



Doctor of Pharmacy - Statement of Inherent Requirements

School	Allied Health (SAH)
Departments	Department of Pharmacy
Courses	Postgraduate Course Doctor of Pharmacy

All students in the UWA Doctor of Pharmacy program must possess the cognitive, ethical, physical and mental capabilities required to participate in the intensive curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence at graduation required by The University of Western Australia. Pharmacy programs provide graduates with the knowledge, skills and attributes required to practice Pharmacy in Australia. This document is prepared with direct references to the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC)¹ and the Pharmacy Board of Australia (PBA), which require that all Pharmacy graduates meet the prescribed professional competencies.

Before being offered a place into the UWA Pharmacy program, students with existing disability may be asked to provide independent medical and/or clinical assessments of the conditions, on the possible impact of successfully completing the program. The reports will be treated in confidence with access by only those on the Admissions Committee and relevant SAH management team (according to UWA governance and procedures). UWA will undertake reasonable steps to minimise barriers towards the successful completion of the Pharmacy program and make reasonable adjustments through UniAccess to enable students' participation in the learning activities over the course of the program. It is a requirement of the program that students will regularly perform clinical procedures on each other over the duration of their study.

All enrolled students need to participate fully in all online and physical learning activities and to successfully fulfil the rigorous assessment (didactic and skill-based) components of the course. UWA is committed to making reasonable adjustments for students to compensate for disability impacting participation in the program. It is important that adjustments for students do not prevent them from providing a primary duty of care to the patients in the clinical training environment.

UWA has enacted the following eight inherent requirements³⁻⁷ that an enrolled student must comply with:

1. Ethical Behaviour
2. Legal Compliance
3. Communication Skills
4. Behavioural Stability
5. Motor Skills (Mobility, Gross and Fine)
6. Sensory Skills
7. Cognitive Skills
8. Sustainable Performance

It is important to note that registration to practise as a pharmacist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) and Pharmacy Board of Australia requires practitioners to declare any impairments that may affect their ability to practise. An impairment: physical or mental impairment, disability, condition or disorder (including substance abuse or dependence), that detrimentally affects or is likely to detrimentally affect a registered health practitioner's capacity to safely practise the profession or a student's capacity to undertake clinical training. Having an impairment will not necessarily prevent registration and practice however Ahpra do need to know how the impairment is managed and may require documentation from treating health practitioners. Further information is available on the Ahpra website.

1. Ethical and Professional Behaviour

Inherent Requirement

- Displaying ethical and professional behaviour in academic and professional settings, complying with relevant standards and codes of ethics of the health care profession.
 - a. Pharmaceutical Society of Australia: Code of Ethics
 - b. Advanced Pharmacy Australia: Code of Ethics
 - c. Pharmacy Board of Australia: Code of Conduct for Pharmacists

Rationale

- Compliance with ethical and professional behaviour in academic and professional settings will bring about a safe and conducive learning environment for interactions between students and UWA academic and professional staff. This supports the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of everyone.
- Ethical and professional behavior is required when undertaking clinical placements in a variety of practice settings where students will interact directly with healthcare professionals and patients.

Examples

- Demonstrate ethical behaviour with proper and discreet communication of patient clinical data in the academic settings and clinical training, and extend the confidentiality beyond the UWA clinical settings.
- Demonstrate the use of appropriate and ethical management skills for the wellbeing of patients.
- Complying with relevant registration, scope of practice and legislation requirements.
- Coping with own emotions and behaving professionally when exposed to difficult, unpredictable and challenging educational and clinical situations.
- Responding appropriately to feedback and having appropriate insight and judgment into own abilities, limitations and health.

2. Legal Compliance

Inherent Requirement

- Legal compliance with Australian and Western Australian Law, UWA Legislative instruments, professional regulations and/or scope of practice relevant to the profession.

Rationale

- Recognising the legal framework in the knowledge, understanding and compliance with Australian and WA Law, and professional regulations, is essential towards the clinical training of effective, professional, responsible and accountable pharmacists, and fulfilling the legislated national law and professional registration requirements. For example,
 - a. Health Practitioner Regulation National Law 2010 (WA)
 - b. Compliance with the UWA Information Privacy Policy and Guidelines, which complies with Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles.
 - c. UWA (Student Conduct) Rules
 - d. Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists²
 - e. Pharmacy Board of Australia standards

Examples

- Understand the relevance of privacy and confidential information protection about patients under the legal requirements.
- Having the necessary skills to communicate about the need to obtain informed consent for the care to be delivered to vulnerable and young patients.
- Know the legislative obligations to practice within the Pharmacy standards of competence and its scope of practice.
- Understand the continuing professional development requirements in order to maintain professional registration with Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency (Ahpra).

3. Communication Skills

A. Expressive Communication Skills

Inherent Requirement

- Meeting the standard required to communicate effectively, that provides clear, coherent and professional knowledge sharing and outward delivery of person-centric clinical information appropriate to the audience.

Rationale

- Competency in expressive communication skills in academic learning and clinical settings is required to enable transparent and effective transfer of knowledge and information between students, academics, patients and health care professionals, resulting in trusting relationships. Communication skills can be in verbal, non-verbal or written formats.

Examples

- Demonstrate the ability for students to deliver coherent and logical communication (verbal, non-verbal or written) to academics required for the volume of learning.
- Demonstrate the ability for students to synthesize and articulate a summary of a patient's clinical findings.
- Actively participate in the learning environment with considered and informed discussions e.g. tutorials, team-based learning, seminars on differential diagnosis of a case.

B. Receptive Language Skills

Inherent Requirement

- Meeting the standard required to internally evaluate abstract and conceptual meaning in English (with the elements of critical thinking skills), that provides a coherent understanding of knowledge received and making appropriate clinical decisions.

Rationale

- Competency in receptive communication skills in academic learning and clinical settings is required to enable effective reception of knowledge and information, and to provide suitable interpretations to the transferred knowledge and information. Communication skills can be in verbal, non-verbal or written formats.

Examples

- Ability to understand and interpret information presented in clinical practice such as handwritten notes, test results, charts and computerised outputs.
- Ability to comprehend spoken English delivered at conversational speed (including in non-clinical settings such as social and school environments).
- Ability to comprehend and contribute during tutorial, team-based learning, laboratory, seminar, clinical and placement discussions.

C. Interpersonal Communication Skills

Inherent Requirement

- Using verbal, non-verbal or written formats to communicate with others, including the ability to listen, display empathy, show respect, build rapport and gain trust to ensure meaningful and effective engagements in clinical and non-clinical settings.

Rationale

- Strong interpersonal communication skills in academic learning and clinical settings are necessary to provide a trusting and highly effective working environment. Communication skills can be in verbal, non-verbal or written formats.

Examples

- Providing the necessary respectful communications with people of different gender, sexual orientations and age, and from diverse cultural, language, religious, socio-economic and educational backgrounds.
- Ability to develop rapport with peers, academic and professional staff conducive to effective learning and working relationships e.g. tutorials, team-based learning, group learning seminars.
- Putting into practice the learned cultural competence, displaying the sensitivity and willingness to work with others in the diverse Australian educational and clinical settings.
- Ability to ask for patients' consent for procedures that may intrude on their personal space or involve physical contact. For example, during blood pressure measurement.
- Dutifully maintaining good personal hygiene and dressing professionally in a clinical setting to promote patient confidence and comfort.
- Displaying the sensitivity towards nonverbal communication including patient distress, mood swings and posture.
- Maintaining appropriate neutral facial expression, eye contact, postures and personal space.

4. Behavioural Stability

Inherent Requirement

- Displaying flexible and adaptable behaviours to effectively manage fluid situations to maintain the required academic and professional standards and codes of conduct.

Rationale

- Recognising behavioural stability is critical in managing emotional responses and behaviour in academic and complex professional environments, particularly in situations with heightened human emotions. Healthcare providers are required to work in culturally and socially diverse settings, and to manage challenging workplaces, tight timelines in clinical appointments and difficult patients.

Examples

- Ability to be receptive and respond appropriately to feedback from patients and tutors.
- Managing own emotions and behaviour in the academic environment and clinical settings. For example, being empathetic and supportive when breaking bad news or remaining calm, open and receptive when dealing with conflicts or complaints.
- Seeking personal and professional support (e.g. mental health first aid) when needed.

5. Motor Skills (Mobility, Gross and Fine)

Inherent requirement

- Having the required dexterity and effective tactile function, freedom of joint movements, strength and mobility to safely function and practice within the scope of Pharmacy practice.

Rationale

- Pharmacy requires the mobility, gross and fine motor functions to consistently deliver timely, safe and effective services to minimise the risk of harm to self and others, especially in a clinical setting.

Examples

- Accurately read medication charts, prescriptions and related documents.
- Accurately choose and dispense medicines.
- Differentiate sounds, speech and alarms in a clinical environment.
- Use of a variety of laboratory instruments.
- Ability to administer injectable formulations in accordance with current jurisdiction-specific legislation, scope of practice and Pharmacy Board of Australia Guidelines
- Complete a written dispensing record or fill out details on the computer.
- Ability to complete clinical placements in a range of clinical settings (including regional, rural and remote) to meet the requirement to register as a pharmacist.

6. Sensory Skills

Inherent requirement

- Adequate level of sensorimotor skill requirements, including visual, auditory and tactile acuity, to physically manage patients within the Pharmacy scope of practice.

Rationale

- Pharmacy practitioners require visual, auditory and tactile acuity to consistently provide safe, efficient and effective eyecare in order to minimise the risk of harm to self and others.

Examples

- Ability to instruct, perform, observe and interpret information from a range of essential Pharmacy clinical equipment, such as blood pressure monitors, blood glucose monitors and otoscopes.

7. Cognitive Skills

Inherent Requirement

- The complex neural tasks of acquiring knowledge, process information, formulate, analyse, think critically and synthesise information to apply knowledge of the discipline, in order to meet learning outcomes and academic standards pertinent to the course.
- Cognitive skills encompass cognitive, numeracy and literacy skills.

Rationale

- Cognitive skills, including maintaining focus, memory and attention to detail, are essential elements in the acquisition, interpretation and application of knowledge (in both the academic and professional settings).

Examples

- Ability to receive, comprehend, interpret, formulate and synthesise existing and new information though the substantial volume of learning.
- For example:
 - Processing appropriate and relevant information in a timely manner.
 - Interpreting, conceptualising, integrating and implementing knowledge in academic assessment items and in clinical practice.
 - Interpreting, calculating and applying numerical data and measurements.
 - Solving complex problems from obtaining, synthesising and evaluating information from various sources in a timely manner.
 - Displaying clinical reasoning with rational and consistent thought and judgements in a timely manner.
 - Working within the scope of pharmacy practice to make the correct diagnosis, and if required, to prescribe the appropriate medicines and non-medicine options to manage the condition.
 - Making the clinical decision to refer, and/or co-manage patients, with the other health care practitioners to ensure the best outcomes for patients.
 - Engaging critical thinking skills through research projects.

8. Sustainable Performance

Inherent requirements

- The ability to consistently perform and complete given tasks in a timely manner with satisfactory (competency based) outcomes, while maintaining consistency and quality of performance.

Rationale

- Pharmacists operate within an engaging environment where physical and mental endurance is a critical success factor when performing multiple tasks in a designated period of time, with the goal of providing safe and effective care. The wellbeing of students, academic and professional staff, supervising practitioners, and patients is essential.

Examples

- Maintaining the academic focus and performing consistently over the duration of the accelerated course.
- Demonstrate the ability to complete all facets of the training requirements outlined in the UWA Pharmacy course unit outlines.
- Having the energy to perform multiple tasks with a level of concentration that ensures the capacity to focus on the activities until completion e.g. final year clinical placements.
- Managing the assigned academic and non-academic workload to deliver safe and effective eye care services in a timely manner.

Student Declaration:

I have read, acknowledge and understand the inherent requirements. I agree that I possess the abilities required for the successful completion of the UWA Doctor of Pharmacy course.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Sources of Reference

1. Australian Pharmacy Council - Accreditation Standards (2020)
2. National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (2016)
3. University of Western Australia – Doctor of Medicine (Inherent Requirements)
4. University of Canberra – Bachelor of Vision Science (Statements of Inherent Requirements)
5. University of Melbourne – Master of Optometry (Inherent Requirements)
6. Medical Deans ANZ – Inherent requirements for studying medicine in Australia and New Zealand (July 2017)
7. University of Newcastle – Inherent requirements for Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine – Joint Medical Program (JMP)