

University of Kentucky
Physician Assistant Academic Residency Handbook
2025-2026

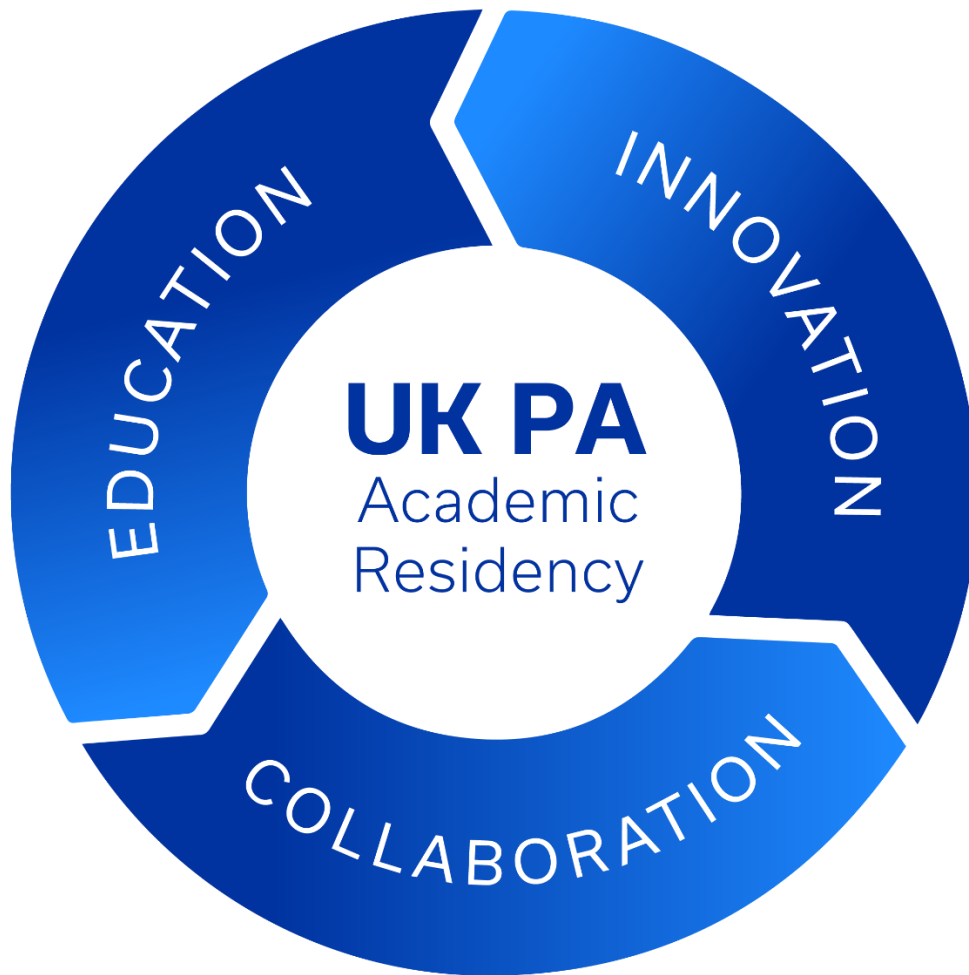


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Section 1: Introduction

Welcome to the University of Kentucky (UK) Physician Assistant (PA) Academic Residency Program, and welcome to Lexington, Kentucky, the home of the Wildcats' Big Blue Nation. The UK PA program started in 1974 and is proud to have over 1,800 PA alumni who serve the state of Kentucky and beyond. Responding to workforce needs in an ever-changing healthcare delivery landscape, the Department of Physician Assistant Studies created the UK PA Academic Residency in 2020.

The UK PA Academic residency is designed to go beyond the “when” and “what” of patient care but also teach the “how” and “why.” The goal is to train PAs to gain mastery in a clinical specialty and provide mentorship to become leaders in the health workforce. Our program is proud to collaborate with hospitals across Kentucky to train PAs to meet current and future healthcare needs. Each residency position in medicine and surgery provides an opportunity for intensive clinical work, didactic education, research, teaching, conferences, and leadership development.

Upon completing the 12-month UK PA Academic Residency training, the graduate will receive a certificate of completion. The PA resident graduate may be eligible to sit for a National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) – Specialty Certificates of Added Qualifications (CAQ) exam if the exam is available in the specialty area. Throughout the residency program, residents will have the opportunity to earn Continuing Medical Education (CME) hours toward recertification. Residents will also be eligible to apply for a DEA license upon completion of the residency and all DEA training requirements.

Program Mission Statement

The UK PA Academic Residency Program is committed to the transformation of health care delivery by training specialized physician assistant leaders.

[Learn more about the College of Health Sciences and University of Kentucky mission here.](#)

Program Values

- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Educational Excellence
- Leadership

Accreditation Status

The UK PA Academic residency program is actively preparing to seek accreditation. Our goal is to become an accredited program through the Advanced Practice Provider Fellowship Accreditation (APPFA).

UK PA Residency Faculty & Staff

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UK PA Residency Site Contacts

For clinical site-specific contacts, please refer to the following [link](#), syllabus, or contact your program coordinator

Section 2: Admissions

In our admissions process, we are committed to fairness and equity for all applicants. We understand that each individual brings unique experiences, perspectives, and potential to our institution, and it is our goal to ensure that every application is reviewed with the utmost integrity and impartiality.

Our admissions team follows a holistic approach, considering a wide range of factors beyond academic achievements, including personal experiences, extracurricular involvement, leadership qualities, and community contributions.

Transparency is at the heart of our process. We strive to provide clear guidelines and criteria, offer support throughout your application journey, and maintain open communication to address any questions or concerns. Our commitment to a fair and equitable admissions process reflects our core values of respect and inclusion, aiming to build a vibrant and dynamic community that enriches the educational experience for everyone.

The admission process includes an application, application review by the admissions committee, interview (if selected) with the admissions committee and clinical partners, and then residency matching.

Qualifications

- A. All applicants must complete the application, meet the standards listed in this section, and undergo the interview and selection process.
- B. Applicants must be a student or graduate of a PA training program approved by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).
- C. Applicants must have passed or be eligible to take the NCCPA Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE).
- D. Applicants must be eligible for licensure by the Kentucky Medical Board of Licensure (KMBL).
- E. Applicants must have applied for a National Provider Identifier (NPI).
- F. Applicants must be current in BLS and ACLS.
- G. Up-to-date on all required vaccinations per hospital policy.

Behavioral and Technical Standards

The UK PA Academic Residency Program has adopted the behavioral and technical standards set forth by the UK College of Health Sciences (CHS). Original standards as written for the College of Health Sciences can be found in [Appendix A](#), or on the [CHS webpage](#). The areas of the behavioral and technical standards are listed below.

All UK PA Academic Residency applicants must possess aptitudes, abilities, and skills in five areas:

1. Observation
2. Communication
3. Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function
4. Conceptualization, Integration and Quantification
5. Behavioral and Social Skills, Abilities and Aptitude

In addition to the UK PA Academic Residency Program standards, residents must meet the behavioral and technical standards of the institution that hosts their residency track. It is the responsibility of the resident to review those standards and ensure compliance. If the institution's standards are not provided to the resident during the institution onboarding process, it is the responsibility of the resident to request a copy of the standards for review.

Application Process and Deadlines

The application window opens in the spring of each year and can be accessed via the [UK PA Academic Residency webpage](#).

If residency seats remain unfilled, the program may, at the discretion of the Program Director, re-open the application window. No applications will be accepted after closure of the second window. Submission of an application does not guarantee an interview or placement into the residency.

Program Completion - Candidate must complete PA program at least three (3) months prior to the residency program start date of October 1st.

- For credentialing sites, the PANCE must be completed prior to the start date of October 1st.
- If an applicant needs to re-take the PANCE, please review the program's [PANCE](#) policy.

Interviews

Interviews are held and scheduled based on clinical site team availability. Applicants must attend their scheduled interview to be considered for the program. Initial interviews are held via **Zoom**. This is a formal interview; professional dress and conduct are required.

Second interviews may be held at the request of the clinical site team and may be in-person or via Zoom. Expenses for optional in-person interviews are the responsibility of the applicant.

Selection Process

The admissions committee will meet and deliberate to determine residency matching. Residents will be informed within two weeks of the interview of the admissions decisions. It is possible that a resident will be matched with more than one residency track. If this occurs, the resident will be notified of multiple offers and given the option to choose.

Appointment

Once an offer has been accepted, the resident must complete and submit the following items:

- Proof of NCCPA certification

- Kentucky Temporary License
- NPI
- Site-specific credentialing process

Section 3: Licensing and Credentialing

It is the resident's responsibility to ensure that all appropriate licensing and credentialing requirements are completed upon appointment. Adhering to these requirements is essential for the resident's professional practice and the smooth operation of our program.

We provide guidance and support to help residents navigate the process, but it is crucial that the resident takes the initiative to fulfill these obligations in a timely manner. This includes obtaining the necessary state medical licenses and completing any additional credentialing steps required by hospital sites. Late or incomplete licensure or credentialing may necessitate a late start or dismissal from the residency program.

Kentucky Licensure

Once a residency position is accepted, the resident must begin the Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure (KBML) process to meet the program start date deadlines. The resident must follow the application process according to the [KBML site](#). It is the resident's responsibility to complete the application, submit fees, and meet all deadlines.

The hospital sites are responsible for completing the supervising physician application and fee.

Hospital/Clinic Credentialing

In addition to obtaining a KBML license, residents must also complete hospital credentialing, which includes the following:

- Complete the application request form provided by the site
- Official credentialing packet sent from the site
- All items must be completed and returned according to site credentialing deadlines
- A KBML Temporary License must be obtained
- Once the credentialing packet is completed, the file is sent to the hospital board for approval

*Additional items may vary based on site (e.g., drug test or required certifications)

Section 4: Resident Expectations

Residents serve a vital role in delivering high-quality patient care, advancing medical knowledge, and contributing collaboratively to the healthcare team. It is crucial that the resident meet the professional and ethical standards set forth by our institution. This includes not only completing medical training and clinical duties with diligence but also adhering to the guidelines, policies, and procedures outlined in this handbook.

Requirements to Begin Residency

To begin the residency program, residents must be fully licensed and have credentialing completed to begin on October 1st. Credentialing requirements may differ slightly depending on site and specialty. Residents must be on track to practice in the specialty areas relevant to their residency track.

Schedule and Attendance

Residents should discuss their clinical schedule and responsibilities with their on-site clinical directors. They are expected to maintain this schedule, unless otherwise agreed upon by the resident and clinical directors. The work schedule should not exceed 80 hours per week. Concerns regarding hours worked or attendance should be brought to the UK PA Residency Track Director. Residents are expected to attend and participate in all residency-required learning activities.

Professionalism

Residents are expected to conduct themselves respectfully and professionally at all times while representing UK. This includes but is not limited to their bedside manner with patients, interactions with colleagues, attire, decorum, and evidence-based clinical practice. Lack of professionalism will not be tolerated.

Self-Care

The residency program and health care generally are demanding on an individual. It is expected that each resident engage in self-care and clearly communicate with the clinical site director or residency program director if mental health concerns arise. Each resident is encouraged to utilize either the University of Kentucky or their individual clinical site's [mental health services](#) as needed.

Communication

On-site clinical directors will serve as the residents' immediate point of contact. With concerns related to the program or clinical site, the resident should contact the Program Coordinator, who will ensure a prompt response from the appropriate representative of the UK PA Residency Program.

Supervision

UK PA Academic Residency Faculty and Staff supervise program requirements and completion. The resident's direct clinical supervisors are the site-specific Clinical Director and Assistant Clinical Director. As a resident, all patient care must be supervised by an identifiable, appropriately credentialed, and privileged attending physician/physician assistant who has ultimate responsibility for patient care. Supervision is exercised through a variety of methods, including direct and indirect supervision. The privilege of progressive authority and responsibility, conditional independence, and a supervisory role in patient care should be delegated to each resident in a graduated manner.

Supervision assignment should be of sufficient duration to assess the knowledge and skills of each resident and delegate to him/her the appropriate level of patient care authority and responsibility. Residents must be provided with rapid, reliable systems for feedback and communication with supervising physicians/PAs to provide opportunities for growth and learning. Each resident must know the limits of their scope of practice and the circumstances under which they are permitted to act with conditional independence. For concerns related to resident conduct, performance, or safety, the UK PA Residency Track Director should be notified in a timely manner to ensure support or remediation.

Time-off

Residents are permitted to take the time off allotted to them by their employing hospital system. However, time off should not interfere with the **minimum requirement of 46 weeks** for program completion. Time off requests should be requested with the Clinical Director/Assistant Clinical Director within the predesignated site-specific time frames (3-8 weeks). Once approved, the resident is required to notify the Program Coordinator.

For extenuating circumstances, residents may be granted extended leave; these situations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Approval must be obtained from the Clinical Director, the site's Human Resources (HR) department, and the UK PA Residency Program Director. Depending on the length of extended leave, the resident may be required to extend the program completion date to complete the minimum requirement of 46 weeks.

Expenses

Residents are responsible for all expenses associated with the residency program, including housing, transportation, and basic needs. Each employing hospital has benefits, including CME funds, which can be used for conferences or other professional development opportunities. Site-specific policies can be found by contacting the facility's HR representative.

Patient Confidentiality/HIPPA

Residents must comply with all Patient Confidentiality agreements and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) practices at their facility.

Section 5: Requirements for Residency Completion

The UK PA Residency is proud to train excellent PAs to serve multiple specialties throughout the US upon program completion. As a program that values well-rounded training, there are multiple aspects of the program that are required for completion.

Residency completion requirements are as follows:

1. Clinical training
2. Teaching
3. Research
4. Didactic learning (monthly lectures, curriculum, CME)
5. Advocacy (national/state legislation, speaking on PA profession/residency)

Clinical Training

Clinical work accounts for no less than 90% of the resident's learning hours. It is critical for residents to keep these logs up-to-date to ensure accuracy for future positions and credentialing. Clinical work is tracked with three types of logs that are submitted monthly to the track director:

- A. Hour logs
- B. Patient logs
- C. Procedure logs

Assessment method: Quarterly, each resident will be asked to complete evaluations on themselves, their clinical preceptors, and the residency program. Clinical site preceptors will also provide feedback via evaluations. These evaluations are necessary to provide constructive feedback and provide an avenue for continuous self-assessment and improvement. Resident feedback regarding the residency program is valued as we work for continuous improvement. Additionally, residents will be provided the opportunity to provide feedback verbally in the quarterly evaluation meetings.

Teaching

Teaching is the highest level of learning as you share your expertise with the next generation of PAs. Each resident is required to engage in the teaching of physician assistant students. To complete this requirement, residents are required to teach clinically or didactically.

Research

As a future leader in the PA profession, it is important to engage in and produce research in your area of expertise. Each resident is required to complete a research project during their time in the residency program with mentorship. The research project is directed by the resident and is in a topic of their choosing. The project can be a variety of options (ie, systematic review, case report, quality improvement project, chart review, data analysis) and can be independent or with your clinical team. Each project needs to be approved by your faculty mentor prior to completion. If IRB is required, the resident will be expected to complete [CITI training](#) and complete IRB with faculty mentor support. Residents will be assigned a faculty mentor to guide them through the process. The final research product should be a poster, paper, or presentation. Residents are strongly encouraged to submit research to a state or national conference or for publication. Residents will meet with their research mentor for additional information and examples.

Research Timeline:

Quarter 1: Planning and Proposal (December 1st)

Quarter 2: Data Collection and Drafting in Progress (March 1st)

Quarter 3: Final Draft Complete, Ready for Submission (June 1st)

Quarter 4: Submission Under Review/Presentation Complete (September 1st)

This timeline ensures a structured approach to completing your research project, with regular milestones and mentor check-ins to guide you through the process.

Didactic Learning

Didactic learning accounts for no less than 10% of the resident's learning hours. At times, the resident may need admin time to ensure completion of didactics. Each residency has a *track-specific curriculum* designed to augment the clinical experience and learning of the resident. The residents are required to follow and complete the activities and assignments that are allocated for their specific track. Didactic learning will include intentional combinations of on-site in-person learning, article and text readings, videos, and online modules.

Monthly lectures will be held virtually via Zoom every month with all the residents together and a guest speaker on a selected topic. Each resident will be assigned a question before the lecture to prepare a brief (<1 minute) answer during the presentation. This will also be a time for program updates and questions as needed.

During the residency year, residents are expected to participate in *continuing medical education* learning opportunities. It is strongly encouraged to attend a professional conference of their choosing that is relevant to their track or subspecialty. It is expected that their CME funds will be used to cover some or all of the associated expenses.

Advocacy

Each resident is expected to contribute to the profession by attending various events throughout the year that advocate for the profession as well as the UK PA Residency Program. These events include, but are not limited to, State or National PA Advocacy events, Residency or PA Information sessions, UK Department events, and virtual panels. Each resident is required to attend two events.

Section 6: Program Policies:

This section of the handbook is dedicated to outlining the essential policies that govern our program. Understanding and adhering to these policies is critical to ensuring quality and a productive experience for all residents.

Our program policies are designed to maintain a high standard of professional conduct, ensure patient safety, and support your educational and professional growth. They cover a range of topics, including work hours, leave policies, evaluation procedures, and disciplinary actions. Each policy is in place to provide a clear framework within which you can operate effectively and ethically. Residents are expected to be familiar with and adhere to all policies as written.

PANCE

Applicants must pass the PANCE for formal acceptance into the residency. On a rare and exceptional basis, if an applicant fails the PANCE on their first attempt, the residency program *may* offer an extension of acceptance with stipulations. This offer is determined on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the clinical site's preference and ability to accommodate a delay in credentialing. If an applicant fails the PANCE on the first attempt and is not provided an extension, they are able to reapply for the residency program the next year.

Scope of Practice and Supervision

The PA resident will practice within the scope of practice outlined by state licensure, credentialing facility, and the overseeing Clinical Director. Any tasks or procedures outside of this scope of practice require approval in accordance with hospital credentialing and Clinical Director policies. Each resident is a learner and is provided supervision from an attending physician.

Duty Hours

It is expected that the resident spends a significant number of hours in clinical work to develop the skills necessary to become a specialist. Residents are expected to maintain clinical hours as outlined by the clinical site. They must not exceed 80 hours of work per week. For questions or concerns regarding clinical time, residents should contact the Clinical Director and/or the track director.

Moonlighting

Residents are permitted to request the opportunity to moonlight after the initial six (6) months of the residency program as long as the following requirements are met:

- A. Requires written approval from the on-site Clinical Director and Assistant Director.
- B. Requires written approval by the UK PA Residency Program Director.
- C. Must be in good standing with the UK PA Residency Program.
- D. Must have at least a 12-hour break between clinical shifts.

Malpractice Insurance Coverage

All clinical sites have malpractice coverage. Malpractice coverage availability to residents varies by clinical site. For more information, contact the clinical site's administrative support.

Grievances

Concerns and grievances should be brought to the Clinical Director and/or the UK PA Residency Program Director. Residents should consider business hours and urgency when choosing the method of communication. With urgent needs, please text the residency program, and with non-urgent matters, communicate via email. Our goal is to always ensure a fair and equitable workplace.

Remediation

PA residents enter the program with a diverse and variable set of experiences, which can at times present a unique challenge for trainees entering a specialty. The primary responsibility for PA residents is to meet the training program requirements and to maintain satisfactory professional, academic, and clinical performance within the program. While this is anticipated for all PA residents, there may be instances in which PA residents do not progress as expected. Evaluation of progress occurs daily with on-the-spot feedback from preceptors during clinical work and quarterly with the formal evaluation process.

In cases of unsatisfactory performance, the clinical site director, track director, and program director will communicate with the resident. Communication initially will be from the clinical director or assistant director at the clinical site. If performance issues continue, communication via email and/or a meeting will occur to ensure the resident is aware of deficiencies. If deemed appropriate, a formal remediation plan will be developed to support the resident. The reasonable and attainable remediation plan will include short-term goals and checkpoints to ensure the resident is enhancing their skills and clinical capabilities as expected.

Every effort will be made to preserve residents' participation in the program to completion. However, if a resident is unable to meet the requirement through remediation, then steps toward dismissal will be

considered. For more information on the University of Kentucky's corrective action policies and steps toward dismissal, please visit: [Corrective Action | Human Resources \(uky.edu\)](#)

Dismissal

Dismissal from the residency program is a last resort option following significant support and remediation processes with an individual resident. Possible causes for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Inability to meet programmatic requirements despite remediation and support
- Academic or research dishonesty, including plagiarism, or submission of any work materials that are not your own work
- Altering or falsification of any official document or medical record
- Unprofessional behavior, including assault, acts or threats of violence, or any behavior that violates UK CHS policy or your clinical site's policies
- Harassment of any person
- Inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature
- Illegal use, possession of, or sale of drugs or narcotics

If a resident is unable to meet expectations or has engaged in an activity qualifying for dismissal, they will be notified in writing of the concerns and provided an opportunity to respond in writing. A formal meeting will then be conducted with the inclusion of a review of documentation of the entire residency evaluation, the resident's formal response, and additional materials as they pertain to the specific issues. A formal recommendation will be made by the committee, and the resident will be notified in writing of this decision. Appeal of the decision may be made to the CHS associate dean. Dismissal processes will be conducted in compliance with hospital HR policies.

Voluntary Termination (Resignation)

The decision to withdraw from the UK PA Academic residency program is a serious consideration and should be made only following extensive consultation with counseling supports available to the PA resident. A PA resident may choose to withdraw from the program for several reasons, including ongoing issues with academic underperformance, personal reasons, or extended leave of absence making circumstances around return difficult. PA residents requesting voluntary termination must meet with both the clinical site director and program director and then provide a 30-day notice in writing.

Appendix A

UK College of Health Science Behavioral and Technical Standards

Observation:

The PA resident must:

- have functional vision, hearing, and somatic sensation sufficient to perform a comprehensive assessment of a patient.
- be able to assess a patient accurately through observation at a distance and close at hand, noting non-verbal as well as verbal signals.

Communication:

The PA resident must:

- meet all standards described in the General Technical and Behavioral Standards.
- be able to read and to record observations and plans legibly, efficiently, and accurately in documents such as the patient record, including electronic versions.

- be able to prepare and communicate concise but complete summaries of complex, prolonged encounters, including hospitalizations.
- be able to complete forms according to directions in a complete and timely fashion.

Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function:

The PA resident must:

- have sufficient sensory and motor function to perform a physical examination utilizing palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers.
- possess sufficient motor ability to respond effectively to emergencies within the clinical environment, and must not hinder the ability of their co-workers to provide prompt care.
- be able to perform diagnostic and therapeutic procedures common in medical practice.

Conceptualization, Integration, and Quantification:

The PA resident must:

- have the ability to learn and retain detailed and complex information and concepts presented in the curriculum.
- be able to make measurements and calculations as well as have the mental capacity to reason, analyze, make decisions quickly and competently, and to synthesize complex information from a variety of sources.
- possess basic math skills (ability to accurately add, subtract, multiply, and divide)
- be able to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships of structures.

Behavioral Attributes:

The PA resident must:

- possess adequate endurance and resilience to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress.
- recognize their personal limitations, accept appropriate suggestions and criticism, and if necessary, respond by modifying behavior.

Appendix B

International PA Residency Elective

As a resident in the UKPA Academic residency program you are invited to participate in the international exchange program. The goal of the international PA residency elective opportunity is to broaden the education of the PA resident through experience in PA education and direct medical care in the Netherlands and Germany.

Following the International Elective, the resident will:

1. Understand the Dutch and German health systems and their approach to health care delivery.
2. Describe the role of PAs in the Dutch and German health systems.
3. Outline the funding and approach to health care expenses and how this informs care.
4. Compare and contrast the PA educational systems in the US, Germany and the Netherlands.
5. Compare and contrast the tenants and practice of medicine (from medical care) in the US, German and Dutch health system.
6. Provide a peer educational session regarding medicine and healthcare in Germany and the Netherlands.

General Information

The UK PA Department is in a formal partnership with the PA programs at the HAN University in Nijmegen, Netherlands and Fleidner University in Dusseldorf, Germany. Dr. Valentin and Dr. van den Brink have partnered to provide internationalization between the United States and the Netherlands since 2017. The HAN has supported the recent development of the PA Master's program in Germany. Most recently, the University of Kentucky faculty, PA student and residents visited HAN University in June 2025 and HAN and Fleidner University faculty and PA students visited the University of Kentucky in September 2025.

This late May 2026, up to two UK PA residents and two UK PA students will be selected for this exchange. This experience will include an introduction and tour of the PA educational system at HAN University, tour of the local hospital system, networking with several Dutch PAs and a 2-week clinical rotation at three-four different clinical sites in Nijmegen and Dusseldorf.

Estimated Cost:

Flight: \$1,000-1,500

Hotel for first few days: \$500

Airbnb Housing share with other students for 2+ weeks: cost varies

Food and transportation: \$500-\$1,000

*CME budgeted funds may be requested to be used for these expenses

Tentative Travel Agenda:

May 26-29th Dr. van den Brink and colleagues will provide a formal program to include tour of the Dutch hospitals and clinics, meetings with PA clinicians and other healthcare leaders, tour of PA education at HAN university and possible tour of Fliedner University of Applied Science in Dusseldorf, Germany.

Tentative Schedule:

May 25th: Arrive in Nijmegen by 4pm for a dinner and city tour. Nijmegen is 1 hour train from Amsterdam airport.

May 26-27th: Formal tour of Dutch health and education system with UK faculty, clinicians, residents, and students.

May 28th: UK residents and students begin clinical rotations

June 12th: UK residents and students last day clinical rotations

Application: If interested, PA residents are asked to submit a letter of interest to Dr. Valentin by December 1st. Letter should include assurance of having a passport, any relevant past experience with international medical travel and/or international health systems, plan for covering estimated costs and response to two essay questions (see below). Additionally, each resident must assure support from clinical site director prior to applying for this opportunity.

Essay questions:

- 1) In a 300 word maximum essay, describe why you'd like to study health care in the Netherlands and what you hope to gain from the experience that will impact your work as a PA.
- 2) In a 300 word maximum essay, describe why you'd be a good choice as an ambassador for UKPA residency program and the US PA profession in the Netherlands.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How do I fund this opportunity?

Some residents use their CME funds, some have asked their facility to sponsor them, and some is covered by the resident themselves.

Do we have health insurance coverage while in Europe?

Participants are covered under UK's international health insurance coverage through the partnership with International SOS, as this is a UK-affiliated trip. This plan provides primary coverage while abroad, including both accidental and work-related incidents—such as a finger stick or similar exposure.

Do we have malpractice insurance coverage while in Europe?

The University of Kentucky partners with International SOS to support any traveler going abroad on behalf of UK. They are also the group that coordinates the insurance plan that covers all travelers abroad for a UK purpose (see more [here](#)). In a true emergency, there is a standard crisis response plan that is maintained in partnership with UK's senior administration.

Do I have to register with UK International Office?

Yes. <https://international.uky.edu/ihss>

Would it be okay for me to take a vacation before or after the planned elective?

Yes, we just ask that you assure you are present at dates outlined and communicate your travel plans so we know where you are for safety.