

Third year

This year focuses on abnormal functioning of the human body which may result in illness and diseases. Physiotherapy focuses on application of skills in treating patients and clinical reasoning which involves making decisions about patient assessment and treatment. The following subjects are covered:



- Physiotherapy II • Rehabilitation I
- Clinical Physiotherapy • General Medicine and Surgery • Pharmacology (half course)
- Research Methodology II

During this year students start with clinical work and students are expected to organise transport to some of the hospitals which are not on the Wits bus route. The Physiotherapy uniform is worn to clinical placements and students are expected to buy their own uniform. In the afternoons students return to Medical School for lectures and tutorials.

Fourth year

The structure of fourth year is similar to that of third year, except that clinical work is scheduled for a full day. The year starts with a six week teaching block focusing on consolidation of application of skills to assessment and treatment of patients. The following subjects are covered:

- Physiotherapy III
- Rehabilitation II
- Clinical Physiotherapy II
- Research Methodology II
- Management for Physiotherapists (half course)

On completion of their studies, students are required to take the Hippocratic Oath and must register with the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

Postgraduate Studies

The Physiotherapy Department offers postgraduate studies at various levels and in different formats namely MSc by coursework and research report, MSc by dissertation (research) and PhD.

The following options are offered for MSc by Coursework and research report:

Orthopaedic Surgery for Physiotherapists, Respiriology, Cardiology and Cardiothoracic Surgery for Physiotherapists, Community Physiotherapy, Traumatology, Neurology and Neurosurgery for Physiotherapists, Sport and Exercise Physiotherapy, Paediatrics for Physiotherapists (General or Neurology), Orthopaedic Manipulative Therapy (OMT), Physiotherapeutic Musculoskeletal Pain Management. The MSc by coursework and research report can be completed over a period of one (full-time) or two years (part-time). If this degree is done on a full-time basis, then all five courses are completed in one year namely anatomy, physiology, pathology, course in area of specialisation and research methodology.

For all registered postgraduate students there is a due performance requirement of 80 hours of clinical teaching, assistance with examinations, tutorials or practical teaching on the undergraduate programme, as well as research assistance. On successful completion of an MSc (by coursework and research report or by dissertation/research), students may register for a PhD, which is undertaken by research only.

For further information, contact:

The Student Enrolment Centre

Tel: 011 717 1888

Enquiries: www.wits.ac.za/askwits
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 4, Wits 2050

The Physiotherapy Department
School of Therapeutic Sciences
7 York Road, Parktown, 2193

Tel: 011 717 3702

Fax: 011 717 3719

www.wits.ac.za/_therapeuticsciences/physiotherapy



PHYSIOTHERAPY



What is Physiotherapy?

Physiotherapy is concerned with assessing, treating and preventing human movement disorders, restoring normal function or minimising dysfunction in adults and children with physical impairment, to enable them to achieve the highest possible level of independence and function in their lives; preventing recurring injuries and disability in the workplace, at home, or during recreational and sporting activities and promoting community health for all age groups.

Physiotherapists use different practical skills to assess patients before and after treating them. When treating patients, physiotherapists use manual skills such as massage and mobilisation of joints, individually - designed or group exercise programmes, relaxation techniques, specialised electrotherapy equipment, heat, ice and traction to relieve pain and assist healing and recovery, suitable walking aids, splints, appliances and teaching home management programmes.

What does it take to become a physiotherapist?

People considering physiotherapy as a career must want to work in the health sector, should be mature and have the ability to solve problems, to make decisions and to act on them. They should be able to communicate with people of all ages and backgrounds. They should also have a genuine desire to assist ill and injured people, possess patience, be good at working with their hands and have the capacity for hard work even under pressure.

Employment opportunities

Graduates are required to do one year community service in a government hospital. This allows them to acquire skills and experience in various fields of work. After this general experience, many choose to specialise in a specific area of interest.



Physiotherapists may work in:

- Public and private hospitals
- Private practices
- Community health centres
- Day care centres and nursing homes
- Sports centres and with sporting teams
- Schools and pre-schools
- Research areas
- Occupational health units
- Training institutions
- Health policy development units
- Special centres for people with physical disabilities.

Physiotherapy at WITS

Vision Statement

The Department of Physiotherapy and its graduates are recognised for excellence in physiotherapy research, education and clinical skills that are locally responsive and internationally.

Mission Statement

The Physiotherapy Department is committed to developing the highest standards of academic, research and clinical proficiency.

We graduate responsible, professional, innovative, critically thinking physiotherapists committed to meeting the health needs of all communities in South Africa, appropriately and cost effectively.

Research, evidence based and contemporary teaching as well as community engagement are integral to our sustained excellence.

We advance the physiotherapy profession through continual professional development with local and international collaboration.

Entrance Requirements

In order to be accepted into physiotherapy at Wits, a high standard of academic competence must be demonstrated. All applicants are expected to have spent some time in a physiotherapy department in order to gain some first-hand knowledge of what the job entails.

Minimum Academic Requirements

Please refer to the Wits Guide for Undergraduate Applicants or visit www.wits.ac.za/undergraduate

Programme duration and workload

There are two entry points into the BSc Physiotherapy degree: First year (for applicants currently in Grade 12, and Second year (for applicants who have completed a relevant prerequisite degree – the Graduate Entry Physiotherapy Programme (GEPP). Wits is the only South African university which offers GEPP. Read more about GEPP here <https://www.wits.ac.za/health/gepp/>

The programme requires four years of full-time study. The first year is based mainly at the Braamfontein Campus, while years two to four are at the Medical School in Parktown. The third and fourth years of study involve various levels of clinical work at either hospitals, schools or clinics over and above lectures, tutorials and practical sessions. The course is time-consuming and requires considerable commitment from students.

First year

First year focuses on giving student grounding in the basic sciences. The following subjects are covered:

- Introduction to Medical Science (half course)
- Chemistry (half course)
- Physics (half course)
- Introduction to Psychology I (half course)
- Basic Principles of Group and Individual Psychology I (half course)
- Human Behavioural Sciences (half courses)
- Introduction to Physiotherapy

Second year

Second year focuses on understanding the normal functioning of the human body and basic physiotherapy skills.

The following subjects are covered:

- Anatomy for therapists
- Physiology and Medical Biochemistry
- Physiotherapy I.

This year demands a lot of time and studying from the students. Many hours are spent dissecting human cadavers in studying of human anatomy. Please also note that during the physiotherapy practical sessions, students are required to wear shorts and to allow fellow students (male and female) to work within their personal space while practising physiotherapy treatment techniques on each other. It is therefore important that permission is obtained beforehand from your religious denominations to undress if required. Please see the Faculty's Personal Beliefs Policy given in the Guide for Applicants.