

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (ORAL HEALTH THERAPY)

Introduction

The Oral Health Therapy courses at Curtin University are professionally accredited and graduating students will need to meet the requirements of the professional body to register to work in this profession. Students should be familiar with the requirements set out by the following accrediting bodies and Standards which may impact their progression throughout their studies and in entering the profession:

- [Australian Dental Council](#)
- [Dental Board of Australia](#)
- [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency - Student Registration \(ahpra.gov.au\)](#)

How to read the inherent requirement statements

A series of inherent requirement statements have been developed which are specific to this course. To be successful in your studies all course requirements need to be met which includes the academic/theoretical content and practical application (industry placement). The requirements ensure students understand what is expected to complete their studies and therefore make an informed decision about their chosen course of study.

Each inherent requirement is made up of the following sections:

1. Introduction to the inherent requirement
2. Justification for inherent requirement
3. Examples you must be able to demonstrate to meet inherent requirement

Curtin will endeavour to meet all students needs to ensure success with studies. Students with a disability or health conditions may be able to have reasonable adjustments made to enable them to meet these requirements. For further support please contact [Curtin's AccessAbility Services](#)

INHERENT REQUIREMENT STATEMENTS

LEGAL COMPLIANCE

1. Oral Health practice is mandated by specific legislation to enable the safe delivery of care.
2. Compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements reduces the risk of harm to self and others in clinical and related settings, and ensures students are responsible and accountable for their practice.
3. Examples:
 - Meet the requirements for student registration with the [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency - Student Registration \(ahpra.gov.au\)](#)
 - Meet the [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency - Student Registration \(ahpra.gov.au\)](#) conditions of registration in relation to criminal convictions.
 - Comply with relevant legislation including child protection and safety, work health and safety (i.e. equipment use and storage), and anti-discrimination legislation.

- Adhere to immunisation and health screening requirements for the course

ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

1. The Oral Health profession is governed by policies, codes, standards, and guidelines, where practitioners are both accountable and responsible for ensuring professional behaviour in all contexts.
2. Compliance with policies, codes, standards, and guidelines relevant to the University and the Oral Health Therapy profession facilitates safe, competent interactions and relationships for students and those with whom they interact, and ensures their physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.
3. Examples:
 - Comply with academic and professional codes of conduct and professional standards, including those relating to informed consent, privacy and behaviour that respects personal and professional boundaries.
 - Work with others effectively, co-operatively, and in a professional manner in diverse and changing academic and practical experience settings (classrooms, laboratories, and clinical settings).
 - Be aware and provide evidence of blood-borne virus status at or before entry into the course
 - In cases where a student tests positive to an infection with a blood-borne virus, this may preclude them from being able to undertake some of the requirements for clinical placements
 - Comply with relevant Workplace Health and Safety policies for equipment use and storage
 - Be able to demonstrate and practice standard infection control precautions
 - Be able to wash your hands and forearms with disinfecting products
 - Be able to use protective barriers which may include gloves, gowns, plastic aprons, masks, eye shields or goggles
 - Dress appropriately for laboratories and clinical settings

COGNITION

This course requires knowledge of theory and the skills of cognition, literacy, and numeracy.

KNOWLEDGE AND COGNITIVE SKILLS

1. The acquisition and recall of knowledge, consistent and effective processing of information, attention to detail, theoretical deliberation (comparison of options) and life-long learning behaviours are required for safe practice in oral health therapy.
2. Safe and effective delivery of medical care is based on comprehensive knowledge that must be sourced, understood, and applied appropriately.
3. Examples:
 - Locate and evaluate evidence in a critical and scientific manner to support oral health care
 - Gather, comprehend, integrate and organise patient clinical records and information.

- Make safe and appropriate patient-care decisions from retained knowledge and sourced evidence.
- Notice and respond effectively to small but critical changes in patient information or reported symptoms.
- Understand scientific method and the role of research in advancing knowledge and clinical practice.
- Competently use information and communication technology, including search engines, common software, and online forms.

1.2 LITERACY

1. Competent literacy skills are essential for safe and effective development as a student oral health therapist in Australia.
2. Ability to acquire, read, decode, interpret, and comprehend information and accurately convey messages is fundamental to patient assessment, diagnosis, and management.
3. Examples:
 - The ability to acquire information and to accurately convey messages is fundamental to ensure safe and effective assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and delivery of care.
 - The ability to read, decode, interpret and comprehend multiple sources of information is fundamental for safe and effective delivery of medical care.
 - Read and comprehend handwriting, online and printed materials.
 - Read and interpret clinical charts and records.
 - Integrate and summarise information in a meaningful manner

REFLECTIVE SKILLS

1. Understanding and ongoing learning about oneself is required for safe and effective development as a student oral health therapist.
2. Students should demonstrate awareness of own thinking, and the ability to evaluate and adapt to challenges in learning and clinical practice environments.
3. Examples:
 - Manage uncertainties in scientific and clinical decision making.
 - Be aware of, and take responsibility for, own personal role in inter-personal and team Interactions.
 - Recognise when one's own thinking differs from another person's perspective.
 - Receive and respond appropriately to constructive feedback, including learning from academic and clinical setbacks

COMMUNICATION

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1. Effective verbal English communication with patients and university and clinical staff is required for effective learning and safe and effective practice.

2. Verbal English must allow for fluid, precise and comprehensible two-way discussions, at conversational speed, audible speaking volume, and appropriate tone of voice.
3. Examples:
 - Building conversational rapport with a patient to encourage their trust and cooperation in the healthcare consultation.
 - Presenting clear information in a timely manner that ensures patients are advised of and understand care and treatment options to be provided.
 - Communicating effectively and clearly with clinical tutors and supervisors involved in the patients' care.
 - Questioning directions and decisions that are unclear.
 - Providing timely and audible responses to classes and groups in classroom, laboratory, and workplace settings.
 - Presenting information to an audience of health professionals.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1. An ability to recognise, interpret and respond to non-verbal cues is essential for effective communication as a developing health professional.
2. Student oral health therapists need to demonstrate respectful non-verbal behaviour and be sensitive to individual and cultural variations in non-verbal communication.
3. Examples:
 - Communicate respectfully with people of different gender, sexuality, and age, and from diverse cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds.
 - Use appropriate eye contact, gestures, facial expression, and an open body language to build rapport and demonstrate understanding and empathy.
 - Sensitivity to non-verbal communication and respond appropriately (in context). E.g. patient in pain or distress.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

1. Effective communication using written English is required to produce a cohesive academic argument and demonstrate academic writing conventions, including paraphrasing.
2. Written communication must be at an appropriate level for the audience. Competence in reading and comprehension in English is required for safe and effective development as a student oral health therapist in Australia.
3. Examples:
 - Produce accurate, concise, clear, legally compliant patient notes in both handwritten and electronic formats, in a timely manner.
 - Produce accurate, concise, and clear reports from practical work.
 - Read and comprehend handwriting, online and printed materials
 - Read and interpret clinical charts and records
 - Integrate and summarise information in a meaningful manner

SENSORY ABILITY

AUDITORY

1. Functional hearing, using corrective aids where needed, is required to manage in the university and clinical learning environments, and for safe and effective practice.
2. Sufficient auditory function in the university and clinical learning environments to monitor, assess and manage an individual's needs consistently and accurately.
3. Examples:
 - Observe auditory alarms, warnings and directions in university and clinical environments
 - Differentiate sound across a wide spectrum of tone, pitch, and volume (including distinguishing speech and background noise).
 - Understand and respond to verbal communications accurately, appropriately and in a timely manner.
 - Follow developing discussions with healthcare colleagues regarding patients
 - Listen to nuances in patients' bodily sounds.

VISUAL

1. Adequate visual acuity is required to provide safe and effective care.
2. Students demonstrate sufficient visual acuity necessary to demonstrate the required range of skills, tasks, and assessments to maintain consistent, accurate and safe care of self and to others.
3. Examples:
 - Assess patient appearance, behaviour, posture, movement, and speech
 - Monitor the broader practice environment (including observing multiple patients and events simultaneously)
 - Assess, diagnose, and treat within the limitations of the oral cavity including discerning spatial relationships and using reflected vision tools (mirrors)
 - Judge the quality of radiographic images produced, having sufficient visual acuity to allow for distinction of optical contrast, low contrast, and small image details.

TACTILE

1. Sufficient tactile ability is required to perform competent and safe care.
2. Functional touch sensation, ability to apply appropriate pressure, and appropriate use of touch are required to manage in the university and clinical learning environments, and for safe and effective practice.
3. Examples:
 - The ability to perform dental procedures using dental handpieces, tools, and instruments in a safe and effective manner.
 - Be comfortable touching people of any gender, and in a professionally appropriate manner, to observe signs and symptoms, and provide dental care as required.

STRENGTH AND MOBILITY

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

1. Oral health practice involves physical demands and requires gross motor function.
2. Functional movement is required to manage in the university and clinical learning environments, and for safe and effective practice. This includes sufficient strength, range of motion, coordination, and independent mobility (using mobility aids if necessary) to meet practice needs in a time-constrained and confined environment.
3. Examples:
 - Being able to manoeuvre around equipment and in confined spaces (e.g. workstations, laboratory benches, dental cubicles).
 - Maintain a standing position while using both upper limbs to perform a task
 - Have the physical capability to provide emergency life support.
 - Travel to, and participate in, clinical placements and other fieldwork, and meet the physical demands of those sites.

6.2 FINE MOTOR SKILLS

1. Oral health is a profession that requires manual dexterity and fine motor skills to perform dental procedures and deliver safe and effective treatments.
2. Fine-motor manual skills and dexterity are required to perform dental procedures and deliver safe and effective treatments.
3. Examples:
 - Manage and treat oral conditions and diseases, pain and pathology of the dentition, mouth, and associated structures.
 - Effectively and independently manipulate small objects and carry instruments, materials and equipment used in dental care. This includes having the manual dexterity to perform a range of skills associated with patient care which includes cutting, pinching, extending, pulling, and twisting.
 - Complete clinical tasks in a safe and reasonable time frame.

SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE

1. Sufficient physical and mental endurance is an essential requirement needed to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide safe and effective care.
2. Functional and sustainable physical, cognitive, and psychosocial performance is required to complete complex and extended practice tasks safely and effectively in time-constrained environments. Interruptions to consciousness (e.g. from uncontrolled epilepsy, poorly managed diabetes, narcolepsy or repetitive fainting) present significant risks to own and others' safety in university and clinical environments.
3. Examples:

- Maintain a level of concentration to focus on an activity to completion.
- Perform acts of dentistry over a prolonged period (5-6hours) with appropriate breaks.
- Sustain study practices and clinical performance to ensure effective learning and application of that learning.

BEHAVIOURAL STABILITY

1. Behavioural stability is required to function and adapt effectively and sensitively in this role.
2. Student Oral Health Therapists will need to adapt their behaviour to manage their emotional responses in changing and unpredictable environments. Student oral health therapists will also need to demonstrate appropriate interpersonal and social interactions during times of additional stressors in their own lives; this may require seeking counselling and/or withdrawing from study.
3. Examples:
 - Control the expression of own emotions to maintain a professional, respectful environment when working with people of varied personal and professional backgrounds and in times of increased stressors or workloads.
 - Manage multiple tasks and complex demands with composure and focus.
 - Accept and fulfil responsibilities for patient care.
 - Manage own physical and mental health effectively, ensuring appropriate others are aware of conditions that may fluctuate and impact performance.
 - Be receptive and respond appropriately to constructive feedback.
 - Be able to work effectively in the face of uncertainty and adapt to changing environments.

Attribution



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