

Bachelor of Science (Physiotherapy)

Bachelor of Science (Physiotherapy) (Honours)

Doctor of Physiotherapy

Introduction

The Physiotherapy 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:

- [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency](#)
- [Australian Physiotherapy Council](#)
- [Physiotherapy Board of Australia](#)

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 DOMAINS – Physiotherapy

ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

1. The Physiotherapy profession is governed by codes, guidelines and policies ensuring Physiotherapists and Physiotherapy students are accountable and responsible for always behaving professionally.
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 Physiotherapy 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. Physiotherapists are required to interact sensitively with patients, carers, and fellow healthcare professionals.
2. A Physiotherapy 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 from varied personal and professional backgrounds and in times of increased stressors or workloads.
 - Managing multiple tasks and complex demands with composure and focus. This includes being able to effectively manage workload by prioritising competing demands.
 - Accepting and fulfilling responsibilities for patient 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.
 - Treatment and interaction with patients across the lifespan and from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

LEGAL

1. Physiotherapy practice is mandated by legislation and regulatory requirements to ensure the safe delivery of care.
2. Physiotherapy students must comply with Australian Law, professional regulations, and scope of practice limitations. Compliance ensures that students are responsible and accountable for their practice and reduces the risk of harm to self or others.
3. Examples:
 - Meeting the conditions and requirements for student registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra).
 - Compliance with child protection and safety, workplace health and safety, and anti-discrimination legislation and policies.
 - Practising within contemporary Federal and State Physiotherapy laws and regulations.
 - Adhering to immunisation and health screening requirements for the course.

COMMUNICATION

Verbal communication

1. Effective verbal English communication with patients, 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, Physiotherapy 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. Verbal communication is critical to developing respect, empathy and trust with patients, members of the health care team, colleagues and peers, University staff and family members of patients. Further, timely, accurate and effective delivery of instructions is critical to individual safety, treatment, and management. Some interactions may be limited to verbal communication because of physical limitations of the individual (e.g., injury, disease, or congenital conditions).
4. Examples:
 - Speaking English delivered at conversational speed in noisy environments such as hospital wards, gyms and classrooms.
 - Speaking English and make oneself understood via telehealth systems including online apps and telephone.
 - Making oneself understood while using personal protective equipment (PPE) including masks.
 - Responding appropriately to a patient's question while walking them along a noisy hospital corridor.
 - Building conversational rapport with a patient to encourage trust and cooperation in the healthcare consultation.
 - 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 specialist (e.g. health professionals) and non- specialist audiences.

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 medical records and scientific articles.
 - Written record of a physiotherapy consultation with a patient.
 - 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

Knowledge and cognitive skills

1. An appropriate level of knowledge and cognitive skills must be utilised by physiotherapy students within the physiotherapy course to provide safe and competent physiotherapy patient care.
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 information, in a limited time-frame,
 - Accurate recall of patient information without reference to notes under time pressures, and
 - An understanding of another person's perspective on their health

3. Examples:

- Navigation of medical records in electronic, handwritten, or typed formats in a timely manner to gather pertinent information.
- Listening to a patient and perform a physical examination to formulate a provisional diagnosis and a treatment plan within a designated timeframe.
- Plan the management of a weekend ward list in a timely manner to ensure that each patient receives adequate care.
- Understand how behaviour, culture, and motivation will influence development of an appropriate exercise programme.
- Use knowledge of anatomy and biomechanics to diagnose an injury in a patient with a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament.
- Use evidence-based practice knowledge to prioritise treatment options for a patient with cystic fibrosis.
- Perform a succinct patient handover to a senior colleague to the appropriate level of detail.
- Differentially diagnose causes of illness in an older adult patient.
- Consider patient autonomy and preferences in palliative care treatment.
- Share decision making with a client in a wheelchair about their goals and return to preferred activities.
- Plan and implement long term goals and treatment for a patient with an acquired brain injury over the course of 3 months.

Literacy (language)

1. Physiotherapy students must develop and demonstrate competence in reading and comprehension, and attention to detail in spoken and written English, to provide safe and competent physiotherapy patient care.
2. The student needs to develop and demonstrate:
 - Ability to accurately acquire information and communicate in an appropriate and effective manner with a wide variety of patients, clinicians, and stakeholders,
 - Ability to read and comprehend a range of literature and information formats,
 - Implementation of academic conventions to construct written text in a scholarly manner, and
 - Ability to quickly acquire, read, decode, interpret, and comprehend information to undertake patient assessment, diagnosis and management.
3. Examples:
 - Reading and comprehending handwritten, online and printed materials.
 - Read and interpreting case notes, hospital notes, charts, spreadsheets, and graphs.
 - Understanding hazard signs and warnings.
 - Comprehending technical documents including risk assessments, standard operating procedures, and material safety data Accuracy in undertaking simple arithmetic calculations, and sheets.
 - Integrating and summarising information accurately in a meaningful manner.

Numeracy

1. Physiotherapy students must accurately perform mathematical functions with precision to ensure safe and effective physiotherapy patient care.
2. The student needs to develop and demonstrate:
 - Interpretation and correct application a range of numerical data, measurement, and criteria,
 - Understanding of graphical representations of data,
 - Accurately undertaking simple arithmetic calculations, and
 - Recognition of when doses, strengths and quantities are potentially inaccurate or inappropriate.

3. Examples:

- Gathering and analysing lung function test data.
- Calculating the intensity required for exercise training adaptation based on the findings of a six-minute walk test.
- Calculating summative scores in validated patient reported outcomes or in the calculation of BMI.
- Calculating summary measures for fluid intake and void volumes in patient reported 3-day bladder diaries.
- Correctly applying data, measurements and numerical criteria in relation to research literacy, for example, in the critical evaluation of evidence, through measures of central tendency and dispersion (confidence intervals), correlations, analysis of variance, and regressions

REFLECTIVE SKILLS

1. Physiotherapy 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 a physiotherapy student.
2. A physiotherapy student 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 patient case 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 care for your patient.
- 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. Physiotherapy students must develop and demonstrate effective use of their own sensory abilities to provide safe and competent physiotherapy patient care. 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. Physiotherapy 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 (including observing multiple patients and events simultaneously)

3. Examples:
 - Integration of observational and tactile sensory information to assess patient problems effectively and efficiently.
 - Observation skills to detect signs of inflammation, changes in behaviour, signs of discomfort or distress, and irregularities in movement or posture.
 - Observation skills to assess the patient appearance, behaviour, posture, movement, and speech in the physical examination of a newly referred patient with an acute stroke.
 - Accurately positioning themselves and their patients during exercises and movements.
 - Effective use of their own body movement and be able to perceive the body's movement while they adjust movements on patients or instruct patients.
 - Palpate and use of touch to detect changes in muscle tension, joint mobility, skin temperature and other physical sensations in their patients.
 - Supporting or holding patients during exercises, which requires good balance.
 - Safely conducting an exercise class for patients with lower back pain.

STRENGTH AND MOBILITY

Gross motor skills

1. Physiotherapy students must develop and demonstrate effective gross motor skills to provide safe and competent physiotherapy patient care.
2. Students will need to be able to complete the physical demands required to perform physiotherapy functions. Physiotherapy students will need to develop and demonstrate:
 - Gross motor skills to function within scope of practice, including sufficient strength, range of motion, coordination and independent mobility (using mobility aids if necessary) to meet practice needs in a time-constrained environment,
 - Functional capacity to manage in the university and workplace learning environments, for safe and effective practice,
 - Physical touch and close observation of people of differing genders,
 - Completion of clinical tasks in a safe and timely manner,
 - Physically assisting a client or patient 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,
 - Safe and effective work practices with patients in an aquatic environment, 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.
3. Examples:
 - Acquisition and maintenance of a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certificate from a registered training organisation.
 - Acquisition of aquatic rescue proficiency.
 - Sit, stand, and walk for periods of 2-4 hours at a time.
 - Maintenance of an upright position while using both upper limbs to perform a task.
 - Manoeuvring around hospital beds, medical equipment, workstations, laboratory benches, clinical areas, storerooms.
 - Physical capability to provide emergency life support.
 - Physical dexterity to perform blood pressure monitoring and respiratory function tests.
 - Performance of a physical examination of a newly referred patient with an acute stroke.
 - Use of therapeutic touch as an assessment tool.

- Safely conducting an exercise class for patients with lower back pain.
- Assisting patients to get in and out of a chair safely following hip replacement.
- Providing maximal assistance to get a patient out of bed the day after major surgery.
- Mobilisation of the joints of the cervical spine in a patient with neck stiffness.
- Measuring a patient's strength with a dynamometer.
- Touching transgender, gender reassigned, gender fluid, agender, male and female patients.
- Collecting and fitting walking aids for patients with orthopaedic problems, for example walking frames and crutches.
- Conducting a hydrotherapy treatment for a patient or conducting a hydrotherapy class safely.
- Performance of passive movements on a patient or student who is lying on a plinth.
- Completion of a six-minute walk test.
- Wearing designated clothing (eg a uniform) and masks designed to minimise the spread of infection and protect the wearer as requested.
- Meeting ongoing mandatory immunisation requirements.

Fine motor skills

1. Physiotherapy is a profession that requires manual dexterity and fine motor skills to perform detailed and accurate clinical procedures to deliver safe and effective treatments.
2. Students must use fine motor skills to manage in the university and workplace learning environments. Physiotherapy 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 N95 masks over the head and face to ensure mask fit.
 - Suctioning of intensive care patients' breathing tubes without shaking of hands.
 - Adjusting levers, knobs, and dials on diagnostic and therapeutic machines.
 - Using computer equipment (mouse, touchscreens, pointers, keyboards).
 - Applying wound dressings.
 - Using small measurement tools to measure joint range of students and patients.

Sustainable performance

1. Physiotherapy 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 patient-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 the clinic and for practical examinations,
- Restriction of wearing jewellery to ensure safe handling of patients.
- 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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