



School of Physiotherapy Laboratories (practical sessions)

The practical laboratories associated with physiotherapy courses are where the practical skills of being a physiotherapist are taught. During these practical sessions you will learn techniques including, but not limited to, manual handling and transfers, movement observation and analysis as well as various assessment techniques that will allow you to make a diagnosis of a person's functional status. You will also be introduced to interventions such as manual therapy, movement retraining and exercise prescription.

To allow these techniques to be fully taught, understand how the recipient (patient/client) feels and experience the range of normal responses it is a requirement that students participate fully in the practical laboratories. This helps you to attain the skills and techniques that will initially be applied to fellow students and tested in practical exams, prior to you being competent to apply these in a clinical setting. At times, the learning of surface anatomy, assessment, observation and practice of the skills and techniques of physiotherapy will require you to appropriately disrobe in a mixed class, for example in appropriate swimwear or modest undergarments, to allow learning and practice on both genders. You need to be willing to act as a subject for your peers as well as act as a 'simulated' patient for your student-colleagues.

For your practical laboratories you will need to be dressed in loose fitting clothing such as sports shorts and top and be able to disrobe appropriately. You are required to participate fully in the practical sessions and be able to act as a subject for your peers as they will for you. For learning and applying manual techniques and for any manual handling procedures you should be able to remove rings, watches and bracelets to avoid skin injury to your 'patient/client'. You must wear non-slip, closed-toe footwear in accordance with occupational safety and health guidelines. This is particularly important when in the Physiotherapy gym for practice or teaching sessions where you must wear appropriate closed-in footwear and comply with the School of Physiotherapy Gym dress code (see information leaflets on gym noticeboards).



Please notify the lecturer taking the practical laboratory if there is any reason why you might not be able to participate in a particular laboratory, for example current or previous health problems. The lecturer/ laboratory leader will be able to advise on the extent that you will be able to participate in that laboratory, but you must make sure that your own learning is still attained. Your safety and the safety of your student-colleagues is important and we ask that you look after yourself and your fellow students. Any medical information of which you may become aware about your fellow student(s) should remain confidential in the same manner any medical information about a patient in the clinical setting would remain confidential. This all becomes part of your learning to be a professional in the healthcare setting.

As part of your learning it is critical that you take the opportunity to practice your skills across different people and genders. At times you will be required to choose differing partners rather than working with the same partner in every lab so you can appreciate how different ages, genders and different body shapes and sizes influence performance and capacity of the assessments and treatments you will practice.

We also encourage you to work in small study groups during the semester and you will be able to book the laboratory rooms and equipment so you can practice during the week. Practice during the semester makes the practical exams easy to pass and will give you skills that will last throughout your clinical career.

Thank you for being prepared for your practical laboratories – both in the dress code and any preparatory reading completed. Make the most of these labs to start your progress to being a physiotherapist.