



Physician Associate - Hani's story

Hani Mohamed

I am currently a first year MSc Physician Associate student at the University of Manchester, but I started my academic journey at the University of Salford where I studied Biomedical Science.

Out of college I knew I enjoyed Biology but was still confused career-wise. Therefore, I chose this Biomedical Programme because it was accredited and offered a unique opportunity to complete a placement year within my degree to gain some real-world experience. This turned out to be one of my best decisions because the entire Bioscience team was fantastic, and the programme turned out to offer so many opportunities to take part in that other universities did not. In my placement year I gained a lot of hospital and research experience, which really boosted a newfound passion for Medicine and gave me a clearer idea of the career I wanted. After returning from my placement year into my final year I decided to no longer be in “Auto-mode” and to participate in all the opportunities that the university offered.

The first opportunity that came along was when Dr. Sara Namvar and Dr. Niroshini announced a presentation competition called Salford Passion Flash; where we could present any topic, we found interesting for ten minutes. I decided to get out of my shell and took part. I was stunned to be one of the winners with my presentation on ‘The Advancement of Homo Sapiens.’ From here I joined the Biomed Society which really allowed me to experience different opportunities, like presenting at the University Future Health conference, and helping with events like secondary school science outreach. I also joined GEMMS (Graduate entry Medicine Mentoring Scheme), which really equipped me with the skills and knowledge I needed to complete the Physician Associate application process. Being around such an inspiring and fantastic group of people that really supported me through my degree and beyond, affirmed my decision to get out of my shell and take every opportunity.

Once I graduated, I applied to a never-ending list of jobs and was fortunate to secure a Research Assistant position at the University of Manchester where I now research agricultural health hazards. I initially applied for Medicine, but I was concerned about the course duration and having to leave home to study in another city. Therefore, after researching and speaking to many different Physician Associates, I realised that the Physician Associate course and career was extremely suitable to my character and circumstances. The Physician Associate application process was quite different when I applied because each University had a different process. In my personal statements, I mentioned the skills and experiences I gained from my degree, placement year, Biomed Society, GEMMS and voluntary work. I also made sure to link the experiences I had to the skills that are essential for this line of work and highlighted how this will help me be a good Physician Associate. The key points I mentioned included effective communication, interpersonal skills, teamwork, and compassion, alongside my Biomedical knowledge.

The interview process for the University of Manchester Physician Associate course was an MMI (multiple mini-interview) based interview, which involved five ten-minute stations that each contained a different question or scenario. The interview process was very nerve-wracking, but GEMMS regularly set up mock MMI interviews which really helped me get used to the format and practise my answers. I must have spent weeks practising for the interviews and after some ups and downs, it finally worked out when I was accepted to the University of Manchester. I have recently started the Physician Associate course and I am absolutely loving it. Being able to turn theoretical scientific knowledge into practical skills is a new skill set that I am excited to learn and using my Biomedical Science knowledge to help people in a clinical setting feels extremely rewarding. In hindsight, I am so glad that I became more active in my academic journey and took part in the opportunities because I gained new experience and skills that propelled me to where I am now and allowed me to interact with so many inspiring and supportive individuals from this University.



