

Inherent Requirements for Rehabilitation Counselling Courses

To assist students to make informed choices about their study, we have identified and set out below the Inherent Requirements for coursework award courses in Rehabilitation Counselling.

The University of Sydney welcomes and encourages applications from students with disabilities, and from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Where there are physical, intellectual, cultural, religious or other factors that impact on a student's ability to meet the Inherent Requirements, the University will make reasonable adjustments to assist the student to meet the requirements.

To successfully complete their award course, students must meet the academic requirements set out in the Faculty and course resolutions – these are set out in the [Faculty handbook](#). In addition, students in all courses are required to comply with Australian laws and University rules and policies, including the [Student Charter 2020](#). The University of Sydney upholds the academic standards of each degree and discipline so that all students graduate with the skills and knowledge expected of a graduate of the award conferred.

With appropriate supports and reasonable accommodations, students must be able to carry out the list of Inherent Requirements described below, in order to successfully complete Rehabilitation Counselling.

Communication tasks

1. Comprehend spoken English delivered at conversational speed (including in noisy environments, such as hospital wards and classrooms).
E.g. discussing safety concerns with supervisor and shop steward while performing an on-site job/task analysis.
2. Understand and respond to verbal communications accurately, appropriately and in a timely manner.
E.g. respond appropriately to a care request in the clinical environment.
3. Communicate clearly, audibly and intelligibly in English.
E.g. understand and be understood during intake interviews with workers.
4. Actively participate in group discussions.
E.g. case conferences and informal discussions concerning patient or client care.
5. Read and comprehend information presented in a variety of standard formats.
E.g. critically reading a vocational evaluation report to evaluate its quality.
6. Record information accurately and make coherent notes.
E.g. taking and transcribing field notes to be shared in rehabilitation team meetings.
7. Perceive non-verbal communication from others and respond appropriately (in context).
E.g. patient or client symptoms such as pain and suffering.
8. Communicate respectfully with people of all genders, sexuality and age, and from diverse cultural, religious, socio-economic and educational backgrounds.
E.g. listen, and respond to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender youth in mental health support groups.

Observation/sensory tasks

1. Assess and interpret patient speech (including rate, volume and quantity of information, content of thought).
E.g. tracking changes in client (with schizophrenia) speech patterns as they transition from shelter to independent living (attending to possible exacerbating psychiatric symptoms or possible issues with medication side effects).

Physical tasks

1. Acquire and hold a Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation Certificate from a registered training organization.
2. Cleanse hands and forearms using disinfecting products.
This is an occupational health and safety, and patient safety requirement.
3. Meet ongoing immunisation requirements, including those introduced after commencement in the course or program.
Detail is available at <https://sydney.edu.au/students/clinical-placement-checks.html>.
4. Attend clinical or practicum placements in a range of physical settings and for the required number of hours, within a reasonable period.
E.g. urban & rural locations; industrial (all manner of work/employment sites), institutional, office, hospital, clinic, and home settings.

Intellectual tasks

1. Gather, comprehend and organise information.
E.g. manage knowledge acquisition across units of study; develop and maintain both client documentation and conceptualisation in case management exercises.
2. Integrate theory and knowledge from various sources.
E.g. cite evidence base for prescribed workplace interventions.
3. Develop options and assess and compare their respective merits.
E.g. facilitate client and family decision making processes in service planning.
4. Accurately recall information without reference.
E.g. summarise client information in order to “hand over” to another professional.
5. Engage in scientific and clinical reasoning.
E.g. develop and test hypotheses regarding problematic return to work efforts.
6. Engage in rational and ethical reasoning.
E.g. recognise and address ethical dilemmas in situ and engage in constructive resolutions.
7. Understand another person’s perspective.
E.g. develop a working alliance with client individually and family as a group in developing a consensually approved school to work transition plan.
8. Complete clinical tasks in a safe and reasonable time frame.
E.g. recognise and respond appropriately to client crises.
9. Maintain a sufficient level of concentration to focus on an activity to completion.
E.g. regularly schedule and complete labour market surveys.

Interpersonal and social interactions

1. Control the expression of your own emotions.
Patients and clients need continuous professional care including when the professional feels sad, angry or tired. Workplace conflict creates an unsafe team environment.
2. Be able to work effectively in the face of uncertainty and adapt to changing environments.
Patient and client conditions and required care tasks can change rapidly. Many different clinical environments are encountered during training.
3. Accept and fulfill responsibilities you are given for patient/client care.
This is a patient and client safety requirement.
4. Manage your own physical and mental health effectively.
This is a patient and client safety requirement and includes seeking help and/or notifying others of fluctuations in physical and mental health as necessary (e.g. epilepsy, hypomania, infective diseases).
5. Respect personal and professional boundaries.
Patients and clients are vulnerable.
6. Dress appropriately and safely for the clinical workplace.
This is an occupational health and safety requirement.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**Why have a list of Inherent Requirements for Rehabilitation Counselling**

We think it’s important for students to be aware of the Inherent Requirements they will need to meet in university subjects and courses. This information enables prospective students to make informed decisions about their subject and career choices. In the case of Rehabilitation Counselling and other health professional degrees, many of the Inherent Requirements relate to patient and client contact. This contact increases with each year of the course and we believe it’s important to be clear from the beginning about what is required to be able to successfully complete the course.

The Inherent Requirements are likely to be particularly helpful for students with disabilities. Many students successfully manage their disabilities with external support, and opt not to notify the University. However, the University’s Disability Services assists hundreds of current students with a disability, and provides prospective students with advice about the support services offered at the University. Where necessary, after confidential registration of a disability, Disability Services negotiates reasonable adjustments for students with the relevant Faculty. Adjustments to coursework and assessments may also be made for students with carer’s responsibilities, or cultural or religious needs. These adjustments may include such things as building and timetabling modifications, recording teaching material and special examination provisions. For fieldwork placements, it may include negotiating with supervisors in advance of the placement for reasonable adjustments.

Adjustments must be reasonable and cannot compromise the academic integrity of a course. Reasonable adjustments are provided to assist students to achieve the inherent requirements, not as a substitute for them.

How are lists of Inherent Requirements developed?

They are developed from the required learning outcomes of the courses. Course structure and content, including learning outcomes, are designed to ensure that the course meets required standards. In addition to meeting general higher education standards, the health professional courses are accredited (inspected and approved) by specialist groups. There are 14 health professions regulated by the Australian Health Practitioner Agency (AHPRA) and profession specific boards or councils are responsible for assessing programs of study and education providers against accreditation standards.

In the case of many university subjects, the Inherent Requirements are purely cognitive. However, the health professional courses, in addition to teaching cognitive skills, train students to diagnose and treat clients and patients. Students' abilities to do this are assessed in structured examinations and students are required to perform supervised care of clients and patients satisfactorily when on placement. Patient and client safety must be ensured at all times and the healthcare institutions, the registered practitioners supervising, and, the University have a duty of care to these patients and clients. Students are required to comply with relevant requirements for placement organisations (e.g. NSW health). The health placement requirements are at: <https://sydney.edu.au/students/clinical-placement-checks.html>

Do I have to disclose any disability I believe I may have? Is there an assessment?

No, the information on Inherent Requirements is provided for your guidance. While registration with Disability Services is necessary for you to obtain reasonable adjustments, you are not otherwise required to disclose your disability to the University, unless it poses a risk to your health or safety or to that of others.

What should I do if I am worried about my ability to successfully undertake a listed essential requirement?

You can make initial contact with a course advisor via the Education Support team or with Disability Services to discuss your specific issue. Liaison will occur, if necessary, with appropriate protection of your privacy. The Education Support team can be contacted on shs.ltadmin@sydney.edu.au. The Disability Services Team can be contacted on +61 2 86278422 or disability.services@sydney.edu.au.

What is an adjustment?

These are modifications or accommodations made by the University that have the effect of assisting a student with a disability to participate or access something on the same basis as someone without a disability. Common accommodations include aids to vision or hearing (which many people of course wear every day). Disability Services at the University works to support students with disabilities, including negotiating reasonable adjustments for students. These adjustments are frequently related to assessment, e.g. extra time in examinations, allowing students to type instead of handwrite, or may relate to such issues as timetabling or access. Other assistance for fieldwork may include adjusting hours of work and the allocation of the type of placement may also be adjusted where needed to ensure the psychological safety of the student.

The University of Sydney has obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth), the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW) and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Cth) to ensure that reasonable adjustments are available. Adjustments must be reasonable and cannot compromise the academic integrity of a course. Reasonable adjustments are provided to assist students to achieve the Inherent Requirements, not as a substitute for them.

Can I enrol even if I am not sure I will be able to carry out some of the Inherent Requirements?

Yes. In fact, it will usually be unlawful for the University to restrict enrolment on the basis of disability, or to discriminate against students with a disability in other ways.

What happens if I do enrol and I am unable to carry out some of the Inherent Requirements?

Assessment is carried out with approved reasonable adjustments. If, even with reasonable adjustments, you are unable to carry out some of the Inherent Requirements, you may fail an essential component of the course. In this event, you will be unable to graduate with the health professional degree.