

Physiotherapy studies SFYSIS18

DESCRIPTION OF STUDIES

The Bachelor of Physiotherapy degree studies are based on the legislation concerning universities of applied sciences and professional work, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the National Qualifications Framework (NQF, www.minedu.fi/OPM) and the degree regulations and strategy of Turku University of Applied Sciences, whose pedagogic approach is innovation pedagogy. In addition, the studies have been designed using descriptions of core competences in physiotherapy prepared in cooperation with the Finnish Association of Physiotherapists, taking into account both national- and international-level research and descriptions of physiotherapists' work.

After graduating as a physiotherapist, you will be able to work as an expert in the healthcare, social welfare, sports and rehabilitation systems. You can work as a physiotherapist in a health centre, hospital or rehabilitation department, for example, or establish your own physiotherapy business. During your studies, you will learn to conceptualize your professional task areas, along with their scope and associated interfaces. Additionally, you will gain the skills needed to evaluate and develop your own learning and competence.

The goal of your work is to support the customer in maintaining and promoting their mobility and functional capacity, as well as their health and well-being, taking into account the prevailing environmental conditions and situation of society. As part of the physiotherapy process, you know how to examine your customer in a customer-oriented and reliable manner, and are able to make the right decisions based on the results of your examination. You know how to design and implement physiotherapy treatment in cooperation with the customer, their family members and other operators.

During your studies, you will acquire the skills needed to encounter different kinds of people and to guide and train their mobility individually and on a case-by-case basis. Your work is based on your extensive knowledge of physiotherapy, the core of which is made up of physiotherapy science and research. Your work is based on evidence-based practices, in which the best possible available data is connected to practical experience.

As a physiotherapist, you also have the skills needed to develop the field of physiotherapy, which requires the ability to examine and assess physiotherapy critically and apply research data to practical work. You also know how to take into account national and international challenges in your work. Additionally, in your studies you will acquire the skills needed to lead professional groups and projects.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDIES

The Bachelor of Physiotherapy degree studies are based on the legislation concerning universities of applied sciences and professional work, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the National Qualifications Framework (NQF, www.minedu.fi/OPM) and the degree regulations and strategy of Turku University of Applied Sciences, whose pedagogic approach is innovation pedagogy. In addition, the studies have been designed using descriptions of core competences in physiotherapy prepared in cooperation with the Finnish Association of Physiotherapists, taking into account both national- and international-level research and descriptions of physiotherapists' work.

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STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE STUDIES AND PEDAGOGICAL SOLUTIONS

Physiotherapy studies are structured based on the expectations and skills needs of working life. The curriculum has been prepared in cooperation with representatives of working life.

Physiotherapy is made up of seven **competence areas** Research and assessment skills (1) include methods for examining the movement, mobility and functional capacity of different kinds of people of various ages and abilities, as well as the preconditions for these, such as muscle strength and balance. In therapy skills (2) training, you will learn ways to influence your customer's functional capacity and its various aspects, including joint mobility, strength and movement control, as well as how to tailor these to suit your customer's needs. Physiotherapy guidance and counselling skills (3) emphasize an approach to work that treats the customer fairly, takes into account the available resources and supports the customer's motivation. You will practice individual and group guidance using oral and particularly manual guidance tools. The guidance environment can be a physiotherapy facility or a digital environment.

In technology (4) and accessibility (5) studies, you will become familiar with assistive equipment, ergonomic solutions and the assessment and planning of an accessible environment. In social studies (6), you will learn to conceptualize different structures and operational models of social welfare, healthcare, sports and rehabilitation systems and learn what society expects from your work. Ethical competence (7) creates a foundation for your work.

The competence areas of physiotherapy come together in the physiotherapy process, which you will first practice based on case descriptions, both in theory and in practice, in your study group. As your skills develop, you will get to apply them to increasingly challenging customer situations in your practical working life training.

The total scope of the physiotherapist studies is 210 ECTS credits, the completion of which requires about 3.5 years of full-time studying. The curriculum also allows you to complete your studies faster, depending on your learning capacity and prior skills. Physiotherapy studies are divided into two broader study modules: complementary competence (155 ECTS) and complementary competence (55 ECTS).

You will learn the skills and knowledge that are part of **core competence** during your first academic years. You will become familiar with the knowledge base of physiotherapy and the best possible research-based physiotherapy practices at the different stages of the physiotherapy process. Core competence studies also include the language studies as required by section 8 of the government decree on polytechnics (352/2003). Core competence studies are made up of basic studies, professional studies and practical training, the contents of which are connected to one another through various pedagogical solutions. These studies come together to benefit you in your learning and your work as a physiotherapist.

In your practical training, you will apply theory to practice by grounding your own work in the theory you have learned. The practical training is first carried out as teacher-guided work in small groups and then, as your knowledge accumulates, in a variety of real customer situations in projects and especially in working life. Practical training is carried out in health centres, in-patient rehabilitation wards, hospitals, private rehabilitation units and companies as well as with third-sector operators.

Core competence studies make up a cumulative study module. During the first year, you will become familiar with human anatomy and its functions, as well as physiotherapists' methods for examining and influencing people's health when the risks to functional capacity and health are minimal. In your second year of study, you will deepen your competence to include situations in which your customer has permanent risk factors and limitations concerning their health and functional capacity. You will gain the skills needed to work with elderly people, people of working age, youth and children taking into account

their resources, goals and operating environments. Your customer's goal may be the ability to manage with everyday life or to achieve top physical performance, for example.

Complementary competence studies are carried out during the last 1.5 years of your studies. In these studies, you will broaden and deepen the physiotherapy skills you have already acquired through a thesis (15 ECTS), research and development studies (5 ECTS), elective studies (15 ECTS) and elective practical training placements (20 ECTS). In the elective practical training, you can familiarize yourself with physiotherapy competence areas that are of particular interest to you. This way, you can deepen and broaden your physiotherapy skills in psychophysical physiotherapy, paediatric physiotherapy or sports physiotherapy, for example.

Core competence and complementary competence studies are further grouped into modules of varying scopes. The modules are made up of study units with an average scope of 5 ECTS. You can learn about the content and structure of the curriculum in more detail in the PEPPI system.

Turku University of Applied Sciences' **pedagogical policy** is **innovation pedagogy**. In innovation pedagogy, learning is built on social-constructive thought in which the learner builds up new information by utilizing their prior skills and teamwork. The goal of innovation pedagogy is to support the student in developing their own way of learning and thinking so that they can acquire methods to develop and innovate working life. The core principles of learning are an orientation towards working life, a multiprofessional and multidisciplinary approach, connecting studies to research and development activities, entrepreneurship and internationality.

Working according to the principles of innovation pedagogy requires the ability to evaluate your own skills realistically. In physiotherapy studies, innovation pedagogy is implemented in many different ways, including case-description work, customer work, panel discussions, different kinds of games, the mentoring model (in which more advanced students support new students' independent studies) and working with video material, among others methods.

You will first become familiar with customer work in simulated situations using various customer descriptions. Then, as your competence develops, you will work with different

kinds of customers in projects and various work communities. Genuine interactions with customers are necessary for the growth of your expertise. The projects can be part of multiprofessional and multidisciplinary research and development activities.

Multiprofessional studies support you in conceptualizing your skills and role as a physiotherapist. Working in a project also prepares you for entrepreneurship. You will learn to take responsibility for your own work and to develop it in a systematic and goal-oriented manner. You will learn to design and market service products and processes and to evaluate the risk factors related to them.

Physiotherapy studies require self-direction. Contact studies focus on applying theoretical information to practical situations. This requires you to prepare by familiarizing yourself with the study material in advance, for example online. The different written assignments will teach you to conceptualize physiotherapy as a whole and enable you to practise drawing up physiotherapy documentation. Independent study is not targeted only towards theoretical studies, but also towards developing the skills needed when working as a physiotherapist. In small groups, you can practice guiding the customer's movements with your hands or measuring muscle strength, for example. In small group teamwork, you will not only learn the core content of the profession but also skills necessary for working life, including teamwork skills and creative thinking.

The teachers will guide your learning and take into account your previously acquired skills. Your study counsellor will work as your teacher tutor's partner and provide you with advice in questions related to the duration of studies and social student benefits.

In physiotherapy studies, learning takes place in various learning environments utilizing a wide range of pedagogical solutions, which promotes your ability to think critically and creatively and to work in working groups in the physiotherapist's role.

PROFESSIONAL DIRECTIONS, SPECIALIZED FIELDS AND QUALIFICATIONS

In physiotherapy studies, you will study physiotherapy and its application to various practical situations.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BACHELOR'S THESIS

In your Bachelor's thesis, you will demonstrate your readiness to work independently in a physiotherapy development task and to examine research-based data critically. The Bachelor's thesis is completed towards the end of studies as a working life-driven commission supervised by vocational teachers in cooperation with a representative of the commissioner.

In recent years, students have also done their theses as part of Turku University of Applied Sciences projects that aim to develop areas such as the use of well-being technology to support rehabilitation, planning and construction of accessible environments, and to investigate the significance of time- and place-independent work on well-being, for example.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

In physiotherapy studies, the most important goal of assessments is to guide and support your learning and to promote your professional growth. The evaluations guide you in acquiring work habits and learning methods that you can use when working in expert tasks as a physiotherapist. The national-level description of core competences in physiotherapy is the basis for the assessment. The description determines what skills are required of physiotherapists who have completed their studies.

In the assessment, you will receive feedback on your skills and progress in relation to the competence goals. The tasks assessed include oral and written tests, multimedia presentations of assignments, reports, learning journals and practical simulation tests, among others. The assessment is pass or fail (1–5). You will receive either verbal or written feedback on your performance. In addition to assessments from teachers and from the supervisor of your practical training in work communities, the student's self-assessment and classmate's peer assessment are important parts of the assessment.

Study unit assessment criteria have been recorded in the study unit description and the general assessment instructions of Turku University of Applied Sciences have been utilized in their preparation. The assessment criteria separately depict professional knowledge and information seeking, professional skills and self-evaluation, as well as taking responsibility for learning. Additionally, the level descriptions of the assessment

criteria take into account the student's learning stages (core competence and complementary competence).

In physiotherapy studies, activities are developed by gathering student feedback on the implementation of study units, for instance, during a feedback day and at the end of an academic year. Turku University of Applied Sciences implements an annual student satisfaction survey (student barometer). At the end of your studies, you will respond to the AVOP feedback questionnaire.

INTERNATIONALIZATION

Physiotherapy studies are part of the European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education, or ENPHE. The study programme has several international cooperation partners that enable student exchanges for studies and practical training in Central Europe and the Nordic countries. You also have the opportunity to participate in intensive courses, international projects and International Semester studies. The majority of the literature used in physiotherapy studies is in English, which supports internationalization. Based on the implementation of the curriculum, you can see which study unit will be held in English each semester, which makes it possible for exchange students to participate in the teaching.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER EDUCATION

A Bachelor's degree opens the door to further education in the form of a Master's degree or a university degree in Finland or abroad. Once you have graduated, you can develop and broaden your skills through various continuing professional education programmes.