



School of Physiotherapy

Student absences

The following information is found in all course outlines each semester as you journey through your physiotherapy studies:

Attendance & Absence

In accordance with the General Regulations and the School Regulations, it is expected that a student enrolled in this course shall attend all lectures, tutorials and labs. Attendance will not form part of any assessment for this course.

In accordance with the School of Physiotherapy Regulation 4.1

4.1.1 Students are expected to advise the Course Coordinator if they are unable to attend tutorials, workshops or any other teaching period outlined in the course outline. A student who is absent for more than 15 per cent of course teaching will be required to attend a meeting with the Dean (or delegate) to discuss the implications of their actions.

4.1.2 Full time attendance at all scheduled clinical placements, practicums or internships, including necessary briefing sessions, is compulsory.

Current University, School of Physiotherapy Regulations and Program Regulations can always be found here <https://www.notredame.edu.au/about/governance/regulations>

This document is designed with an understanding that sometimes life happens resulting in a break from normal routines and habits. However, it is important to consider the Graduate Attributes and Professional Behaviours required of a professional when managing your attendance. This document will guide you around these expectations.

Should you have any queries that are not answered by the **Frequently Asked Questions** (FAQs) below, please contact the School Administration Team. If you are an **international student**, there are visa requirements pertaining to attendance – any queries on absences should be directed to the [international office](#).

FAQs

I unexpectedly need to take a day or two off from uni during semester for personal reasons (such as short-term illness, family caring responsibilities, bereavement) – what do I do?

- In the work force as a physio (or in any current employment as a student) you would never just not show up for work. So as a courtesy, you are expected to notify all of your course coordinators / lecturers / tutors via email as soon as practical of your absence, anticipated duration away, and then enter into a dialogue with the teaching team as to the impact of this short-term absence. It may be that a strategy is to lean on your peers to assist you in efforts to catch up on missed materials.

- No leave forms are required by the School in this instance. (in the workforce you may need to complete requirements including attaining a 'sickness certificate', such that sick leave payments can be processed).
- Repeated unexplained absences may trigger the Course Coordinator to consider whether to action the clause "A student who is absent for more than 15 per cent of course teaching will be required to attend a meeting with the Dean (or delegate) to discuss the implications of their actions."

I expectedly need to take a day or two off from uni during semester for personal reasons (such as specialist medical appointments, minor surgeries, family caring responsibilities) – what do I do?

- Planned short-term absences are possible in your future employment, with appropriate notifications and negotiation with your employer. Same for uni. Once details are known of the dates / impact on your attendance, you should liaise directly with your course coordinators / lecturers / tutors in order to minimise the impact of the expected absence to your teaching and learning activities.
- No leave forms are required by the School in this instance; in the workforce though you would need to complete requirements to apply for short-term leave, or negotiate some 'flexi-time' should that be an option in your workplace.
- Repeated absences, whether planned or unplanned, do impact service provision in the real world – so this will need to be managed between you and your employer. At uni it would be expected that you liaise directly with your course coordinators to avoid any mismatch in expectations, and to consider how to ensure your teaching & learning journey is not compromised.

I unexpectedly need to miss a brief time at uni during semester, but this happens to correspond with an assessment task – what do I do?

- Any absences whether planned or unexpected, but resulting in an assessment task being missed will necessitate that you complete an application for a "Temporary Leave of Absence" – this more formal approach is necessary to allow for a process to be considered to reschedule the missed assessment task(s).
- The School's 'Temporary Leave of Absence Application' can be found [here](#)
- To assist you and limit the amount of people with whom need to liaise, we ask that you discuss your situation and submit this application (with columns 1-3 inclusive completed) to your Year Coordinator. You should also prepare some thoughts as to your availability and the timing options to complete any rescheduled deferred assessments (column 4 of application). The Year Coordinator will liaise with the Course Coordinators on your behalf and gain the required sign off for you. Once signed and approved, the completed application form should be submitted to the School of Physiotherapy admin team for processing.

I expectedly need to take time off from uni during semester for personal reasons (such as elite athlete commitments, recovery from surgery, longer-term family caring responsibilities) – what do I do?

- Any absences beyond a couple of days, whether planned or unexpected, will necessitate that you complete an application for a “Temporary Leave of Absence” – this more formal approach is necessary to allow for a process to be considered to examine the impact on learning and teaching activities missed and develop strategies to facilitate your ability to maintain progress through the course.
- Further, this formal process will also consider any missed assessment task(s), and allow for negotiation around rescheduling.
- The School of Physiotherapy ‘Temporary Leave of Absence Application’ can be found [here](#)
- To assist you and limit the amount of people with whom need to liaise, we ask that you discuss your situation and submit this application (with columns 1-3 inclusive completed) to your Year Coordinator. You should also prepare some thoughts as to your availability and the timing options to complete any rescheduled deferred assessments (column 4 of application). The Year Coordinator will liaise with the Course Coordinators on your behalf and gain the required sign off for you. Once signed and approved, the completed application form should be submitted to the School of Physiotherapy admin team for processing.
- Completed forms should be submitted to the School of Physiotherapy admin team for processing.

I need to take time off from uni during semester and it impacts assessments in my course– what do I do?

There are a couple of things to consider here, based on whether the absence is during semester, or during the examination period:

- Students should refer to the [Outline of Academic Year](#).
It is the student's responsibility to check if their end of course exam is to be held at a time other than the main exam period.
- Students must be available during the entire examination period to sit their exams (including scheduled supplementary exam times). Deferred or Irregularly Scheduled exams will not normally be granted if a student has organised another activity during the examination period.
- A student may apply for a deferred or irregularly scheduled examination on medical or compassionate grounds if the student believes that illness, disability through accident or other exceptional circumstances beyond their control are likely to prevent or have prevented their attendance at the scheduled final examination.
- A student will not normally be granted a deferred or irregularly scheduled examination on the grounds that they mistook the time, date or place of an examination, or that they have made arrangements to be elsewhere at that time; for example, having previously booked plane tickets.

Deferred Assessment (excluding examinations)

See [General Regulations, 6.3](#)

- Any absences during semester whether planned or unexpected, but resulting in an assessment task being missed will necessitate that you complete an application for a “Temporary Leave of Absence” – this more formal approach is necessary to allow for a process to be considered to reschedule the missed assessment task(s).
- The School of Physiotherapy ‘Temporary Leave of Absence Application’ can be found [here](#)
- Please request a Deferred Assessment Form from Physiotherapy Administration
- Completed forms should be submitted to the School of Physiotherapy admin team for processing.

Deferred Final Examination

See [General Regulations, 6.7](#)

Any absences during final examination periods that are planned or expected, resulting in an examination task being missed, will necessitate that you complete a form to apply for deferral of the examination.

- In accordance with 6.7 of the [General Regulations](#), deferred examinations for School of Physiotherapy courses will generally be conducted in the next available examination period. Key criteria to consider here are based on applications on “medical or compassionate grounds if the Student believes that illness, psychological factors, disability through accident or other exceptional circumstances are likely to prevent or have prevented their attendance at the scheduled final examination.”
- Applications for deferral of final exams can be found [here](#).

Irregularly Scheduled Examination

See [General Regulations, 6.8](#)

- In accordance with 6.8 of the [General Regulations](#), irregularly scheduled examinations for School of Physiotherapy final examinations may be applied for “on medical or compassionate grounds if he/she believes that circumstances beyond his/her control are likely to prevent his/her attendance at the scheduled final examination”.
- The key words here are ‘beyond your control’ – the School’s interpretation of this does not include holidays, part time work commitments and the like.
- Applications for irregularly scheduled final examinations can be found [here](#).

See also: [GUIDELINE: SUPPLEMENTARY, DEFERRED AND IRREGULARLY SCHEDULED EXAMINATIONS](#)

I have just found out that I've been given a 'supp' exam, but I will be away at that time – what do I do?

- The [Outline of Academic Year](#) clearly outlines the scheduling of the exams for the current and next academic year, including weeks of deferred and supplemental examinations.
- It is the student's responsibility to be aware of these dates and to be available accordingly.
- If you are away (or plan to be away) and are awarded a supplemental examination, the expectation would be that you alter your plans and make arrangements to attend the supplementary assessments as scheduled.
- Deferral of supplemental examinations will generally only be granted in exceptional circumstances upon the production of such documentation as the Registrar deems appropriate (e.g. medical certificates, statutory declarations). In general, exceptional circumstances will be defined as circumstances that are beyond the control of the student; the interpretation of this does not include holidays, work commitments and the like.
- Deferral / Rescheduling of supplemental examinations to allow for potential progression to the next semester/ year creates significant challenges for staffing and processing of results.
- Applications for deferral of final examinations can be found [here](#).
- Completed e-forms should be submitted as soon as possible for processing.

I've recently needed to miss a brief time at uni, but have now returned to complete an assessment task. However, I don't feel that my performance at this assessment task was optimal due to my recent absence – what can I do?

- It may be that you qualify for 'Special Consideration'
 - A student who, due to serious illness, misadventure, trauma, compassionate grounds or Compulsory Community Commitment(s) is unable to complete an assessment, including a final Invigilated Examination; or whose performance in an assessment, including a final Invigilated Examination, may be impaired, can apply for Special Consideration
- The Head of Discipline may grant special consideration in respect of an assessment or final examination, where a student satisfies the criteria that his or her personal circumstances warrant such consideration.
- Request for special consideration must be lodged in writing with the relevant School prior to the assessment task or **no later than three working days after** the assessment / examination.
- Special consideration is applied at the end of semester as part of Board of Examiners' procedures.

Special Consideration

See [General Regulations, 6.10](#)

Applications for Special Consideration can be found [here](#).

Further information from The University pertaining to Special Consideration is available here:
[Student policies, procedures and guidelines | Notre Dame](#)

I need to take time off whilst I'm on a clinical placement – what do I do?

- Any unplanned absences from clinical placement need to be reported to both the facility supervisor and the clinical education team (via the clinical education mobile 0438 937 913) as soon as practicable.
- Requests for planned time off from clinical placement need to be discussed with the clinical education team prior to the clinical placement. These are generally not allowed due to the impact on placement outcomes and accreditation requirements.

I want / need to take a semester (or year) off from uni – what do I do?

- Prior to taking a semester off it is necessary for appropriate course counselling to occur – you are encouraged to discuss your situation with the Head of Discipline, Associate Professor William Gibson.
- At University a leave of absence is the mechanism to allow for an extended period away from your studies.
- Forms can be found [here](#).