 1, our expectations are that students are timetabled 7.5-8 hour days and they are permitted to take 3 study days during the 9-week rotation, if also permitted by the placement supervisor.

Whilst on placement some students may be involved in campus-based teaching. This would be for a maximum of 4 half-days over the course of the 9-week rotation. If this is the case, then you will be informed in advance.

Dermatology Placement - Learning Outcomes

By the end of year 2, PA students should have attained a level of clinical competence sufficient to allow them to investigate and initiate treatment of dermatology cases presenting in general practice and emergency department settings, and to communicate appropriately with patients and other medical professionals.

These are the objectives and intended learning outcomes of the placement and they should be met through clinical experience and wider reading.

By the end of their placements in Dermatology the physician associate students should be able to:

Professional Attitudes and Behaviours

- Be aware of the psychosocial impact of skin disease, how this potentially affects patients and their families.
- Treat patients and their carers with professionalism and confidentiality.
- Recognise when it is appropriate to refer a patient to dermatology and have an understanding of the different referral pathways.
- Recognise the conditions which require Public Health notification.

Clinical Skills

- Be able to take a focused history from a patient presenting with a skin lesion.
- Be able to examine skin, hair, nails and mucous membranes systematically showing respect for the patient.

- Be familiar with dermatological terminology.
- Be able to recognise common skin problems and develop a system of describing common lesions using dermatological terms.
- Understand common conditions presenting with skin symptoms or signs
- Recognise and be aware of the significance of less common but important skin problems including dermatological emergencies
- Understand the clinical features and classification of common skin diseases.
- Understand the role of current best evidence and how and where to access clinical guidelines and how these are utilised in clinical decision making
- Utilise this knowledge to interpret evidence, formulate simple management plans and communicate effectively with patients
- Recognise limitations of knowledge and skills and seek help when needed.
- Counsel patients on appropriate sun protection behaviours with the correct use of sunscreens (protecting for both UVA and UVB)
- Counsel patients and/or carers on benefits, potential adverse effects and appropriate application of topical treatments to maximise adherence to treatment

Medication Management

- Apply a stepwise approach to treating skin problems ensuring that exacerbating factors have been addressed.
- Understand the main indication, contraindications and side effects of:
 - a. Emollients and soap substitutes
 - b. Corticosteroids
 - c. Antifungals and Antibiotics
 - d. Retinoids
 - e. Therapies for parasitic infections
 - f. Immunosuppressants and biological medications
 - g. UVB and PUVA therapy

Clinical Procedures

- Perform skills utilised in the field of dermatology, including skin scrapes/clippings, viral and bacterial swab
- Understand the indications for and side effects of the following procedures:
 - a. Patch testing
 - b. Ellipse biopsy and punch biopsy
 - c. Curettage and cautery
 - d. Cryotherapy
 - e. Laser therapy of cutaneous vascular lesions
 - f. Doppler studies

Knowledge

Teaching on campus has been designed to address the learning outcomes for newly qualified PAs as outlined within the [FPA Physician Associate Curriculum](#). In year 1, students have been taught the theory underlying how core and critical clinical conditions may present, and how a PA would be expected to assess and manage these. In year 2 students are expected to apply and develop this knowledge, recognising that there is often complexity and uncertainty associated with diagnosis and the need for appropriate supervision, support and guidance.

Domain 3 of the [GMC Physician Associate Registration Assessment content map](#) outlines the patient presentations and conditions for which a newly qualified PA could be expected to assess and initiate treatment under appropriate supervision. Students may encounter a range of these presentations and conditions during this placement

but should have the opportunity to be involved in the assessment and management of patients presenting with a number of the following:

Presentations	Core Conditions
acne	acne
bites	angioedema
desquamation	basal cell carcinoma
dry skin	bites
hair loss	cellulitis
hypo and hyperpigmentation	eczema and dermatitis
itching	lipomas
lumps	fungal and mite infections
nail abnormalities	psoriasis
rashes	skin infection
pressure sores	ulcers
skin and subcutaneous lumps/lesions	urticaria
	malignant melanoma
	squamous cell carcinoma
	Uncommon but critical conditions
	erythroderma
	desquamation disorders including Steven-Johnson syndrome
	necrotising fasciitis

Dermatology Placement - Suggested Activities

Students should be provided and timetabled opportunities that enable them to develop the attitudes and behaviours, clinical skills, treatment/medication knowledge and clinical knowledge listed above.

Students are also strongly encouraged to seek out their own learning opportunities. Some specific suggested activities include:

- Attending Outpatient dermatology: understanding how to manage dermatology patients in the outpatient setting
- Liaison and community dermatology: working in partnership with primary care and promoting skin health
- Skin tumours and skin cancer: Attending specialist skin tumour assessment clinics and understanding how to assess skin cancer and benign skin lesion service
- Procedural dermatology: attending minor procedures and/or dressing clinics and seeing skin surgery and other dermatological procedures
- Paediatric dermatology: managing paediatric dermatology patients in all settings

Essential Components

INDUCTION

Administrative

At the start of the placement there will be an administrative induction including the following:

Patient confidentiality

Access to IT facilities, and rules regarding appropriate use of PCs/internet

Student and placement liability, and requirements for appropriate supervision of procedures

Placement health and safety procedures and risk assessment

Personal health, social, cultural or religious requirements of the students

Arrangements for communication in case of sickness or other absences, or emergencies

Who's who!

Clinical

There should also be a clinical induction to clarify aims and objectives, proposed learning timetable and clarification of assessment requirements.

There should also be a clinical induction to:

clarify aims and objectives;

discuss the proposed learning timetable;

clarify assessment requirements;

clarify who the overall educational supervisor is and who is responsible for clinical supervision each day.

Attendance

Students have their own timesheet which they complete and is reviewed by the university at the end of each term. This timesheet also needs to be reviewed by the clinical supervisor at the end of the placement (see below).

Please note students are told: *Attendance is one of the key professional attributes. We expect students to attend 100% of the sessions on the course as a mark of respect for their colleagues, staff and particularly patients.*

If they are absent while on a clinical placement, students should contact the relevant person at the placement and pastudies@leeds.ac.uk to indicate how long they expect to be absent. It is expected that they make any missed days up. If this is not possible, they must contact the PA team to decide next steps.

ASSESSMENT

➤ End of Placement Assessment Form

This can be found in the PebblePocket app and includes reviewing the Clinical Skills, MiniCex and timesheet. This should be completed by the supervisor with the student. If in doubt regarding professionalism issues please refer to the professionalism statement on the placements website which is the guidance given to students about aspects of professionalism.

If you would like to discuss problems related to a particular student please contact Sarah Howarth (s.d.howarth@leeds.ac.uk).

➤ Clinical skills

Students should have opportunities to be assessed and receive feedback on clinical skills (e.g. taking bloods, history taking). There are a number of mandatory clinical skills that students need to complete over the year and they should be recorded on the PebblePocket App. These can be completed by any appropriately trained professional.

For more information on these skills (what they are and what level they should be undertaken at), please see *Workplace-based assessments: Expectations of a Year 2 physician associate student*, which can be found [here](#).

➤ **Mini-CEX scenarios**

Students should have opportunities to be assessed and receive feedback on clinical scenarios they have taken part in. Students must complete a minimum of 15 by the end of year 2. These are completed on the PebblePocket app with any appropriately trained professional.

For more information on these skills (what they are and what level they should be undertaken at), please see *Workplace-based assessments: Expectations of a Year 2 physician associate student*, which can be found [here](#).

➤ **Drug Profile Form and Reflection Forms (optional)**

Both of these forms can be completed by students if they download the form from Minerva. They are self-directed learning tools and will not be monitored but they are useful to have on record when uploaded onto PebblePad.

EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

➤ **Placement evaluation form**

We collect feedback from students after each placement and use it carefully to improve aspects of the PA Studies curriculum and placements. A feedback report is provided in January and August to the Trust.

➤ **Clinical Placement Reporting Tool**

The Clinical Placement Reporting Tool allows staff and students to inform the School about the positive experiences that they've had as well as highlight any problems or issues that they may have encountered.

Staff and students have two options after accessing the Tool – 'leave a commendation' and 'raise a concern'. Commendations are intended to recognise individuals that have made significant contributions to a placement experience through their outstanding teaching, professionalism, or attitude. Both students and staff can submit feedback for one another, and the named individual will be sent the feedback instantly if an email address is provided.

Concerns should be raised if a staff member or student has engaged in behaviour that has either contributed negatively to the placement experience or falls short of the professional standards expected of their role. This includes harassment, bullying and discrimination, as well as any other behaviour that might jeopardise the delivery of safe and equitable healthcare or a supportive and effective learning environment.

The School will work with individuals who submit a concern to ensure that issues are fully-investigated and action taken where appropriate.

The placement provider version of the Tool and further information can be found [here](#).

Please remember if you would like to discuss an issue that arises concerning a student (good or bad), the PA team are always happy for you to send an email or call to discuss it further.

Relevant Contacts

If you have any queries please contact one of us as below:

Dr Katie Cunningham

Programme Director, MSc Physician Associate Studies

Email k.cunningham@leeds.ac.uk

Sarah Howarth

Academic Lead for Physician Associate Placements

Email: s.d.howarth@leeds.ac.uk

PA Studies Student Education Service Team

Email pastudies@leeds.ac.uk