

RGS CAREERS
**GUIDE TO
PHYSIOTHERAPY**
2016-2017



REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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WHY STUDY PHYSIOTHERAPY?

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

Physiotherapy is an allied healthcare profession and physiotherapists themselves are concerned with human function and movement. Physical approaches are used to prevent and treat many disabilities and diseases, but physiotherapy can also be used to help people gain strength and mobility after an illness or hospital stay.

Physiotherapy has its roots in ancient times. The Chinese around 2500BC used massage as a treatment and Hippocrates described massage and hydrotherapy in 460BC. Since then the list of conditions that physiotherapy can assist in treating has grown considerably. The modern practice of Physiotherapy is thought to have come into being during the nineteenth century, with the overseeing professional body, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, being set up in 1920.

Physiotherapy is now used to treat conditions such as asthma, back pain, cerebral palsy, tinnitus, heart disease, osteoarthritis, mental health, strokes and ulcers. Some of these may seem a little unusual but physiotherapy can be broken down into different areas such as cardiovascular and respiratory physiotherapy, musculoskeletal physiotherapy and neurological physiotherapy so many 'systems' in the body can be treated.





PERSONAL QUALITIES (SOURCED FROM THE CAREERS DIRECTORY)

You will need to establish relationships with a wide range of people, most of whom are likely to be frightened, ill or in pain. You need to maintain a cheerful and positive outlook to reassure patients and encourage them to help themselves. Patience and tact are also needed as progress made by patients can be very slow. As well as getting on with people, you will need to demonstrate effective communication skills so patients are clear about what each exercise requires. You must be able to work alongside others as part of a team. It is essential to be well organised and meticulous in the maintenance of detailed records of each patient. Aspiring undergraduates should be comfortable with the prospect of manual and social contact with patients largely taking place on a one to one basis.

AREAS OF STUDY

Physiotherapy courses are available across the UK. If you accept an NHS-funded place on an accredited Physiotherapy degree course you may receive an NHS means-tested bursary.

Most Physiotherapy courses are largely similar in content, especially those that lead to Chartered status granted by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists. An idea of the type of modules that you will have the opportunity to study is listed below:

- Professional and clinical practice
- Musculoskeletal physiotherapy
- Physiotherapy practice
- Cardiovascular and respiratory physiotherapy
- Neurological physiotherapy
- Health and social care
- Kinesiology
- General pathology
- Clinical reasoning
- Biomechanics
- Clinical sciences
- Anatomy
- Physiology
- Psychosocial studies
- Health and disease
- Community physiotherapy
- Movement and exercise science
- Medical sociology
- Occupational health
- Palliative care
- Women's health
- Electrotherapeutic interventions
- Mental health and learning disabilities
- Hydrotherapy
- Sports medicine and science
- Orthopaedics
- Rehabilitation studies
- Nutrition

CAREER POSSIBILITIES

Most qualified physiotherapists either work within the NHS or the private sector within hospitals, doctors' surgeries or out in the community. Other settings for physiotherapists may include private companies, sports centres or in private practice. Animal Physiotherapy is an alternative and emerging area of specialism.



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry requirements vary from institution to institution but a general guide to the grades and qualifications you need is listed below:

- A-levels: Minimum of BBB including Biology or Human Biology
- International Baccalaureate: 32-34 points including a human biological science
- BTEC National Diploma: DDM in a relevant biological subject
- Access: in a relevant subject for mature entry

WHERE TO APPLY

Consider the following:

PHYSIOTHERAPY – TOP 10 IN THE 2017 GOOD UNIVERSITY GUIDE

All award a BSc (Hons) qualification on successful completion of course.

UCAS code for all Physiotherapy courses is B160

Stated grades are `typical offer` made by institution.

(For comparison the new UCAS points tariff has 136 points as equivalent to Grades AAB at A2 level)

RANK	UNIVERSITY	GRADES	SUBJECT NOTES
1	EAST ANGLIA (UEA)	AAB	Must include at least a B grade in Biology or Human Biology or Physical Education
2	BIRMINGHAM	AAB	Must have A2 Grade A in Biology or Human Biology or Physical Education
3	BRADFORD	AAB	Must have minimum Grade B at A2 in Biology or Human Biology or Physical Education.
4	KEELE	ABB/A*BC	Must include Biology / Human Biology or Physical Education.
5	CARDIFF	AAB	Biology or Human Biology required.
6	GLASGOW CALEDONIAN	ABB	Must include a Science subject. (NB- 4 Year course)
7	BOURNEMOUTH	AAB	Must include Biology or Human Biology as one of 3 A2 passes.
8	LIVERPOOL	AAB	Must include Biology or Human Biology or Physical Education
9	COVENTRY	AAB	Must include a Biological Science subject, although Physical Education will be considered.
10	SOUTHAMPTON	AAA	Must include a Science subject but excluding Physical Education.

For your application or interview, the following may be useful:

- **Work experience** is a good idea to allow yourself to decide for sure that Physiotherapy is for you. This will be looked on favourably by the institutions that you apply to. You need to be able to show them that you fully understand what Physiotherapy involves; you must reflect upon your experiences.
- Further information on physiotherapy and state registration is available from [The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy](http://www.thechartered-society.org)
- You might also wish to consult www.nhscareers.nhs.uk and read the section on Physiotherapy.

EX RGS STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF STUDYING PHYSIOTHERAPY**HANNAH GARMSTON (OR 2016) First Year Undergraduate at Liverpool University**

A levels in: Biology, Geography, Sports Studies

"I am having a brilliant time studying Physiotherapy at Liverpool. It is a lovely city and a really great course which has more than lived up to my expectations.

The course at Liverpool is very practically based. Most of my time is spent in the physio gyms where we work in groups of around 12. I have a Core Skills module which includes learning things such as teaching a patient how to use crutches, massage and passive movements. The Anatomy module so far has focused on lower limb joints. I also have a Cardio-Respiratory module based upon a series of seminars, and all the work for this is problem-based learning. I don't have any formal lectures as such, so never have to sit in a big lecture hall with someone talking at the front. We have Electures which are all online, and these provide us with all the theory we need to prepare in advance for each practical session. There are only 38 people on my course, which I really like as I have got to know everyone, and all the lecturers already know us as individuals. There is a lot of work to be done, but I am really enjoying it so I don't mind too much. I am really happy with how the teaching is supplied here as I find it very engaging and love the fact we have so much practical learning. "

BETHANY BROOKS (OR 2012) Recent Graduate of King's College London

A levels in: Biology, Chemistry, Sports Studies

"I was first attracted to Physiotherapy as I wanted to work in a job where I would get to experience different things every day. I found many of the subject areas covered in a Physiotherapy course such as Anatomy and Physiology really interesting when I studied them during A-level Physical Education. Consequently, I felt inspired to take it further.

The course covers a really wide variety of topics as there are so many areas that a physiotherapist can work in - it's basically split into musculoskeletal, neurological and respiratory units. At King's we had a small year group of 42 students, which is one of the best things about the course - you get to know everyone really well and it makes it a lot more fun. Quite a lot of time is spent in practical classes, which is good as it breaks up the lectures a bit. Unfortunately, due to several weeks of placement during the summer holidays we don't get a normal university holiday of several months, which is definitely one of the worst things about the course!"

Different universities vary in their placement timings, but in general, holiday time is limited to a few weeks. To enjoy the course and be suited to this choice of career you definitely have to be a 'people person' – you're constantly expected to be interacting with other people and communication skills are one of the key qualities they want you to have. You also have to be prepared to work hard from the very start as it is one of the most intense courses there is, as so much is crammed into the three years. You have to expect to be in lectures or practical sessions the majority of the time – days off are extremely rare. Make sure you do your research, as Physiotherapy involves so many different areas and you will be exposed to all of them throughout your time at university. It isn't just sports injuries like a lot of people imagine, and if you don't show that you are aware of all the different areas at interview you won't get in. Regarding Advanced Level subjects, Sciences and Physical Education are usually the way to go, although most courses only ask for one science course (normally Biology or Human Biology) and Physical Education is an added benefit as a lot of the material is included in the course at a more advanced level. "

ANNA HARVEY (OR 2009) Graduate of Cardiff University.

A levels in: Biology, Chemistry, Geography

What motivated you to apply for Physiotherapy courses at university whilst you were a student at RGS?

"I knew I wanted to be involved in healthcare and my passion for sport at school led me towards my career choice." (Anna was captain of the 1st VII Netball team in season 2008-9)

How did you enjoy the Physiotherapy course at Cardiff?

"Cardiff is a great city to study in and it has been voted the best place to train as a physiotherapist so the course is brilliant. It's a great mixture between practical and theory sessions and the modules are designed to complement each other. It is a tough course with long hours and much reduced holidays so be prepared for that."

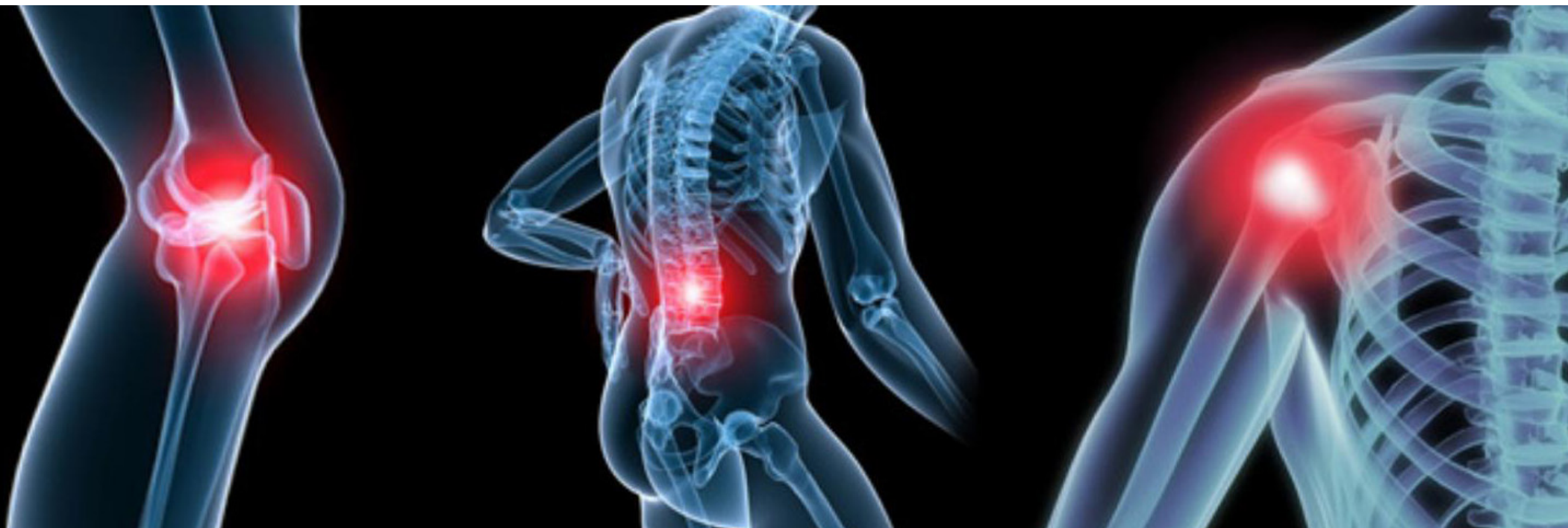
Has the 'world of work' met or exceeded your expectations in the field of Physiotherapy?

"I currently work in the private world of Physiotherapy which is very different to NHS work. I am employed by an international company, so have been fortunate that my job has allowed me to travel a fair bit. I specialised fairly early in my career which I have benefited from, but this won't be the case for everyone.

Most of my university friends from Cardiff are currently doing their rotations in the NHS, our jobs are all so different. The scope within Physiotherapy is huge and only getting wider. This means there are a myriad of opportunities as a Physiotherapist, which can only be a very positive thing for those committed to entering the profession. "

From the interesting and well informed comments made by our former pupils above, it should be clear to all that Physiotherapy as a field of study and subsequent career has much to commend it. It is certainly a demanding yet ultimately very rewarding area of healthcare, and students must accept this from the outset. Potential applicants should note the comments regarding the necessity of work placements at a time when other undergraduate colleagues may be 'at leisure' over the summer break. This is an essential element of Physiotherapy training and cannot be avoided since practical experience is necessary to augment theoretical knowledge.

(With grateful thanks to Hannah Garmston, Bethany Brooks and Anna Harvey for their much valued contribution to this guide on undergraduate study in the field of Physiotherapy.)





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