

**School of Rehabilitation Therapy
Faculty of Health Sciences**

Policy on Student Readiness for Placement

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Rationale and background

The purpose of this document is to outline processes for: 1) identifying occupational therapy and physical therapy students within the School of Rehabilitation Therapy (SRT) at Queen's University who, based on performance in courses or evaluations, have not demonstrated the level of competence, safety, or professionalism expected for their level of training; 2) Strategies to safeguard patient/public safety in the case of students who have not demonstrated the expected level of competency, safety, and professionalism on a course or evaluation. These strategies may include: a) withholding students from placement; b) providing additional educational supports to help students achieve the expected level of competence, safety, and professionalism; or c) communicating with clinical instructors because of the legal and ethical obligation for the clinical instructors to take responsibility for student's interactions with patients.

Scope of policy

This policy is applicable to students in the Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy programs within the SRT. It does not apply to students in the Rehabilitation Science program.

Policy statements

In order to participate in clinical/fieldwork placements:

1. **All pre-requisites need to be met before proceeding to clinical placement.** If a student receives a failing grade on a pre-requisite academic or clinical course, they will be withheld from placement. If the course failure is immediately preceding placement, and the student chooses to appeal the decision, that student will still be withheld from placement until a decision is made in response to the appeal. If the Progress and Awards Committee becomes aware of a course failure on a pre-requisite course after the placement has already been initiated, the student's placement will be terminated at that time. Special permission may be granted by the program progress and awards committee to waive pre-requisites.
2. **Risk mitigation strategies are implemented when students are identified who have not demonstrated the expected level of competence, safety, or professionalism for their stage of training on a clinical competency examination or clinical skills examination.** Risk mitigation strategies may include: communication with clinical instructor/site, remediation, or extra support on placement.

- 3. Clinical instructors or preceptors have the right to decline a student who has been identified as having not demonstrated the expected level of competency, safety or professionalism.**

Procedures

1. All students will be asked to sign a consent to release pertinent information to clinical instructors or clinical sites prior to their first clinical/fieldwork placement in the Physical Therapy or Occupational Therapy.
2. It is the responsibility of the course instructor to identify students who have failed a course or who have not demonstrated the level of competence, safety, or professionalism expected for their stage of training on a clinical competency examination or clinical skills examination after reviewing all student evaluations carefully (criteria in Appendix A). It is also the instructor's responsibility to communicate this to the respective Associate Director (as the Chair of the Progress and Awards Committee) and the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education.
3. In the case of a course failure, it is the responsibility of the Associate Director to communicate with the student (on behalf of the Progress and Awards Committee) that the student will be withheld from placement.
4. In circumstances where a student is determined to have passed a course, but not demonstrated the expected level of competence, safety, or professionalism for their stage of training on a student evaluation; the course instructor, Associate Director, and Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) will collaborate on risk mitigation strategies. The Associate Director will communicate the risk mitigation strategies to the student and the ACCE will communicate with the clinical instructor.
5. All communications related to course failures or risk mitigation strategies will be added to the student file.

APPENDIX A — Criteria for identifying students who have not demonstrated the level of competence, safety, or professionalism expected for their stage of training) any one of the following:

- Failure or In Progress on the most recent fieldwork/clinical placement.
- Failure of an examination station in the most recent OSCE due to an 'unsafe action'.
- Failure of 30% or more examination stations in the most recent OSCE
- A Program decision whereby a student has been deemed as a 'major or critical lapse' in professional behaviour according to the School of Rehabilitation Therapy Professional Behaviour Policy.
- Student returning to the MScOT or MScPT Program following an extended leave of absence (>12 months).