

ATHLETIC TRAINING

Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-admissions/how-to-apply/>). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>).

For admission to the Athletic Training program, applicants must hold a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) from a US regionally accredited institution or international equivalent. An undergraduate major in the health sciences is preferred but this is not a mandatory requirement. For admissions consideration, an applicant should ordinarily have an overall cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 and an overall science GPA of at least 3.0 (based on a 4-point scale).

Several prerequisites and foundational knowledge (Standards 54 and 55 (<https://caate.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2020-Standards-for-Professional-Programs-copyedited-clean.pdf>)) are required for admission consideration. Listed below are the subjects and corresponding number of credits applicants must complete before enrollment. For applicants on a trimester schedule, 5-to-6 quarter hours at minimum satisfy a prerequisite.

- Anatomy and Physiology (including labs): 6-to-8 credits
- Biomechanics: 3 credits
- Chemistry (including lab): 3-to-4 credits
- English Composition or Intensive Writing: 3 credits
- Exercise Physiology: 3 credits
- General Biology (including lab): 3-to-4 credits
- Nutrition: 3 credits
- Physics (including lab): 3-to-4 credits
- Psychology: 3 credits
- Statistics: 3 credits

A minimum letter-grade of C is required in each course linked to this list. Furthermore, coursework in these subjects have a five-year currency. This currency requirement may potentially be waived for an applicant who has been working full time and continuously in the health care field since completing the coursework. Although completion of coursework is not required until the time of enrollment, no more than two courses specifically linked to this prerequisite list can be outstanding at the time of application.

Advanced placement credit accepted at an undergraduate institution can satisfy a number of prerequisites including biology, chemistry, psychology, statistics, and English composition courses. College-Level Examination Program credit may also satisfy course prerequisites. Any course that an undergraduate institution deems as having satisfied a "writing intensive" requirement will suffice. This course can be in any major and does not need to be an English major-based course. Additionally, if an applicant's bachelor's degree incorporates writing across the curriculum, they should share this information with the admissions committee.

Optional preparation through coursework in the areas listed below is strongly recommended.

- Basic Emergency Care (1-4 credits)
- Medical Terminology (1-4 credits)

Applicants must hold current credentialing in emergency cardiovascular care. This requirement may only be satisfied with certification through one of the following programs:

- Basic Life Support (<https://cpr.heart.org/en/cpr-courses-and-kits/healthcare-professional/basic-life-support-bls-training/>) by the American Heart Association
- Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers (<https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/bls-training/bls-for-healthcare-providers/>) by the American Red Cross
- CPR for Healthcare Providers (<https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/cpr/cpr-training/cpr-for-healthcare-providers/>) by the American Red Cross

Scores from the most recent standardized exam(s) an applicant has completed within the last five years. At the discretion of the program, this requirement may be satisfied through one or a combination of the following: Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College Test (ACT), and/or Graduate Record Examination (GRE).

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants. See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students/>) for more information.

Applicants must demonstrate evidence of adequate exposure to the field of athletic training and understanding for the depth, breadth, and scope of practice through shadowing or volunteer experiences in various practice settings. A minimum of 50 hours is required with at least 25 hours being completed in a college/university setting and at least 25 hours in a secondary school or other non-college/university setting. Demonstration of an appreciation for the diverse patient populations athletic trainers interact with is highly preferred. Prospective students must have completed a minimum of 35 shadowing hours at the time of submitting their ATCAS application.

A personal statement must accompany application materials and include why an applicant is pursuing the degree program with focus on how their background and interests match well with the curriculum. Applicants should also present a brief summary of short- and long-term goals relevant to career planning.

Three letters of recommendation are required for review. One letter from each of the following individuals is necessary:

- An athletic trainer the applicant interacted with during their shadowing or volunteer experience
- A faculty member from the applicant's college/university studies
- A supervisor/employer, preferably from a health care related experience/job

The letters should address the applicant's academic, professional, and personal attributes as well as potential for successful graduate study.

Selected candidates will be required to meet with the admissions panel for a personal interview. The panel looks for attributes such as maturity, empathy and compassion, motivation, ability to communicate, cultural sensitivity, critical thinking skills, and potential to achieve career fulfillment as an athletic trainer. Interviews may be conducted in-person

or remotely, and provide an opportunity for candidates and the panel to interact. Discussion will center on how the program's mission and applicant's goals align. Additional dialogue will include rationale for entering the profession and pursuing a degree at Penn State.

Applicants offered admission to the Master of Athletic Training program must review the technical standards deemed essential for successful completion of the curriculum. Prior to and every semester after enrollment, students are required to attest that they meet the technical standards either with or without reasonable accommodations. Upon completion of the attestation, Penn State reserves the right not to admit any applicant who cannot meet the technical standards. This right to not admit or the right to rescind admission applies in cases where reasonable accommodation cannot be provided, would result in a fundamental alteration to the technical standards, or would compromise patient/client care or the safety of the prospective and/or currently enrolled students.

In addition to these admission requirements, participating clinical education sites (on- and off-campus) may require specific background checks and/or medical clearances in order to host a student for experiential learning purposes. Examples include screening of state or federal criminal records and vaccination records. Sites may choose to deny a student's placement in their facilities based on the information in these records. Such instances may create a barrier for students to satisfy compulsory clinical education activities and therefore not complete degree requirements necessary for graduation.