

PROGRAMME FITNESS TO PRACTISE STATEMENT PHYSIOTHERAPY PROGRAMMES

UCD Policy Definition: Fitness to practise means having the skills, knowledge, health and character necessary to undertake and complete a programme with professional practice, experiential learning or clinical work safely and effectively, fulfilling the responsibilities within the scope of practise in a chosen field.

Fitness to Practise in Physiotherapy

A student on any of the Physiotherapy programmes must be fit to practise. University College Dublin's Fitness to Practise Policy applies to the BSc Physiotherapy, MSc Physiotherapy [pre-registration], Grad Dip/MSc Sports Physiotherapy, Grad Dip/MSc Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy, Grad Dip/MSc Neuromusculoskeletal Physiotherapy, Grad Dip/MSc Healthcare Acupuncture, Grad Cert/Grad Dip/MSc Advanced Physiotherapy Studies programmes.

A guide to Fitness to Practice in these programmes has been developed using the principles of the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists Rules of Professional Conduct incorporating the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Behaviour (June 2010), and informed by the UK Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Code of Members' Professional Values and Behaviour, the UK Health Professions Council Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (2007) and the UCD Physiotherapy documentation used for academic and clinical placement settings.

Aims of the Fitness to Practise Statement:

The fitness to practise statement aims to

1. Ensure students on all of the UCD Physiotherapy undergraduate or postgraduate programmes have a clear understanding of the standards of professional attitudes and behaviour required of them throughout all aspects of their education, and are supported in their continuous attainment of these standards.
2. Ensure the well-being of any members of the public, service users and placement providers that our students have contact with during the course of their clinical placements or other learning experiences, such as research.
3. Provide a suitable framework for the effective management of Fitness to Practise issues that may arise, either prior to or during a student's programme of study.

Fitness to Practise Standards:

The following positive attitudes and behaviours are expected of students registered to any of the UCD Physiotherapy Programmes.

Personal Behaviour

Physiotherapy students demonstrate their Fitness to Practise in all aspects of their personal behaviour throughout their period of registration by behaving in a manner appropriate to their position as a student of the University studying for a qualification, the successful completion of which leads to entry to a professional body or specialist area of physiotherapy practise. Students are required to keep high standards of personal conduct and to behave with integrity and honesty at all times. Students are required to follow and obey the laws of the land and to refrain from unlawful activity at all time. As a condition of acceptance onto one of the UCD Physiotherapy programmes with a clinical placement component students must undergo and receive Garda Clearance. Relevant documentation demonstrating Garda Clearance must be lodged by the Physiotherapy student with the Physiotherapy Programme Manager. During their period of registration where a Physiotherapy student is subject to a Garda caution, allegation of criminal activity, or criminal prosecution he/she is required to notify the relevant Programme Director in writing as soon as possible and no later than seven days after they become aware of its occurrence. In the event of an alleged incident the Course Director in correspondence with the FTP Physiotherapy Subcommittee may require the Physiotherapy student to discontinue a clinical placement if applicable until such time as the issue is resolved. Failure to notify the relevant Course Director or to agree to temporarily discontinue a clinical placement while an outstanding legal issue is being resolved will result in the initiation of formal Fitness to Practise procedures.

Appearance

Physiotherapy students demonstrate their Fitness to Practise during their course of studies by maintaining a standard of appearance that will be perceived by others as professional. Students are required to follow the guidelines for standard of dress as detailed in the relevant Physiotherapy Clinical Placement Handbook and Physiotherapy Guidelines for Practical Classes. Students are required to adopt the dress code of their host organisation while on clinical placement.

Behaviour Towards Others

Physiotherapy students demonstrate their Fitness to Practise continually during their course of studies in all aspects of their behaviour towards others: members of the public, patients/clients/service users and their families, classmates and other students, research participants, University staff, Practice Tutors, other staff on placement, colleagues and employers. Students are required to treat others with due respect, courtesy, honesty, accountability, humility, fairness and impartiality and to recognise, respect and tolerate individual differences in others including gender, religious values, sexual preferences, age, disability, and cultural beliefs and values. This requires the Physiotherapy student to be open and positive towards new learning experiences and to demonstrate the ability to receive and respond to feedback in a constructive and non-defensive manner at all times. In instances where there is a concern that a Physiotherapy student is unreasonably defensive and unresponsive to constructive feedback offered to them in the University or on Clinical Placement then the specific feedback given and the response of the student should be clearly documented and returned to the Module Co-ordinator.

Learning

The content of the majority of the Physiotherapy programmes of study is designed to meet the requirements of a professional body and may be amended if required on introduction of statutory registration for Chartered Physiotherapists in Ireland (pending establishment of Physiotherapy Registration Board by CORU). Physiotherapy students demonstrate their Fitness to Practise by pursuing their studies with due diligence ensuring they avail of the range of educational opportunities made available in order to acquire the skills and knowledge identified in the relevant professional and/or statutory body guidance. Students are required to take responsibility for their own learning by fulfilling the attendance, learning and assessment requirements of the academic and clinical placement aspects of their education. Students are required to demonstrate good time management and regular attendance and to adhere to the guidelines for reporting non-attendance on clinical placement as stated in the relevant Physiotherapy Clinical Placement Handbook. Failure to follow the procedure for reporting non-attendance on clinical placement may result in the initiation of formal Fitness to Practise procedures.

Health

Physiotherapy students must be able to perform their clinical skills in a safe, competent and proficient manner in order to meet the needs of patients or clients. UCD is committed to equal opportunities and the support of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities registered to a Physiotherapy programme are required to register with UCD Access for a Needs Assessment to identify any appropriate supports required in the academic and/or clinical placement settings.

As a condition of acceptance onto the BScPhysiotherapy or MScPhysiotherapy [pre-registration] programme students are required to undergo pre-entry blood testing to demonstrate immunity for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and Varicella, and to provide evidence of immunisation for measles, mumps, rubella [documentary proof] and tuberculosis [documentary proof or BCG scars] as outlined on <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/admissions/biomed.pdf> Students who cannot provide evidence of immunity to tuberculosis are required to undergo the Mantoux Test. Students entering any of the UCD Physiotherapy programmes will also be required to declare themselves physically and psychologically well in order to competently execute the various academic coursework, practical classes, and clinical placements of the relevant programme by signing a declaration statement. Students are required to adhere to the Physiotherapy Guidelines for Practical Classes as regards consent to participate, safety and infection control. Thereafter, on an annual basis during the registration process students will be required to declare themselves fit to practise by signing a declaration statement. In the event that a student experiences a change in their physical or psychological health affecting their ability to execute their academic and/or clinical placement responsibilities they are required to notify the Course Director in writing within seven days. In such circumstances the Course Director and Course Team will work with the student to develop an appropriate plan to manage their changed circumstances in a

supportive manner. Students who have had to withdraw from clinical placement for health reasons will need to be certified as fit to return to clinical placement by an impartial physician with relevant expertise before they will be permitted to return. Failure to follow any aspect of this procedure, which affects an individual's capacity to carry out their various academic and clinical placement requirements may result in the initiation of formal Fitness to Practise procedures.

Duty of Care

Physiotherapy students will demonstrate their Fitness to Practise at all times by working within the scope of practice of the profession and by accepting and upholding their duty of care to their patients/clients/service users and research participants by conducting themselves in a professional manner in all aspects related to patient/client/service user care while on supervised clinical placement and when conducting supervised research as outlined in the relevant Physiotherapy Programme Curriculum. Students will at all times respect the rights and dignity of the patient, maintain accurate patient treatment records, research data, obtain appropriate informed consent and adhere to the relevant host clinical or industry guidelines for all aspects of patient care. Students may have access to confidential personal information and are required to ensure patient confidentiality and comply with Data Protection legislation. Students are also required to follow the health and safety requirements of the School, UCD and the host clinical or industry Partner. In instances where there is a concern that a Physiotherapy student has breached their duty of care the specific incident should be documented by the clinical placement or research supervisor and the response of the student should be clearly documented and both should be forwarded to the Course Director within seven days. Failure to follow this procedure may result in the initiation of formal Fitness to Practise procedures.

Reporting to Clinical Placement The Dean of Physiotherapy has a duty to inform current clinical placement supervisors of any Fitness to Practise hearings and their outcome on which a physiotherapy student is being referred. In the event that the Dean of Physiotherapy is informing a supervisor of the outcome of a Fitness to Practise investigation which has resulted in the student's continuation on their programme of study this information should be conveyed in a manner that supports the student in achieving and maintaining the appropriate standard of clinical practice in a constructive manner.

References

Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists Rules of Professional Conduct Incorporating the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Behaviour (June 2010)

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Code of Members' Professional Values and Behaviour (2011)

Health Professions Council Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (2007)

UCD Public Health, Physiotherapy, Performance and Population Science Programme Board Fitness to Practise Sub-committee

Composition

Core

Dean of Physiotherapy [Chair]
Member of the Programme Board
Relevant Programme Co-ordinator

As required

Other member(s) of relevant Programme team as appropriate, including Stage co-ordinator, Practice Education Co-ordinator