

Bachelor of Exercise Science/Master of Physiotherapy and Exercise Physiology Expectations of Students

Summary

The following list of expectations have been developed to help prospective students make informed choices about future study and professional requirements. UNSW Sydney encourages applications from students with disabilities and from diverse backgrounds.

Students with disabilities or health conditions are encouraged to register with [Equitable Learning Services \(ELS\)](#). This will enable them to have a learning plan with reasonable adjustments to support their learning/studies.

This program involves physical skills or knowledge that can only be developed to an adequate standard through in-person attendance for classes and assessment. If you are undertaking a course with this kind of content and you have difficulty meeting attendance requirements, you need to reach out to the Program Authority, relevant Course Convenor or ELS to discuss whether any reasonable adjustments or extra support may be available.

Importantly, it is a requirement of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia that any health impairment which may impact upon patient and public safety is disclosed when applying for registration following graduation.

1. Legal, ethical and behavioural requirements

Physiotherapy is a profession governed by a [code of conduct](#), [standards](#), guidelines and policies, in which registered physiotherapists and physiotherapy students are both responsible and accountable for ensuring professional and safe behaviour in all context.

Physiotherapy practice is mandated by [legislation](#) to enable the safe delivery of care. Students must demonstrate knowledge and compliance with Australian Law, professional regulation and scope of practice. As a physiotherapy student, you will be required to:

- demonstrate knowledge of, and engages in ethical behaviour in academic and clinical environment
- demonstrate self-awareness and ensures that their own opinions, attitudes and behaviours

- do not adversely affect others.
- demonstrate ability to reflect on ethical issues and take responsibility for ensuring awareness of ethical behaviour
- demonstrate knowledge and compliance with relevant national and state laws, professional regulation and scope of practice
- comply with requirements relating to informed consent, confidentiality, and privacy with patient information in academic and clinical environment.
- meet ongoing immunisation requirements, including those introduced after the commencement of the program

2. Communication requirements (verbal, written and non-verbal)

Effective communication is a core competency for practice as a physiotherapist. You would be expected to:

- comprehend spoken English delivered at conversational speed;
- respond to verbal communications accurately, appropriately and in a timely manner;
- comprehend written English presented in a variety of standard formats and demonstrate a reading speed in English of at least 250 words per minute;
- recognise and interpret non-verbal communication and respond appropriately to the circumstances (e.g. recognising and responding to signs of distress or pain experienced by patients);
- demonstrate the ability to adjust your communication style or approach if required to assist or support a client with communication challenges; and
- communicate respectfully with people of different gender, sexuality, age, and from diverse cultural, religious, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds.

3. Cognitive and intellectual requirements

The role of a physiotherapist can be mentally challenging. As a physiotherapy student and as a registered physiotherapist, you will be required to:

- understand and respond to written communications accurately, appropriately, and in a timely manner.
- demonstrate capacity to locate appropriate and relevant information from various sources.
- demonstrates the ability to process information relevant to physiotherapy practice and ability to integrate and implement knowledge into physiotherapy practice in a timely manner.
- understand, interpret and correctly apply numerical criteria, data and measurement in a range of contexts.
- demonstrate the ability perform repetitive activities in an assigned period ensuring safe and effective patient care.

4. Sensory abilities

Student can accurately gather and interpret information provided through touch. Adequate tactile ability is required to perform competent and safe physiotherapy practice and to undertake diverse range of practical skills and assessments. As such, as a physiotherapy student, you will be required to:



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- demonstrate adequate tactile function to perform physiotherapy practice safety and to undertake a diverse range of practical skills and patient assessment techniques in a timely manner.
- demonstrate adequate visual function to observe, assess and monitor patient appearance, behaviour, posture, movement, gait and your physical surroundings
- demonstrate adequate hearing/auditory function to comprehend and respond to auditory information (e.g., accurately perform cardiopulmonary assessment by auscultation).

5. Physical strength and mobility

Physiotherapy is a profession that is physically demanding and requires gross motor function, manual dexterity as well as fine motor skills. Physiotherapy students and physiotherapists are required to:

- demonstrate appropriate gross motor and fine motor function to perform first aid including if necessary cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
- maintain a standing position while performing basic physiotherapy techniques safely and effectively (e.g., performing suctioning or chest percussion on a patient lying on a plinth) and must be able to perform these techniques safely to reduce risk of harm to self and others.
- apply fine motor and gross motor skills (include being able to push, pull, squeeze, grasp, turn and manipulate various objects and individual) to perform the required level of patient care and to undertake required learning, assessment (e.g., palpate bones, joints, muscles and other soft tissues to detect anatomical or movement abnormalities), treatment (e.g. perform manual therapy and soft tissue massage etc) and professional tasks
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately position self, patients, objects and equipment to perform physiotherapy tasks reliably and safely (e.g., transferring immobile patients).

6. Sustainable performance

Physiotherapy practice requires consistent and sustained level of mental as well as physical performance over time. Therefore, it is expected that you can:

- perform repetitive activities with a high level of concentration in an assigned period to provide safe and effective care.

Support for students

- Academic Skills and Support: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/academic-skills>
- Student Wellbeing, Health and Safety: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/wellbeing>
- Equitable Learning Service: <https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/els>
- Mind Hub (Online Mental Health Support): <https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/mind-hub>
- Student Support Advisors: <https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/study-support-and-education-support-advisors>
- Special Consideration: <https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>



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