

# Nursing Student Inherent requirements

Inherent requirements are the essential components of a course or unit that demonstrate the abilities, knowledge and skills to achieve the core learning outcomes of the course or unit, while preserving the academic integrity of the university's learning, assessment and accreditation processes. The inherent requirements are the abilities, knowledge and skills needed to complete the course that must be met by all students.

**Students with a disability or chronic health condition may be able to have reasonable adjustments made to enable them to meet these requirements.**

Torrens University is committed to making reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning, assessment, clinical practice and other activities to enable students' to participate in their course. Reasonable adjustments must not fundamentally change the nature of the inherent requirement. Students are required to undertake activities which reflect the Australian health care context which may include mixed gender, religious and culturally diverse environments. For further information contact your Director of Academic Program.

Successfully completing the course enables you to apply for registration as a registered nurse with the [Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia \(NMBA\)](#), which is a partner board of the [Australian Health Practitioners Registration Authority \(AHPRA\)](#).

To support potential and current students' decision making, a series of inherent requirement statements has been developed. These statements specify the course requirements of the undergraduate nursing courses for student admission and progression. The statements are clustered under eight domains consisting of ethical behaviour, behavioural stability, legal, communication, cognition, sensory abilities, strength and mobility and sustainable performance.

If you are intending to enrol in an undergraduate nursing course at the School of Nursing, you should look at these inherent requirement statements and think about whether you may experience challenges in meeting these requirements.

If you think you may experience challenges for any reason including a disability or chronic health condition, you should discuss your concerns with the staff, such as the Director of Academic Program, or School Disability Coordinator or a Campus Disability Advisor. These staff can 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 other course information and NMBA publications such as [Guidelines for Mandatory Notifications](#), Professional Boundaries for Nurses and National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse.

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

The inherent requirements are made up of the following five components and domains:

- Level 1 - introduction to the inherent requirement
- Level 2 - description of the inherent requirement
- Level 3 - explanation of why this is an inherent requirement of the course
- Level 4 - the nature of any adjustments that may be made to allow you to meet the requirement
- Level 5 - examples of tasks that show you've met the requirement. These are examples only and not a comprehensive list.

There are eight domains of inherent requirements in each of the undergraduate nursing courses. Some domains have a number of sub-domains.

- Ethical behaviour
- Behavioural stability
- Legal
- Communication
- Cognition
- Sensory ability
- Strength and mobility
- Sustainable performance

### Ethical Behaviour

- 1 Nursing is a profession governed by competency standards (opens in new window), codes of ethics, professional conduct and professional boundaries where nurses are both accountable and responsible for ensuring professional behaviour in all contexts.
- 2 Student demonstrates knowledge of, and engages in ethical behaviour in practice.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement: Compliance with the standards, codes, guidelines and policies facilitates safe, competent interactions and relationships for students and/or the people with whom they engage. This supports the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of all.
- 4 **Adjustments** must ensure the standards, codes, guidelines and policies are not compromised or result in unethical behaviour. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Demonstrating appropriate behaviour with confidential information in classroom and clinical settings
  - » Demonstrate ability to reflect on ethical dilemmas and issues and take responsibility for ensuring awareness of ethical behaviour.
  - » Complying with academic and non-academic misconduct policies

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Behavioural Stability

- 1 Behavioural stability is required to function and adapt effectively and sensitively in this role.
- 2 Student demonstrates behavioural stability to work constructively in a diverse and changing academic and clinical environment.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Behavioural stability is required to work individually and in teams in changing and unpredictable environments. Nursing students will be exposed to emergency situations and human suffering and will be required to have behavioural stability to manage these events
- 4 Adjustments must support stable, effective and professional behaviour in both academic and clinical settings. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Being receptive and responding appropriately to constructive feedback
  - » Coping with own emotions and behaviour effectively when dealing with individuals in the clinical setting

### Legal

- 1 Nursing practice is mandated by legislation to enable the safe delivery of care.
- 2 Student demonstrates knowledge and compliance with Australian Law, professional regulations and scope of practice.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Knowledge, understanding, and compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements are necessary pre-requisites to clinical placements in order to reduce the risk of harm to self and others
  - » Compliance with these professional regulations and the Australian Law ensures that students are both responsible and accountable for their practice
- 4 Adjustments must be consistent with legislative and regulatory requirements. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Complying with the requirement for student registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)
  - » Complying with relevant child protection and safety legislation

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Communication

This course requires effective, verbal, non-verbal and written communication skills.

#### Verbal:

- 1 Effective verbal communication, in English, is an essential requirement to provide safe delivery of care.
- 2 Student demonstrates:
  - » Sensitivity to individual and/or cultural differences
  - » The ability to understand and respond to verbal communication accurately, appropriately and in a timely manner
  - » The ability to provide clear instructions in the context of the situation
  - » Timely clear feedback and reporting
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Communicating in a way that displays respect and empathy to others and develops trusting relationships
  - » Communication may be restricted to verbal because of physical limitations of the individual (e.g. injury, disease or congenital conditions)
  - » Speed and interactivity of communication may be critical for individual safety or treatment
  - » Timely, accurate and effective delivery of instructions is critical to individual safety, treatment and management
- 4 Adjustments must address effectiveness, timeliness, clarity and accuracy issues to ensure safety and appropriate care. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Participating in tutorial, simulation and clinical discussions
  - » Responding appropriately to a care request in the clinical environment

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Non-verbal

- 1 Effective non-verbal communication is fundamental to nursing and needs to be respectful, clear, attentive, empathetic and non-judgmental.

Student demonstrates:

- 2
- » The capacity to recognise, interpret and respond appropriately to behavioural cues
  - » Consistent and appropriate awareness of own behaviours
  - » Sensitivity to individual and/or cultural differences

#### **Justification of inherent requirement:**

- 3
- » The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues assists with building rapport 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, time boundaries and body movements and gestures promotes trust in academic and professional relationships
  - » Being sensitive to individual and/or cultural differences displays respect and empathy to others and develops trusting relationships
  - » The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues is essential for the safe and effective observation of patient symptoms and reactions to facilitate the assessment and treatment of patients

- 4
- Adjustments** must enable the recognition, initiation of or appropriate response to effective non-verbal communication in a timely and appropriate manner. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.

#### **Exemplars:**

- 5
- » Recognising and responding appropriately in classroom situations
  - » Recognising and responding appropriately to cues in the clinical environment

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Written

**1** Effective written communication, in English, is a fundamental nursing responsibility with professional and legal ramifications.

**2** Student demonstrates the capacity to construct coherent written communication appropriate to the circumstances.

**Justification of inherent requirement:**

**3**

- » Construction of written text based assessment tasks to reflect the required academic standards are necessary to convey knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter for professional practice
- » Accurate written communication, including record-keeping and patient notes, is vital to provide consistent and safe patient care

**4** **Adjustments** must meet necessary standards of clarity, accuracy and accessibility to ensure effective recording and transmission of information in both academic and clinical settings. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.

**Exemplars:**

**5**

- » Constructing an essay to academic standards
- » Constructing a nursing report in a timely manner that meets professional standards

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Cognition

This course requires knowledge of theory and the skills of cognition, literacy and numeracy.

#### Knowledge and cognitive skills

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- 1** Consistent knowledge and effective cognitive skills must be demonstrated to provide safe and competent nursing care.

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Student demonstrates:

- 2**
- » The capacity to locate appropriate and relevant information
  - » The ability to process information relevant to practice
  - » The ability to integrate and implement knowledge in practice

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**Justification of inherent requirement:**

- 3**
- » Safe and effective delivery of nursing care is based on comprehensive knowledge that must be sourced, understood and applied appropriately

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- 4** **Adjustments** must ensure that a clear demonstration of knowledge and cognitive skills is not compromised or impeded. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.

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**Exemplars:**

- 5**
- » Ability to conceptualise and use appropriate knowledge in response to academic assessment items
  - » Applying knowledge of policy and procedures in the clinical setting

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Literacy (language)

- 1** Competent literacy skills are essential to provide safe and effective delivery of care.

Student demonstrates:

- 2**
- » The ability to acquire information and accurately 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

**Justification of inherent requirement:**

- 3**
- » 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 the safe and effective delivery of nursing care

- 4** **Adjustments** must demonstrate a capacity to effectively acquire, comprehend, apply and communicate accurate information. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.

**Exemplars:**

- 5**
- » Demonstrates the ability to listen to information
  - » Demonstrates the ability to convey a spoken message accurately
  - » Demonstrates ability to paraphrase, summarise and reference in accordance with appropriate academic conventions
  - » Demonstrates accurate, concise and clear nursing documentation



## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Numeracy

- 1 Competent and accurate numeracy skills are essential for safe and effective care.
- 2 Student demonstrates the ability to interpret and correctly apply data, measurements and numerical criteria.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Competent application of numeracy skills is essential in nursing to facilitate the safe and effective delivery of nursing care
- 4 Adjustments must demonstrate a capacity to interpret and apply concepts and processes appropriately in a timely, accurate and effective manner. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Performing accurate drug calculations
  - » Demonstrating accurate recording on a fluid balance chart

### Sensory ability

This course requires adequate visual, auditory and tactile abilities.

#### Visual

- 1 Adequate visual acuity is required to provide safe and effective nursing care.
- 2 Student demonstrates sufficient visual acuity to perform the required range of skills.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Sufficient visual acuity is necessary to demonstrate the required range of skills, tasks and assessments to maintain consistent, accurate and safe care of self and to others
  - » Visual observations, examination and assessment are fundamental to safe and effective nursing practice
- 4 Adjustments must address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in clinical practice. Any strategies to address the effects of the vision impairment must be effective, consistent and not compromise treatment or safety. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
5. Exemplars:
  - » Accurately drawing up medication to administer
  - » Observing and detecting subtle changes in wounds

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Auditory

- 1 Auditory ability is required to provide safe and effective nursing care.
- 2 Student demonstrates sufficient aural function to undertake the required range of skills.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Sufficient auditory ability is necessary to monitor, assess and manage an individual's health needs consistently and accurately
  - » Auditory assessments and observations are fundamental to safe and effective nursing practice
- 4 Adjustments must address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in clinical practice. Any strategies to address the effects of the hearing loss must be effective, consistent and not compromise treatment or safety. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Accurately undertaking a blood pressure measurement by auscultation
  - » Detecting care request by activation of call bell or calls for help

### Tactile

- 1 Sufficient tactile ability is required to perform competent and safe nursing care.
- 2 Student demonstrates adequate tactile function sufficient to undertake the required range of skills and assessments.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Sufficient tactile ability is necessary to monitor, assess and detect patients' physical characteristics and act on any abnormalities detected to provide thorough nursing care
  - » Tactile assessments and observations are fundamental to safe and effective nursing practice
- 4 Adjustments must have the capacity to make effective assessments of physical characteristics and abnormalities within safe time frames. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Detecting any changes in circulation observations e.g. temperature and pulse palpation
  - » Conducting a physical assessment and detecting any anatomical abnormalities

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Strength and mobility

This course requires strength and mobility involving fine and gross motor skills.

#### Gross motor

- 1 Nursing involves physical demands and requires gross motor function.
- 2 Student demonstrates the ability to perform gross motor skills to function within scope of practice.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Sufficient gross motor skills are necessary to perform, coordinate and prioritise care. Tasks that involve gross motor skills include lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling, standing, twisting and bending. Students must be able to demonstrate and perform these tasks consistently and safely to reduce the risk of harm to self and others
- 4 Adjustments should facilitate functional effectiveness, safety of self and others and a capacity to provide appropriate care. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Maintaining balance while safely mobilising and transferring individuals or resources
  - » Able to safely retrieve and utilise stock and equipment

#### Fine motor

- 1 Nursing is a profession that requires manual dexterity and fine motor skills.
- 2 Student demonstrates the ability to use fine motor skills to provide safe effective care.
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Sufficient fine motor skills are necessary to perform, coordinate and prioritise care. Tasks that involve fine motor skills include being able to grasp, press, push, turn, squeeze and manipulate various objects and individuals. Students must be able to demonstrate and perform these tasks consistently and safely to reduce the risk of harm to self and others
- 4 Adjustments should facilitate functional effectiveness, safety to self and others and a capacity to provide appropriate care. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Performing an aseptic wound dressing
  - » Able to prime, accurately insert and set prescribed rate on an infusion device

## Nursing Student Inherent Requirements

### Sustainable performance

- 1 Nursing practice requires both physical and mental performance at a consistent and sustained level.
- 2 Student demonstrates:
  - » 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 time
- 3 Justification of inherent requirement:
  - » Sufficient physical and mental endurance is an essential requirement needed to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide safe and effective care
- 4 Adjustments must ensure that performance is consistent and sustained over a given period. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Campus Disability Advisor.
- 5 Exemplars:
  - » Participating in tutorials, lectures, skills
  - » Provide consistent care over a negotiated time frame

\*Developed from: Johnson, A., Allan, T., Phillips, K., Azzopardi, T., Dickson, C., Goldsmith, M & Hengstberger-Sims, C. (2011). Inherent Requirements of Nursing Education (IRONE), Western Sydney University School of Nursing & Midwifery and Student Equity & Disability Services

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