



# Physician Associate Registration Assessment

## OSCE Blueprint

The Physician Associate Registration Assessment (PARA) Clinical Examination has been designed for candidates who have completed the requirements of the [Physician Associate Curriculum \(2023\)](#)<sup>1</sup>. The full list of areas that may be covered as part of the examination's blueprint can be found in the [PARA content map](#).

The PARA Clinical Examination is a 16 station OSCE, structured as follows:

- 14 'live' stations, where candidates will undertake a variety of clinical scenarios
- Two further stations designated as rest stations
- Stations are eight minutes in duration, with a time warning given after seven minutes
- There are two minutes between each stage for candidates to read the instructions outside the station
- Candidates are assessed by examiners via a checklist marksheet, with a total of 35 marks available in each station
- The maximum score achievable in the OSCE is 490 marks.

The pass mark for each OSCE is calculated using the 'borderline regression' methodology:

- Each of the 14 stations' individual pass marks are added together to generate a total score for the OSCE. One 'standard error of measurement' (or 'SEM') is then added to this total score, which will provide the final pass mark for each OSCE
- Candidates must also achieve the pass mark in 9 of the 14 individual stations
- To pass the OSCE candidates must meet or exceed the total score plus SEM and pass a minimum of 9 stations.

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<sup>1</sup> Until December 2026 it will also assess candidates who have completed the requirements of the [Competence and Curriculum Framework for the Physician Assistant](#).

Each station in an OSCE will predominantly look to assess candidates on one of the four skill areas shown in the table below.

**Table 1: Exam composition by skill area**

| Specialty              | Sub-area  | Percentage of stations in OSCE |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Communication          | History taking skills                             | 30                             |
|                        | Communication skills with patient/team/ relatives |                                |
| Diagnosis              | Interpretation of Investigations                  | 30                             |
|                        | Assessing clinical presentation, inc. examination |                                |
| Clinical management    | Formulation of management plan                    | 25                             |
|                        | Working with colleagues                           |                                |
|                        | Health promotion                                  |                                |
|                        | Therapeutic management                            |                                |
| Core procedural skills |   | 15                             |

It is also possible that OSCE stations may be integrated and test a range of skills in a single scenario. For example, they may test a procedural skill alongside communication skills and some subject knowledge. They may also feature multi-morbidity which encompass a variety of areas of clinical practice.

Each OSCE also contains at least one station from each of the following specialty areas:

- Acute and emergency care (inc. toxicology)
- Cardiovascular
- Child and adolescent health
- Gastrointestinal
- Mental health
- Musculoskeletal
- Neurosciences
- Obstetrics and gynaecology
- Respiratory

The remaining stations will be selected from the following specialty areas to ensure each OSCE is a broad and balanced clinical assessment:

- Dermatology
- Endocrine and metabolic
- Infection (inc. sexual transmitted infections)
- Legal framework inc. ethics
- Ophthalmology and ENT

- Palliative and end of life care
- Renal
- Surgery

While the station content is informed by the topics identified in the [content map](#), it is important to note that they are subject to the overarching principles identified in other areas of the content map, such as safeguarding, legal and ethical principles and health promotion.

Images included in the OSCE may be used courtesy of [Dermnet](#).