

# **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY) (HONOURS)**

## **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY)**

### **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

#### **MASTER OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

### **Introduction**

The Occupational 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 which may impact their progression throughout their studies and in entering the profession:

- [Occupational Therapy Board of Australia](#)
- [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency](#)
- [World Federation of Occupational Therapists](#)

### **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 of them 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 the inherent requirement
3. Examples you must be able to demonstrate to meet each inherent requirement.

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

## **INHERENT REQUIREMENT STATEMENTS**

### **ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR**

1. The Occupational Therapy profession is governed by codes, guidelines and policies ensuring occupational therapists and occupational therapy students are accountable and responsible for professional behaviour.
2. Compliance with these codes, guidelines and policies facilitates safe, competent interactions and relationships for students and others with whom they engage, and ensures the physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of the individual is not placed at risk. All students are expected to engage in ethical behaviour in all learning environments.
3. Examples:
  - Maintaining an academic record with no breaches of the [Student Charter](#).

- Compliance with academic and non-academic codes of conduct, professional standards, fieldwork organisation policies, and government legislation (e.g., the Privacy Act 1988) including those relating to:
  - academic integrity,
  - informed consent,
  - privacy,
  - behaviour that respects personal and professional boundaries,
  - behaviour that achieves Occupational Therapy service quality and competency standards.
- Working co-operatively, respectfully and in an effective professional manner with peers from diverse backgrounds, in diverse academic and clinical settings (classrooms, laboratories, and workplace settings).

## **BEHAVIOURAL STABILITY**

1. Occupational Therapists are required to interact sensitively with clients, carers, and fellow healthcare professionals.
2. Occupational Therapists student needs to demonstrate personal behavioural and emotional stability so that they can adapt effectively and sensitively in diverse and changing academic and clinical environments. They must be able to conduct themselves appropriately and safely, even in stressful situations.
3. Examples:
  - Controlling the expression of personal 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. This includes being able to effectively manage workloads by prioritising competing demands.
  - Accept and fulfil responsibilities for client care (duty of care to others).
  - Managing own physical and mental health effectively, ensuring appropriate others are aware of conditions that may fluctuate and impact performance.
  - Welcoming and responding positively to constructive feedback.
  - Being able to work effectively in the face of uncertainty and adapt to changing environments.
  - Working with people across the lifespan and from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
  - Respecting personal and professional boundaries.

## **LEGAL**

1. Occupational therapy practice is mandated by legislation and regulatory requirements to ensure the safe delivery of care.
2. Occupational therapy students must comply with Australian Law, professional regulations and scope of practice. Compliance ensures that students are responsible and accountable for their practice and reduce the risk of harm to self and others.
3. Examples:
  - Meet the conditions and requirements for student registration with Ahpra.
  - Compliance with child protection and safety, work health and safety, and anti-discrimination legislation and policies.
  - Practising within contemporary Federal and State Occupational Therapy laws and regulations.

- Adhere to immunisation and health screening requirements for the course.

## COMMUNICATION

### Verbal communication

1. Effective verbal English communication with clients, as well as with university and clinical staff, is required for effective learning and safe and effective practice. Verbal communication is critical to developing respect, empathy, and trust.
2. Throughout the course, occupational therapy students need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Proficiency in verbal English to allow for fluid, precise and comprehensible two-way discussions, at conversational speed, at audible speaking volume, and with appropriate tone of voice,
  - Respectful communication with people of different gender identities, sexuality, age, and diverse cultural and educational backgrounds,
  - Active participation in group discussions,
  - Accurate, appropriate, and timely responses in verbal communication,
  - Clear instructions in the context of the situation, and
  - Timely and clear feedback and reports.
3. Examples:
  - Speaking at conversational speed in noisy environments such as hospital wards and classrooms.
  - Speaking and make oneself understood via telehealth systems including online apps and telephones.
  - Making oneself understood while using personal protective equipment (PPE) including masks.
  - Responding appropriately to a client's questions
  - Building conversational rapport with a client to encourage trust and cooperation in therapy sessions.
  - Effectively communicating and confirming instructions in a range of different environments.
  - Providing timely and audible responses to classes and groups in classrooms, laboratories, and workplace settings.
  - Presenting information to multidisciplinary team members.

### Non verbal communication

1. Effective non-verbal communication is demonstrated by recognising, interpreting, and responding to non-verbal cues. This skill is essential for effective communication, demonstrating empathy and gaining trust and respect as a developing health professional.
2. Throughout the course students will need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Sensitivity to individual and/or cultural differences,
  - Consistent and appropriate facial expressions and eye contact, being mindful of space and time boundaries,
  - Ability to observe, understand and respond appropriately to non-verbal cues that assist with building rapport and gaining trust and respect in academic and professional relationships,
  - Sensitivity to individual and/or cultural differences, and
  - Respect and empathy to help develop trusting relationships.
3. Examples:
  - Recognising and responding to client facial expressions and emotional states when they experience pain or distress, showing empathy.
  - Communicating effectively with people in distress.

- Communicating respectfully with people of different gender, sexuality, age groups, and from diverse cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Using appropriate eye contact, gestures, facial expression, and an open body language to build rapport and demonstrate understanding and empathy.

### **Written communication**

1. Written English proficiency is required to produce cohesive academic and clinical arguments and demonstrate academic writing conventions, including paraphrasing.
2. Students need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Construction of coherent written communication appropriate to the circumstances and level for the audience,
  - Construction of text reflective of the required academic standards,
  - Ability to convey knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter for professional practice,
  - Ability to read and comprehend information presented in a variety of standard formats, and
  - Accurate written communication, including record-keeping and client notes (vital to provide consistent and safe client care).
3. Examples:
  - Timely, accurate, concise, clear, legally compliant, hand-written and electronic client records and scientific articles.
  - Written records of an occupational therapy session with a client.
  - Written referral letter or report.
  - Summaries of and appropriately referenced range of literature in written assignments.
  - Logically constructed written arguments using grammatically correct and meaningful sentences.
  - Accurate, concise, and clear reports from in-class laboratory and practical work.

## **COGNITION**

1. An appropriate level of knowledge and cognitive skills must be utilised by occupational therapy students within the occupational therapy course to provide safe and competent occupational therapy services.
2. The student needs to develop and demonstrate:
  - Acquisition, recall and application of knowledge, with attention to detail,
  - Effective processing of information relevant to practice, in order to make professional decisions,
  - The ability to engage in multiple sources of information simultaneously to meet clinical and educational deadlines,
  - Integration and implementation of theory and knowledge from various sources in clinical practice,
  - Engagement in scientific, rational, ethical, and clinical reasoning,
  - Prioritisation of options by assessing and comparing their respective merits,
  - Problem solving of intellectual and physical challenges, both independently and in groups,
  - Maintenance of a sufficient level of concentration to focus on an activity to completion,
  - The ability to gather, comprehend and organise medical and other client information, in a limited timeframe,
  - Accurate recall of client information without reference to notes under time pressures, and
  - An understanding of another person's perspective on their health and wellbeing.

3. Examples:

- Gather, comprehend, and organise information such as working out what information is relevant from client notes.
- Integrate theory and knowledge from various sources, such as considering evidence, practical constraints and a client's unique circumstances and needs when designing therapy programs.
- Develop options and assess and compare their respective merits such as working out the most appropriate piece of equipment to recommend for a client.
- Accurately recall information without reference such as being able to think on your feet, and answer questions from clients and carers.
- Accurately undertake arithmetic calculations such as to accurately score standardised assessments, or determine appropriate measurements when recommending home adaptations.
- Engage in scientific and clinical reasoning such as to locate and present evidence from the literature to support a selected intervention; identify ethical issues such as how to manage a home visit for a client, or when to disclose information to carers.
- Understand another person's perspective such as being empathetic to clients in a difficult personal situation, or when their values are different to your own.
- Complete clinical tasks in a safe and reasonable time frame such as performing tasks when they need to be done, such as assessing a new patient who has been referred prior to discharge over the weekend.
- Maintain a sufficient level of concentration to focus on an activity to completion such as completing a comprehensive assessment and write up a report for a workplace assessment.

## REFLECTIVE SKILLS

1. Occupational therapy practice requires self-awareness and a capacity for reflection and reflexivity in order to consider the effect of one's own issues, actions, values and behaviours. Understanding of and ongoing learning about oneself is required for safe and effective development as an occupational therapy student.
2. Occupational therapy practice therefore needs to demonstrate the ability to purposefully reflect on their academic and professional performance, the awareness of own thinking and the ability to evaluate and adapt to challenges in learning and clinical practice environments.
3. Examples:
  - Maintaining professional empathy and objectivity in the context of a dying patient but being able to express your emotions privately to colleagues.
  - Demonstrating competent performance when randomly allocated a client during a viva or practical examination.
  - Managing uncertainties in scientific and professional decision making.
  - Demonstrating resilience and adaptability when a clinical situation suddenly changes
  - Understanding that, even when learning, your focus as a healthcare student must be on the care and safety of your client.
  - Recognising when you need help and seeking assistance from appropriate health professionals or staff at Curtin.
  - Being aware of, and taking responsibility for, own role in inter-personal and team interactions.
  - Recognising when one's own thinking differs from another person's perspective and responding respectfully.

## SENSORY ABILITY

1. Occupational therapy students must develop and demonstrate effective use of their own sensory abilities to provide safe and competent occupational therapy services. Sensory abilities include the way

a student would recognise and respond to external or internal stimuli through sight, smell, kinaesthesia, hearing, taste, and touch.

2. Occupational therapy students will need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Integration of sensory perceptions,
  - Effective observational skills,
  - Spatial awareness,
  - Accurate kinaesthetic sense,
  - Tactile sensitivity,
  - Good sense of balance, and
  - Capacity to monitor the broader practice environment.
3. Examples:
  - Integration of observational and tactile sensory information to assess client performance effectively and efficiently.
  - Observation skills to detect changes in behaviour, signs of discomfort or distress, and irregularities in movement or posture.
  - Observation skills to assess the client appearance, behaviour, posture, movement, and speech.
  - Accurately positioning themselves and their clients during client transfers.

## **STRENGTH AND MOBILITY**

### **Gross motor skills**

1. Occupational therapy practice involves physical demands and requires gross motor function.
2. Students must demonstrate the ability to perform gross motor skills to function within scope of 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 environment. Functional movement is required to manage in the university and workplace learning environments, and for safe and effective practice.
3. Examples:
  - Physical touch and close observation of people of differing genders,
  - Completion of clinical tasks in a safe and timely manner,
  - Physically assisting a client to move around their bed or the general environment,
  - Independently carry and manipulate equipment and materials (therapeutic treatment machines, paperwork) on varying surfaces and levels, to complete tasks within constrained timeframes,
  - Manoeuvring around equipment and in confined spaces, and Attendance at clinical or practicum placements in a range of physical settings (e.g. urban, rural, hospital clinics) and for the required number of hours, within a reasonable period.

### **Fine motor skills**

1. Occupational Therapy is a profession that requires manual dexterity and fine motor skills to perform clinical procedures and deliver safe and effective treatments.
2. Students must use fine motor skills to manage in the university and workplace learning environments. Occupational therapy students will need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Manipulation of small objects, and
  - Accurate placement of objects into exact positions.

3. Examples:
  - Cleansing hands and forearms using disinfecting products.
  - Donning and tying surgical gowns and putting on gloves.
  - Effectively placing a surgical mask over the head and face to ensure mask fit.
  - Using computer equipment (mouse, touchscreens, pointers, keyboards).
  - Using small measurement tools to measure joint range of students and clients.

## SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE

1. Occupational Therapy requires functional and sustainable physical, cognitive and psychosocial performance to complete complex and extended practice tasks safely and effectively in time-constrained environments.
2. Through the course students will need to develop and demonstrate:
  - Consistent and sustained level of physical energy to complete specific tasks in a timely manner and over time.
  - Ability to perform repetitive activities with a level of concentration until completion of the task.
  - Capacity to maintain consistency and quality of performance throughout the designated period of time.
  - Sufficient physical and mental endurance is required to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide safe and effective care.
3. Examples:
  - Participation in client-based group discussion in class and clinic.
  - Ability to wear protective gowns, gloves and masks when treating patients with infectious diseases or low immunity.
  - Adequate protection of self and others to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.
  - Maintenance of specific required immunisation through the course.
  - Wearing a clinical uniform and closed-in shoes in required classes, on clinical placement and in practical examinations,
  - Restriction of wearing jewellery to ensure safe handling of clients.
  - Maintenance of a level of concentration to focus on an activity to completion.
  - Performance of repetitive tasks (e.g. typing, walking) for periods of 2-4 hours, with appropriate breaks.
  - Study practices and workplace performance to ensure effective learning and application of that learning.



Inherent Requirements <http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/ir>

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