

Inherent Requirements for Medicine

Medicine is a physically and mentally challenging profession where practitioners are often required to put the interest of their patients over their own. This results in the need to commit to a lifetime of service with dedication to continuous learning. The Charles Sturt University and Western Sydney University Joint Program in Medicine is a five-year undergraduate degree which aims to help candidates develop necessary skills for practice of medicine. While medical education will provide candidates with the foundation of knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviours required to practice medicine, it is recognised that there are certain inherent requirements that are necessary to progress through the curriculum and ultimately receive the Doctor of Medicine (MD). There is a wide range of capabilities and attributes that are required of doctors, some of which are inherent in a person, and some that are learnt and further developed during their medical training and lifelong learning as a medical practitioner.

Charles Sturt University strongly supports the right of all people to pursue a medical course at the School of Rural Medicine to achieve their potential and career objectives. The School of Rural Medicine is committed to making reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning, assessment, clinical practice and other activities to address the impact of students' disabilities so that they are able to participate in their course.

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 Charles Sturt University and Western Sydney University Joint Program in Medicine 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. Many of the activities associated with the professional practice of a medical practitioner 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 clinical placement activities in mixed gender environments which reflect the Australian health care context. Registration as a Student Medical Practitioner with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is essential for undertaking clinical placements.

The Charles Sturt University and Western Sydney University Joint Program in Medicine is a five year undergraduate degree which is an approved program of study under Medical Board of Australia (MBA) accreditation requirements. Students who meet the course requirements of the medical program are then eligible to apply for registration as a medical practitioner with the Medical Board of Australia.

How to read the inherent requirement statements

If you are intending to enrol in the medical course at the School of Rural Medicine 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 related to your disability, chronic health condition or any other reason and have questions or concerns about your capability to undertake and complete a medical program, you should discuss your concerns with the Charles Sturt University Disability Services Team or the Course Director and the School of Rural Medicine team. Staff can work collaboratively with you to determine reasonable adjustments to assist you to meet the Inherent

Requirements. It needs to be recognised that there will be occasions where students with a disability will not be able to meet the requirements of the program, even with reasonable adjustments. Steps will be taken by School of Rural Medicine staff to provide guidance on other study options available.

These inherent requirements should be read in conjunction with other course information and Medical Board of Australia (MBA) publications such as Guidelines for Mandatory Notifications and Good Medical Practice – A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia.

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

- Level 1 - introduction to the inherent requirement
- Level 2 - description of what the inherent requirement is
- 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 things you must be able to do to show you've met the requirement

There are eight domains of inherent requirements in the Doctor of Medicine (MD). Some domains have a number of sub-domains.

1. Ethical behaviour
2. Behavioural stability
3. Legal
4. Communication
5. Cognition
6. Sensory abilities
7. Strength & mobility
8. Sustainable performance

Eight Domains in Doctor of Medicine (MD) including Sub-Domains

These inherent requirements apply to the following course: Doctor of Medicine. Noting some domains have sub-domains.

Domain	Inherent requirement statements	Justification of inherent requirement	Adjustments	Exemplars
Ethical behaviour	<p>Medicine is a profession governed by codes, guidelines and policies where practitioners are both accountable and responsible for ensuring professional behaviour in all contexts.</p> <p>Student demonstrates knowledge of, and engages in ethical behaviour in practice.</p>	<p>Compliance with the codes, guidelines and policies facilitates safe, competent interactions and relationships for students and/or the people they engage with. This ensures the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of the individual is not placed at risk.</p>	<p>Adjustments must not compromise codes, guidelines and policies or result in unethical behaviour.</p>	<p>Complying with academic and non-academic misconduct policies.</p> <p>Demonstrating appropriate behaviour with confidential information in classroom and clinical settings.</p> <p>Demonstrate respect for staff, colleagues, patients and carers.</p> <p>Ability to work effectively in teams.</p>
Behavioural stability	<p>Behavioural stability is required to function and adapt effectively and sensitively in a demanding role.</p> <p>Student demonstrates behavioural stability to work constructively in a diverse and changing academic and clinical environment.</p> <p>Monitor their own health and behaviour and seek help when required.</p>	<p>Behavioural stability is required to work individually and in teams in changing and unpredictable environments. Medical students will be exposed to emergency situations and human suffering and will be required to have behavioural stability to manage these events objectively and professionally.</p>	<p>Adjustments must support stable, effective and professional behaviour in both academic and clinical settings.</p>	<p>Being receptive and responding appropriately to constructive feedback.</p> <p>Coping with own emotions & behaviour effectively when dealing with individuals in the clinical setting.</p> <p>Coping with own emotions and behaviour effectively when dealing with multiple demands in assessment and completing work</p> <p>Demonstrating professional responsibility to ensure self-care of any physical and mental health issues.</p>
Legal	<p>Medical practice is mandated by specific legislation to enable the safe delivery of care.</p> <p>Student demonstrates knowledge and compliance with Australian Law, professional regulations and scope of practice.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Compliance with these professional regulations and the Australian Law ensures that students are both responsible and accountable for their practice.</p>	<p>Adjustments must be consistent with legislative and regulatory requirements.</p>	<p>Responding to the requirement for student registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).</p> <p>Complying with relevant child protection and safety legislation.</p> <p>Complying to legal requirements for privacy of patient information including on-line environment and clinical photography</p>

Domain	Inherent requirement statements	Justification of inherent requirement	Adjustments	Exemplars
Communication - Verbal (sub-domain 1)	<p>Effective and efficient verbal communication, in English, is an essential requirement to provide safe delivery of care.</p> <p>Student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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; and Timely clear feedback and reporting. 	<p>Adequate communication with patients is essential to the diagnosis and management process in medicine.</p> <p>Communication may be restricted to verbal because of physical limitations of the individual (e.g. injury, disease or congenital conditions).</p> <p>Speed and interactivity of communication may be critical for patient safety or treatment.</p> <p>Timely, accurate and effective delivery of instructions is critical to patient safety, treatment and management.</p>	<p>Adjustments for impaired verbal communication must address effectiveness, timeliness, clarity and accuracy issues to ensure patient safety.</p>	<p>Participating in tutorial, simulation and clinical discussions.</p> <p>Responding appropriately to a care request in the clinical environment.</p>
Communication - Non-verbal (sub-domain 2)	<p>Effective non-verbal communication is fundamental to medicine and needs to be respectful, clear, attentive, empathetic, honest and non-judgemental.</p> <p>Student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The capacity to recognise, interpret and respond appropriately to behavioural cues; Consistent and appropriate awareness of own behaviours; and Sensitivity to individual differences. 	<p>The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues assists with building a rapport with people and gaining their trust and respect in academic and professional relationships.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Being sensitive to individual differences displays respect and empathy to others and develops trusting relationships.</p> <p>The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues is essential for safe and effective observation of patient symptoms and reactions to facilitate the diagnosis and treatment of patients.</p>	<p>Adjustments must maintain the capacity to recognise, respond to or initiate effective non-verbal communication or its equivalent in a timely and appropriate manner.</p>	<p>Recognising and responding appropriately in classroom situations.</p> <p>Recognising and responding appropriately to cues in the clinical environment.</p> <p>Demonstrate respectful attitudes to University staff, fellow students, colleagues patients and carers</p>
Communication – Written (sub-domain 3)	<p>Effective written communication is a fundamental medical responsibility with professional and legal ramifications.</p> <p>Student demonstrates capacity to construct coherent written communication appropriate to the circumstances.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Adjustments must meet necessary standards of clarity, accuracy, accessibility, transferability and portability to ensure effective recording and transmission of information in both academic and clinical settings.</p>	<p>Constructing an essay to academic standards.</p> <p>Constructing medical documentation that meets professional standards and expectations</p>

Domain	Inherent requirement statements	Justification of inherent requirement	Adjustments	Exemplars
		Accurate written communication, including record keeping and patient notes, is vital to provide consistent and safe patient care.		
Cognition – Knowledge and cognitive skills <i>(sub-domain 1)</i>	<p>Consistent and effective knowledge and cognitive skills must be demonstrated to provide safe and competent medical care.</p> <p>Student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity to locate appropriate and relevant information; Ability to process information relevant to practice; and Ability to integrate and implement knowledge in practice. 	Safe and effective delivery of medical care is based on comprehensive knowledge that must be sourced, understood and applied appropriately.	Adjustments must ensure that a clear demonstration of knowledge and cognitive skills is not compromised or impeded.	<p>Ability to conceptualise and use appropriate knowledge in response to academic assessment items.</p> <p>Appropriately applying knowledge of policy and procedures in the clinical setting.</p> <p>Demonstration of clinical reasoning skills in stressful and time pressured environments to ensure safe patient care.</p>
Cognition - Literacy (language) <i>(sub-domain 2)</i>	<p>Competent literacy skills are essential to provide safe and effective delivery of medical care.</p> <p>Student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to accurately acquire information and convey appropriate, effective messages; Ability to read and comprehend a range of literature and information; and The capacity to understand and implement academic conventions to construct written text in a scholarly manner. 	<p>The ability to acquire information and to accurately convey messages is fundamental to ensure safe and effective assessment, diagnosis, treatment and delivery of care.</p> <p>The ability to read, decode, interpret and comprehend multiple sources of information is fundamental for safe and effective delivery of medical care.</p>	Adjustments to address literacy issues must meet accuracy, clarity and availability requirements and demonstrate a capacity to effectively comprehend, apply and communicate information.	<p>Conveying a spoken message accurately and effectively in a clinical setting.</p> <p>Paraphrasing, summarising and referencing in accordance with appropriate academic conventions in written assignments.</p> <p>Producing accurate, concise and clear medical documentation which meets legal requirements.</p> <p>Demonstrate effective clinical handover and ability to convey important information to peers and supervisors to ensure safe patient care.</p>
Cognition – Numeracy <i>(sub-domain 3)</i>	<p>Competent and accurate numeracy skills are essential for safe and effective patient care.</p> <p>Student interprets and correctly applies data, measurements and numerical criteria.</p>	Competent application of numeracy skills is essential in medicine to facilitate the safe and effective delivery of medical care.	Adjustments must demonstrate a capacity to interpret and apply concepts and processes appropriately in a timely, accurate and effective manner.	<p>Performing accurate drug calculations.</p> <p>Demonstrate accurate interpretation of patient's fluid balance status.</p>
Sensory abilities – Visual <i>(sub-domain 1)</i>	<p>Adequate visual acuity is required to provide safe and effective medical care.</p> <p>Student demonstrates sufficient visual acuity to perform the required range of skills.</p>	Sufficient visual acuity is necessary to demonstrate the required range of skills, through the performance of relevant tasks and assessments whilst maintaining consistent, accurate and safe care to self and others.	Adjustments must address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in clinical practice. Any strategies to address the effects of a Vision Impairment must be effective,	<p>Accurately drawing up medication to administer.</p> <p>Observing and detecting subtle changes in patient's response to medical procedures.</p>

Domain	Inherent requirement statements	Justification of inherent requirement	Adjustments	Exemplars
		Visual observations, examination and assessment are fundamental to safe and effective medical practice.	consistent and not compromise treatment or safety	
Sensory abilities – Auditory <i>(sub-domain 2)</i>	Adequate auditory ability is required to provide effective and safe medical care. Student demonstrates sufficient aural function to undertake the required range of tasks.	Sufficient auditory ability is necessary to monitor, assess and manage individual health needs consistently and accurately. Auditory assessments and observations are fundamental to safe and effective medical practice.	Adjustments must address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in clinical practice. Any strategies to address the effects of Hearing Impairment must be effective, consistent and not compromise treatment or safety.	Accurately detecting heart sounds by auscultation. Ability to effectively hear patients, staff and colleagues. Ability to work effectively in an emergency situation
Sensory abilities – Tactile <i>(sub-domain 3)</i>	Sufficient tactile ability is required to perform competent and safe medical care. Student demonstrates sufficient tactile function to undertake the required range of skills and assessments.	Sufficient tactile ability is necessary to monitor, assess and detect patients' physical characteristics and act on any abnormalities detected to provide safe and appropriate medical care. Tactile assessments and observations are fundamental to safe and effective medical practice.	Adjustments must have the capacity to make effective assessments of physical characteristics and abnormalities within safe time frames.	Detecting any changes in circulation observations e.g. temperature and pulse palpation. Conducting a physical examination and detect any pathological abnormalities.
Strength and mobility – Gross motor <i>(sub-domain 1)</i>	Utilisation of appropriate gross motor skills is required in medicine to undertake appropriate clinical care. Student demonstrates the ability to perform gross motor skills to function within scope of practice.	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.	Adjustments must facilitate functional effectiveness, safety of self and others and a capacity to provide appropriate care.	Undertaking effective basic life support and assisting in the management of medical emergencies. Performing a physical assessment such as percussion, palpation of body parts and examination.
Strength and mobility – Fine motor <i>(sub-domain 2)</i>	Medicine is a profession that requires manual dexterity and possession of fine motor skills and is fundamental in providing adequate clinical care. Student demonstrates the ability to use fine motor skills to provide safe effective diagnosis, treatment and clinical care.	Sufficient fine motor skills are necessary to perform, coordinate and prioritise care. Tasks that include 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.	Adjustments must facilitate functional effectiveness, safety to self and others and a capacity to provide appropriate care.	Manipulating instruments in diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Performing treatment techniques e.g. cannulation, venepuncture, suturing.
Sustainable performance	Medical practice requires both physical and mental performance at a consistent and sustained level to meet individual needs over time. Student demonstrates:	Sufficient physical and mental endurance is an essential requirement needed to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide safe and effective care without compromise.	Adjustments must ensure that performance is consistent and sustained over a given period.	Participating in tutorials, lectures, skills throughout the day. Providing consistent care over a negotiated time frame. Demonstrating time management skills for personal and professional life.

Domain	Inherent requirement statements	Justification of inherent requirement	Adjustments	Exemplars
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; and • The capacity to maintain consistency and quality of performance throughout the designated period of duty. • The ability to undertake the course as a full time student. 			<p>Ability to maintain concentration and prioritising skills with multiple requirements in the academic and clinical environment</p>

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

* Acknowledgement August 2021 - Additions to the Inherent Requirements are based from the Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand, Inclusive Medical Education: Guidance on Medical Program applicants and students with a disability, April 2021.

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