



Inherent Requirements for UNSW Master of Clinical Neuropsychology Program

Introduction

The UNSW School of Psychology supports the right of all people to pursue the Master of Clinical Neuropsychology program. The School is committed to making reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning, assessment, neuropsychological practice and other activities to address the impact of students' disabilities so that they are able to participate in their program.

To support potential and current students' decision making, a series of inherent requirement statements have been developed. These statements specify the requirements of the Master of Clinical Neuropsychology program for student admission and progression. The statements are clustered under eight domains consisting of:

1. Ethical Behaviour
2. Behavioural Stability
3. Legal Requirements
4. Communication
5. Cognition
6. Relational Skills
7. Reflective Skills
8. Sustainable Performance

Many of the activities associated with the professional practice of a registered psychologist are time sensitive, where the capacity to perform certain activities within specified time limits is required to reduce or avoid risks to patient safety and wellbeing. The safety and wellbeing of you and others is always of paramount importance. Students are required to undertake placement activities in mixed gender environments which reflect the Australian health care context.

The inherent requirements outlined below provide a guide to understanding the requirements and the type of reasonable adjustments that could be put in place to allow you to complete the program without compromising the academic integrity of the program.

Successfully completing the Master of Clinical Neuropsychology program at UNSW enables you to apply for a registrar program with the Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA), which is a partner board of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

How to read the inherent requirement statements

If you are intending to enroll in the Master of Clinical Neuropsychology program, reviewing the inherent requirements is essential so that you can reflect on the potential challenges in meeting them.

If you think you may experience challenges related to your disability, chronic health condition or any other reason, you should discuss your concerns with the [UNSW Equitable Learning Support](#) in conjunction with the UNSW School of Psychology staff, such as the Master of Clinical Neuropsychology Program Directors. Staff work collaboratively with you to determine reasonable adjustments to assist you to meet the Inherent Requirements. In the case where it is determined that Inherent Requirements cannot be met with reasonable adjustments, the University staff can provide guidance regarding other study options.

These inherent requirements should be read in conjunction with program and course information, the [Psychology Board of Australia codes, guidelines and policies](#) and the [Australian Psychology Accreditation Council Standards](#).

Each inherent requirement is made up of the following four levels:

- Level 1 - introduction and description of the inherent requirement
- Level 2 - explanation of why this is an inherent requirement of the program
- Level 3 - the nature of any adjustments that may be made to allow you to meet the requirement
- Level 4 - examples of things you must be able to do to show you've met the requirement

1. Ethical Behaviour	
Level 1 <i>Definition/description</i>	Clinical neuropsychology is a profession governed by the codes, policies, guidelines and regulations of the organization and jurisdiction in which they work. They are accountable and responsible for ensuring professional and ethical behaviour in all contexts. Students must demonstrate knowledge of, and engage in, ethical behaviour throughout their academic and professional placement activities
Level 2 <i>Rationale</i>	Compliance with the professional and ethical standards ensures safe, competent interactions and relationships with students and the people they engage with, including staff, students, other professionals, and clients. Clinical Neuropsychologists often deal with vulnerable and diverse populations. Ensuring their physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual wellbeing is of the utmost importance of the individual is not placed at risk. (in keeping with General Principle A (Respect for the rights and dignity of people and peoples) (See Code of Conduct).
Level 3 <i>Potential adjustments</i>	Any adjustments must not compromise the safety or security of clients, organizations or colleagues, and further, must not compromise any codes, guidelines, policies or regulation of UNSW, the placement organization, or Psychology Board of Australia, or result in unethical behaviour.
Level 4 <i>Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement</i>	Adherence to conduct required to maintain registration as a psychologist and maintain good standing as a student within UNSW

2. Behavioural Stability

Level 1 <i>Definition/description</i>	Behavioural stability is related to an individual's consistency in their behaviour and cognitive, emotional and socially stable qualities and dispositions. Behavioural stability is required to function and adapt effectively and sensitively in demanding roles and environments. Student must demonstrate behavioural stability to work constructively in a diverse and changing academic and clinical environment, which may at times be challenging and unpredictable.
Level 2 <i>Rationale</i>	Behavioural stability is required to work individually and in teams in diverse and changing environments and with a diversity of clients. Students will be exposed to situations which are challenging and unpredictable, and will be required to have the behavioural stability to manage these objectively and professionally. Behavioural stability should not be conflated with rigidity in cognitive or emotional style; it is more closely aligned with the ability to be flexible within a set of professional and ethical parameters.
Level 3 <i>Potential adjustments</i>	Any adjustments must support stable, effective and professional behaviour in both academic and clinical settings. Any adjustments must not compromise the safety or security of clients, organizations or colleagues, and further, must not compromise any codes, guidelines, policies or regulation of UNSW, the placement organization, or Psychology Board of Australia.
Level 4 <i>Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement</i>	Being receptive and responding appropriately to constructive feedback, and having a strong tolerance for scrutiny and uncertainty. Demonstrating the ability to managing one's own emotional state in order to be able to develop and maintain an appropriate relationship with a diverse range of clients. Ability to manage conflicts to maintain work relationships with colleagues, within and between organizations

3. Legal

Level 1 <i>Definition/description</i>	Clinical neuropsychology practice is mandated by specific legislation to enable the safe delivery of care. Student must be able to demonstrate knowledge of, and compliance with relevant laws and professional regulations throughout their academic and professional placement activities
Level 2 <i>Rationale</i>	Knowledge, understanding and compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements are necessary pre-requisites to placements in order to reduce the risk of harm to self and others. Compliance with these regulations and the law ensures that students are both responsible and accountable for their practice
Level 3 <i>Potential adjustments</i>	Adjustments must be consistent with legal and regulatory requirements. Any adjustments must not compromise the safety or security of clients, organizations or colleagues, and further, must not compromise any codes, guidelines, policies or regulation of UNSW, the placement organization, or Psychology Board of Australia.
Level 4 <i>Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement</i>	Complying with legal requirements regarding all aspects of practice. Complying with the requirement for registration with the Australian Health Professional Registration Authority (AHPRA). Seeking supervision or guidance if ethical or professional issues arise throughout their professional program.

4. Communication (verbal, non-verbal and written communication)

Level 1

Definition/description

Verbal:

Effective and efficient verbal communication, in English, is an essential requirement to provide safe delivery of psychological care. While psychological competency in another language (the competency to easily translate complex psychological terminology to another language from English) is advantageous, it is recognized that most psychological services are provided in English. Students must be able to demonstrate:

- The ability to understand and respond to verbal communication accurately, appropriately and in a timely manner.
- The ability to provide clear information in the context of a situation.
- Timely clear feedback and reporting.
- The ability to communicate in group settings.

Non-verbal:

Effective non-verbal communication is fundamental to psychological practice. Non-verbal communication needs to be respectful, clear, attentive, empathic, honest and non-judgmental, and there also needs to be the ability to observe it in others. Students should be able to demonstrate:

- The capacity to recognise, interpret and respond appropriately to behavioural cues.
- Consistent and appropriate awareness of own behaviours.
- Sensitivity to individual and cultural differences.

Written:

Effective written communication is a fundamental responsibility with professional and legal ramifications. Students must demonstrate capacity to construct coherent written communication appropriate to the circumstances which are completed in a timely manner.

Level 2

Rationale

Verbal:

The practice of psychology depends on effective verbal communication with clients and colleagues. The speed and accuracy of communication may be critical for individual safety or treatment.

Non-verbal:

The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues assists with building a working relationship with people, and gaining their trust and respect in academic and professional relationships. Displaying consistent and appropriate facial expressions, eye contact, being mindful of space, pacing, body movements and gestures promotes trust in academic and professional relationships. Being sensitive to individual and cultural differences demonstrates respect and empathy, and permits the development of working relationships with clients. The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues is essential for safe and effective observation of clients' symptoms and reactions as part of their assessment and treatment.

Written:

Construction of written assignments to reflect the required academic standards are necessary to convey knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter for professional practice. Accurate, timely, effective written communication for a range of purposes and audiences is vital to provide consistent and safe client care.

Level 3 <i>Potential adjustments</i>	Verbal: Any adjustment must address ability to maintain effective, timely, clear and accurate communication to ensure safety. Non-Verbal: Any adjustment must maintain the ability to recognise, interpret and respond to non-verbal cues as well as initiation of effective non-verbal communication in a timely and appropriate manner. Written: Any adjustment must not compromise or impede student's ability to demonstrate the minimum acceptable level of knowledge and cognitive skill required to practice safely and must not compromise the necessary standards of clarity, accuracy, efficiency and accessibility to ensure effective recording and transmission of information in both academic and clinical settings.
Level 4 <i>Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement</i>	Verbal: • Collecting and collating information from clients by asking relevant questions during assessments. • Explaining an assessment or treatment plan concisely to a client. • Discussing the client's progress or results with other professionals and caregivers. • Participating in group projects and collaborations with other students. Non-Verbal: • Recognising and responding to non-verbal cues indicating a change in the emotional state of a client. • Recognising and responding to non-verbal cues in classroom situations. Written: • Constructing an essay or written case report to required academic standards including appropriate referencing of sources. • Preparing a psychological assessment report which is appropriate to the purpose and audience, and completed in a timely manner.

5. Cognition: Knowledge of theory and cognitive skills, literacy, and numeracy

Level 1 <i>Definition/description</i>	Knowledge and Cognitive Skill: Consistent and effective knowledge and cognitive skills must be demonstrated to undertake safe and competent practice. Student demonstrates the capacity to locate, process, integrate, and implement appropriate and relevant information to practice. Literacy: Competent literacy skills are essential to permit safe and effective practice of clinical neuropsychology during placements. Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to accurately acquire information and convey appropriate, effective messages; the ability to read and comprehend a range of literature and information; the capacity to understand and implement academic conventions to construct written text in a scholarly manner.
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	Numeracy: Competent and accurate numeracy skills are essential to provide safe and effective demonstration of psychology practice skills. Students must demonstrate the ability to interpret and correctly apply numerical data, measurement and numerical criteria in the execution of psychological assessments or other 'scoring type' tasks while on placement and in assessment tasks.
Level 2 <i>Rationale</i>	Knowledge and Cognitive Skills: Satisfactory performance in academic work and on placements requires identifying and accurately extracting and understanding information from a range of sources, which must also be applied appropriately. Literacy: The ability to acquire information and to accurately convey messages is fundamental to ensure safe and effective assessment, treatment and delivery of care. The ability to read, decode, interpret and comprehend multiple sources of information is fundamental for safe and effective conduct during placements. Numeracy: Neuropsychological practice relies heavily on collecting data in a numerical form, for example psychometric assessments or routine outcome monitoring data. Students must be able to accurately record and manage numerical data and to interpret their findings.
Level 3 <i>Potential adjustments</i>	Knowledge and Cognitive Skills: Any adjustment must not compromise or impede the student's ability to demonstrate the minimum acceptable level of knowledge and cognitive skill required to practice safely. Literacy: Any adjustment must maintain the ability to effectively acquire, comprehend, apply and communicate accurate information. Numeracy: Any adjustment must not compromise or impede student's ability to demonstrate the minimum acceptable level of capacity to manage and interpret numerical data.
Level 4 <i>Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement</i>	Knowledge and Cognitive Skills: Ability to apply academic knowledge to practice during placements, for example through developing and testing hypotheses, developing assessment and intervention plans and then conducting individual sessions for clients based upon this. Literacy: Conveying a spoken message accurately and effectively in a clinical setting during placements. Paraphrasing, summarising and referencing in accordance with the American Psychological Association Publication Manual conventions. Producing accurate, concise and clear documentation while on placement in the clinical setting which meets legal and professional requirements Numeracy: Being able to accurately score and interpret a standardised psychological test on placement.

6. Relational Skills

Level 1 <i>Definition/description</i>	Clinical neuropsychology practice requires the ability to make and maintain strong relationships with a wide range of clients, often under stressful circumstances. Students are required to undertake course, placement and other activities in mixed gender environments which reflect the Australian work context. Students must demonstrate the ability to attain and maintain a working relationship with clients; the ability to demonstrate common factors in therapy (including the ability to engage in effective counselling skills with accurate empathy)
Level 2 <i>Rationale</i>	Highly developed relational skills (common factors) are a cornerstone of effective therapeutic relationships that permit effective assessment and intervention
Level 3 <i>Potential adjustments</i>	Any adjustments must not compromise the safety or security of clients, organizations or colleagues, and further, must not compromise any codes, guidelines, policies or regulation of UNSW, the placement organization, or Psychology Board of Australia
Level 4 <i>Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement</i>	Able to effectively build a working relationship with a client in order to engage them in an assessment or intervention while on placement. Effectively managing difficulties arising in the therapeutic relationship while on placement, ability to make repair. Does not engage in splitting or triangulation within a worksite, and acts with integrity

7. Reflective Skills

Level 1 <i>Definition/description</i>	Clinical neuropsychology practice requires self-awareness and a capacity for reflectivity in order to consider the effect of one's own issues, actions, values and behaviours on practice. Student's must demonstrate the ability to accurately reflect on their professional work and the ability to accept feedback on their professional practice, reflect, and respond constructively
Level 2 <i>Rationale</i>	Effective use of supervision is a key teaching strategy in clinical neuropsychology training which requires adequate understanding of oneself in order to appropriately engage in this activity. Working with clients while on placement and understanding and responding to them requires adequate understanding of oneself and the ability to effectively manage one's reactions to situations that may arise
Level 3 <i>Potential adjustments</i>	Any adjustments for reflective skills impairments must not compromise the student's ability to demonstrate an acceptable minimum level of capacity in this area.
Level 4 <i>Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement</i>	Identifying when a clinical issue is outside one's level of competency, or when one's practice may be affected by an impairment.

8. Sustainable Performance

Level 1 <i>Definition/description</i>	Clinical neuropsychology practice requires both physical and mental performance at a consistent and sustained level to meet individual needs over time. Students must demonstrate consistent and sustained level of physical energy to complete a specific task in a timely manner and over time; the ability to perform repetitive activities with a level of concentration that ensures a capacity to focus on the activity until it is completed appropriately; the capacity to maintain consistency and quality of performance throughout the designated period of duty
Level 2 <i>Rationale</i>	Sufficient physical and mental endurance is an essential requirement needed to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide safe and effective care
Level 3 <i>Potential adjustments</i>	Any adjustments must ensure that performance can be maintained in a relatively consistent manner over a given period of time.
Level 4 <i>Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement</i>	Participating in all-day workshops, tutorials, lectures throughout the day Remaining focused and providing consistent responses over a negotiated time frame during placement. Clinical neuropsychological practice in particular often requires sustained focus during assessments Engaging in appropriate self care to ensure safe and effective delivery of service.

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(https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/ir/inherent_requirements/inherent_requirements_for_master_of_psychology_clinical_psychology).

