PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PA) SCHOOL INTERVIEW PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

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How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

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Questions

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1. **What type of professionals are Physician Assistants (PAs) primarily licensed to collaborate with?**

   A. Surgeons

   B. Nurse Practitioners

   C. Doctors

   D. Physical Therapists

2. **What does expressing concerns about altering patient charts indicate regarding professional ethics?**

   A. A willingness to ignore legal issues

   B. An understanding of the importance of honest documentation

   C. A desire to foster secrecy among staff

   D. A tendency to overlook professional boundaries

3. **What does the applicant want to be doing five years from now?**

   A. Running their own practice

   B. Finishing the PA program and getting a job

   C. Teaching in a medical school

   D. Learning new surgical techniques

4. **Which of the following best describes the nursing model?**

   A. Focuses on disease treatment

   B. Considers patients' emotional and physical needs

   C. Prioritizes surgical interventions

   D. Emphasizes only mental health

5. **What is a short-term goal mentioned by the applicant?**

   A. To specialize in primary care

   B. To graduate from a strong PA program and pass boards

   C. To gain experience in underserved communities

   D. To establish a private practice

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6. What should a PA do to be eligible for licensure to practice?

A. Only pass the clinical skills portion

B. Graduate from an accredited PA program

C. Complete a nursing program first

D. Obtain their medical degree

7. Why does the candidate want to switch to a career as a PA?

A. To return to school

B. To increase their scope in medicine

C. To avoid working with patients

D. To work more hours

8. What is a critical question to consider when making acute decisions in the ICU?

A. Should I check with the patient's family?

B. Is this decision time-sensitive?

C. What do other staff members think?

D. Am I comfortable making this decision?

9. Which GRE score indicates average performance for PA school candidates?

A. Quantitative: 150, Verbal: 152

B. Quantitative: 155, Verbal: 156

C. Quantitative: 160, Verbal: 158

D. Quantitative: 145, Verbal: 150

10. Which of the following is a question a candidate might ask during a PA interview to demonstrate interest?

A. What is the school's tuition?

B. How do students engage with community clinics?

C. Are there any prerequisites still required?

D. Is there a hospital affiliated with the school?

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Answers

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1. C
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. B

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Explanations

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1. What type of professionals are Physician Assistants (PAs) primarily licensed to collaborate with?

A. Surgeons

B. Nurse Practitioners

C. Doctors

D. Physical Therapists

Physician Assistants (PAs) are primarily licensed to collaborate with doctors, as their role is designed to work under the supervision of physicians. This collaboration allows PAs to provide a wide range of healthcare services, including taking patient histories, conducting physical exams, diagnosing and treating illnesses, and prescribing medications, all within the framework of the supervising physician's practice. The PA's training is deeply rooted in the medical model, and they are prepared to perform tasks typically handled by physicians. While PAs can work with various healthcare professionals, including nurse practitioners and physical therapists, their most formal and direct collaboration occurs with physicians, as they share responsibilities in patient care and clinical decision-making. This relationship is critical for ensuring comprehensive and cohesive medical treatment for patients. In contrast, while surgeons, nurse practitioners, and physical therapists are also integral to the healthcare system, the specific licensing and practice framework for PAs centers around their collaboration with physicians, which defines their scope of practice and operational context within healthcare teams.

2. What does expressing concerns about altering patient charts indicate regarding professional ethics?

A. A willingness to ignore legal issues

B. An understanding of the importance of honest documentation

C. A desire to foster secrecy among staff

D. A tendency to overlook professional boundaries

Expressing concerns about altering patient charts indicates an understanding of the importance of honest documentation. In the medical field, maintaining accurate and truthful medical records is crucial for several reasons. It ensures that all healthcare providers involved in a patient's care have access to reliable information, which is essential for providing safe and effective treatments. Honest documentation is also vital for legal purposes; it serves as a record of the care provided and can protect both the patient and the healthcare providers in case of disputes or audits. Furthermore, adhering to ethical standards in documentation promotes trust between patients and providers. Patients expect their medical records to reflect their health accurately, and any alterations can compromise that trust and lead to ethical breaches. Therefore, the concern expressed about altering patient charts symbolizes a commitment to integrity and professional ethics within the healthcare environment.

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3. What does the applicant want to be doing five years from now?

A. Running their own practice

B. Finishing the PA program and getting a job

C. Teaching in a medical school

D. Learning new surgical techniques

The choice of wanting to be finishing the PA program and getting a job in five years reflects a realistic and pragmatic outlook for someone in the early stages of their medical career. Acknowledging the intensity and rigor of the Physician Assistant program, it demonstrates an understanding that completing the program is often a significant milestone before entering the workforce. This response shows a commitment to gaining the necessary education and training before pursuing any specific career ambitions. Such an answer indicates that the applicant is focused on the immediate goals of their professional journey, recognizing the challenges involved in completing their education and transitioning into a PA role. It also illustrates a readiness to embrace the responsibilities that come with being a PA, highlighting their aspirations to provide patient care after gaining the requisite skills and credentials. Other choices, while they may reflect valuable career aspirations, could imply a lack of awareness regarding the typical trajectory that PAs follow post-graduation or the time it often takes to achieve such goals. For instance, running a practice or teaching in a medical school generally requires years of experience and further education beyond the PA program, which might not be achievable within the specified five-year timeframe for many individuals just beginning their careers. Additionally, learning new surgical techniques, while an important aspect of professional development, might not

4. Which of the following best describes the nursing model?

A. Focuses on disease treatment

B. Considers patients' emotional and physical needs

C. Prioritizes surgical interventions

D. Emphasizes only mental health

The choice that best describes the nursing model is one that considers patients' emotional and physical needs. This holistic approach recognizes that healthcare must encompass not only the physiological aspects of a patient's condition but also their emotional, social, and psychological well-being. Nurses are trained to assess and address the diverse factors that can impact a patient's overall health, promoting a comprehensive care plan that involves collaboration and communication with the patient, their family, and a multidisciplinary healthcare team. In this context, other models that focus solely on disease treatment, surgical interventions, or mental health represent more specialized or narrower approaches to healthcare. While these aspects are indeed important, they do not capture the breadth of care that is characteristic of the nursing model, which seeks to ensure the well-rounded support of patients through empathetic and individualized care.

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5. What is a short-term goal mentioned by the applicant?

A. To specialize in primary care

B. To graduate from a strong PA program and pass boards

C. To gain experience in underserved communities

D. To establish a private practice

Choosing to focus on graduating from a strong PA program and passing boards encapsulates a concrete, actionable short-term goal that is essential for anyone pursuing a career as a Physician Assistant. This goal is effectively within the applicant's immediate control, unlike long-term aspirations which may depend on future opportunities, external circumstances, or regulatory processes. Additionally, the goal of successfully graduating from a PA program signifies a commitment to foundational education and training, which is critical for ensuring that the applicant is well-prepared to enter the field. Passing boards further emphasizes the importance of competency and readiness for practice, as this not only validates their education but also enables them to legally practice as a PA. In contrast, the other options represent more expansive or long-term goals. Specializing in primary care and establishing a private practice require significant time and experience beyond initial training. Gaining experience in underserved communities, while also commendable, ties more to future professional development than to immediate objectives. Thus, focusing on graduation and board certification illustrates a pragmatic approach to the initial steps in the journey toward becoming a PA.

6. What should a PA do to be eligible for licensure to practice?

A. Only pass the clinical skills portion

B. Graduate from an accredited PA program

C. Complete a nursing program first

D. Obtain their medical degree

To be eligible for licensure as a Physician Assistant, graduates are required to complete their education from an accredited PA program. Accreditation ensures that the program meets established educational standards and adequately prepares students with the necessary knowledge and clinical skills. Following graduation, candidates must then pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) to practice. This emphasis on accredited education reflects the importance of a standardized curriculum that prepares PAs for the varied responsibilities and challenges they will face in healthcare settings. The other options, while related to aspects of medical education, do not fulfill the specific requirements for PA licensure. Only passing the clinical skills portion would not be sufficient, as both the didactic and clinical phases of the PA program are important. Completing a nursing program can provide valuable experience but is not a mandatory step for those wishing to become PAs. Likewise, obtaining a medical degree is beyond the scope of PA training and would lead down a different career path altogether.

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7. Why does the candidate want to switch to a career as a PA?

A. To return to school

B. To increase their scope in medicine

C. To avoid working with patients

D. To work more hours

The candidate's desire to switch to a career as a Physician Assistant (PA) reflects an intention to increase their scope in medicine, which is a central aspect of the PA role. PAs have the ability to diagnose and treat medical conditions, prescribe medications, and perform certain procedures under the supervision of a physician. This position allows for a broad engagement with patient care across various specialties and settings, thus expanding the candidate's involvement in healthcare. Choosing this path indicates a commitment to patient care, professional growth, and the pursuit of a more hands-on role in the medical field. The appeal of the PA profession often lies in its blend of medical knowledge and direct patient interactions, leading to a fulfilling career that is responsive to the evolving needs of healthcare. The PA role is designed to be flexible and to allow for career advancement, making it an attractive option for those looking to have a significant impact in medicine.

8. What is a critical question to consider when making acute decisions in the ICU?

A. Should I check with the patient's family?

B. Is this decision time-sensitive?

C. What do other staff members think?

D. Am I comfortable making this decision?

When making acute decisions in the ICU, considering whether the decision is time-sensitive is crucial. In such high-stakes environments, delays can lead to worsened patient outcomes. Time-sensitive situations often require rapid assessment and intervention to stabilize the patient or address life-threatening conditions effectively. Recognizing the urgency of a decision helps healthcare providers prioritize actions and adjust their focus according to the immediate needs of the patient. For instance, deciding to administer medications, perform procedures, or initiate life support must be done promptly to ensure the best possible outcomes. Acknowledging the time-sensitive nature of decisions helps healthcare teams mobilize resources effectively and communicate swiftly to carry out the necessary interventions. Looking at other factors, while they are important in various contexts, do not hold the same weight in critical circumstances where the speed of intervention can be the difference between life and death.

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9. Which GRE score indicates average performance for PA school candidates?

A. Quantitative: 150, Verbal: 152

B. Quantitative: 155, Verbal: 156

C. Quantitative: 160, Verbal: 158

D. Quantitative: 145, Verbal: 150

The choice indicating a Quantitative score of 155 and a Verbal score of 156 reflects average performance for PA school candidates. Generally, scores around this range are considered competitive and align with the typical admissions criteria across many PA programs. For context, the GRE is a standardized test where scores are reported on a scale of 130 to 170 for each section. In PA school admissions, programs often look for a balance between Quantitative and Verbal scores to assess a candidate's overall academic abilities. A score of 155 in Quantitative indicates a solid understanding of math concepts relevant to the healthcare field, while a score of 156 in Verbal demonstrates adequate reading and comprehension skills necessary for success in a rigorous academic environment. Higher scores, such as in the other choices, might indicate above-average performance which, while impressive, are not the defining standard for average effectiveness within the set of candidates vying for PA school admissions. Lower scores, such as those in the last choice, may not consistently meet the benchmarks that many PA programs set, signaling that this combination is below average and might limit a candidate's competitiveness.

10. Which of the following is a question a candidate might ask during a PA interview to demonstrate interest?

A. What is the school's tuition?

B. How do students engage with community clinics?

C. Are there any prerequisites still required?

D. Is there a hospital affiliated with the school?

Asking how students engage with community clinics is an insightful question that reflects the candidate's interest in practical experience and real-world applications of their education. This type of inquiry suggests that the candidate understands the importance of hands-on learning and community involvement, which are critical components of a successful physician assistant program. Engaging with community clinics not only enhances students' clinical skills but also exposes them to diverse patient populations and health disparities, which are essential elements of a well-rounded PA education. This question also allows the candidate to gain insights into the school's commitment to service and public health, and how that aligns with their own professional values and goals. Additionally, it opens the door for a conversation about any specific programs, partnerships, or unique opportunities that the school might offer, further demonstrating the candidate's proactive approach to their education and career in healthcare. In this way, asking about community clinic engagement showcases not just curiosity, but also a forward-thinking attitude towards integrating theory with practice, which is highly valued in the PA profession.

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Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://paschoolinterview.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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