

Technical Standards

Becoming a physical therapist assistant requires the completion of a technical education program that is both intellectually and physically challenging. In the interest of student and patient safety, applicants possessing certain limitations may be requested to demonstrate abilities to perform clinical procedures and skills prior to or after admission to the PTA program. Students should be able to demonstrate abilities to perform procedures and skills safely, effectively, and without potential endangerment to self, other students, faculty, patients or other health care workers. Medical examination records and/or statements from physicians or other appropriate medical professionals may be required to assist in evaluating a student's ability to fully participate in the learning activities and responsibilities of the PTA program. If a student is unable to demonstrate abilities to perform procedures or skills safely, effectively, and without potential endangerment, the student may be denied admission or progression in the program. Program faculty will make the final determination regarding an applicant's eligibility for participation in program activities.

Prospective students who have questions or who would like to discuss specific accommodations should make an inquiry with the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Director by calling (205) 983-5991.

Directions - Please read carefully and complete

1. Read each standard and the examples of behavioral criteria for each. Criteria listed are representative examples only of required behaviors and are not comprehensive.
2. Respond in the appropriate column that you either **fully meet the criteria (100%)** or are **unable to fully meet the criteria (less than 100%)**. Please **initial** the appropriate column
3. If you respond **LESS than 100%** to any standard, you will need to schedule an appointment with the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Director by calling to discuss your situation.
4. This form must be completed and on file with the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Director.

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Physical Therapy is considered a strenuous profession. In order to perform as a physical therapist assistant, the student should meet the listed standards sufficiently to:

Technical Standards	Examples of Criteria	Able to meet standard 100%	Unable to fully meet standard
Cognitive and critical thinking abilities:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make clinical judgments 2. Comprehend new knowledge and apply it in PTA practice 3. Analyze situations and identify cause-effect relationships 4. Organize, problem-solve and make appropriate decisions 5. Meet competency requirements of the Alabama Board of Physical Therapy 6. Compute mathematical problems 7. Operate a computer 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Interpersonal abilities:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interact purposefully and effectively with others 2. Establish rapport with patients, caregivers, others 3. Interchange ideas in a group 4. Perceive emotions displayed by others 5. Display emotions appropriate to the setting 6. Convey sensitivity, respect, tact, and a mentally healthy attitude in interpersonal relationships 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Communication abilities:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convey thoughts in verbal and written form in the English language so that they are understood by others 2. Understand printed materials, classroom lectures, instructional, medical or other directives and patient questions/responses presented in the English language 3. Appropriately use the language of medicine and health care in verbal and written communications 4. Teach a concept, test for understanding, and interpret feedback 5. Display appropriate nonverbal communication 6. Discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate nonverbal communication in patients and others 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Physical mobility:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain balance in any position 2. Move from room to room and/or maneuver in small spaces 3. Extend hands and arms in any direction 4. Move hands/arms and feet/legs coordinately with each other 5. Achieve certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation at the professional rescuer level 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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Technical Standards	Examples of Criteria	Able to meet standard 100%	Unable to fully meet standard
Strength (gross motor skills) and endurance:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Stand and walk for 6 hours or more in a clinical setting Position, lift and transfer patients without injury to patient, self, or others Push or pull heavy objects, such as an occupied hospital bed without injury to patient, self, or others 	 	
Fine motor skills and eye/hand coordination:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Manipulate small objects and dials on equipment without extraneous motions, tremors, or jerking Write the English language legibly, using correct grammar and syntax 	 	
Auditory acuity:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate effectively with others Monitor and assess patient status (hear weak cries of infants and weak calls for help) Hear high and low frequency sounds such as telephones, monitor alarms, emergency signals 	 	
Visual acuity:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and assess patient status Discern the full spectrum of colors and distinguish color changes Accurately read numbers and letters in fine print such as would appear on therapy or monitoring equipment in varying levels of light (daylight to very dim light) Read for long periods of time Read cursive writing such as would be found in patients' charts Detect changes in the environment 	 	
Tactile acuity and sense of smell:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Discern tremors or vibrations in various body areas Palpate and count pulses Discern physical characteristics (skeletal landmarks and/or changes in body tissues) through touch such as texture, temperature, shape, size and location Smell body and environmental odors such as infected wounds or burning electrical equipment 	 	

Disclaimer: The above statement of criteria is not intended as a complete listing of behaviors required in physical therapy. It is a sampling **ONLY** of the types of abilities needed by the physical therapist assistant student to meet program objectives and requirements. The Physical Therapist Assistant Program or its affiliated agencies may identify additional critical behaviors or abilities needed by students to meet program or agency requirements and therefore reserves the right to amend this list based on the identification of additional standards or criteria for physical therapist assistant students.

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Student Verification

Read the declarations below and **mark one option only**. If you are unable to fully meet any criterion at 100%, you will need to make an appointment with the Program Director at (205)983-5991. **Please sign and date below.**

☐

Option 1

I have read the technical standards and to the best of my knowledge I currently have the ability to fully meet these standards.

☐

Option 2

I have read the technical standards and to the best of my knowledge I am currently unable to fully meet the items indicated without accommodations. I am requesting the following reasonable accommodation(s):

☐

Option 3

I have read the technical standards and to the best of my knowledge I am currently unable to fully meet the items indicated without accommodations. I wish to forfeit my placement in the PTA Program.

Student's Name (Print)

Student's Signature

Date

DO NOT WRITE BELOW - FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

☐

Accommodation provided (Explain)

☐

Unable to provide accommodation (Explain)

Signature

Title

Date