

# PHYSIOTHERAPY

## Career Information

### Graduate Opportunities

Physiotherapists assess, treat and prevent disorders in human movement caused by injury and disease using advanced techniques and evidence-based care.<sup>1</sup>

Physiotherapists may perform the following tasks:<sup>2</sup>

- assess physical problems relating to areas of the body such as muscles, nerves, joints, heart and lungs using functional tests design treatment programs
- treat patients to reduce pain, improve circulation, strengthen muscles, improve cardiovascular and respiratory functions, restore joint mobility, and improve balance and coordination
- use the therapeutic properties of exercise, heat, cold, massage, manipulation, hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, and manual techniques in the treatment of patients
- reviewing, continually monitoring, assessing and evaluating programs and treatments
- consulting with other Health Professionals as required about patients' problems, needs and progress

### Registration Requirements

Physiotherapists are required to be registered with the [Physiotherapy Board of Australia](#) and meet their registration standards in order to practice in Australia.

Part of this process is engaging in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) each year. The [Australian Physiotherapy Association](#) provides many opportunities to engage in CPD.

### Physiotherapy Specialisations

Physiotherapists can specialise in a number of different fields:<sup>3</sup>

- Cardiorespiratory
- Continence and women's health
- Gerontology
- Musculoskeletal
- Neurology
- Occupational health
- Paediatrics
- Sports
- Working with animals, in conjunction with veterinarians

In addition to this, physiotherapists provide support in other health contexts such as cancer, palliative care and lymphoedema; orthopaedic support; or pain management; and may use other treatments such as acupuncture, dry needling and aquatic therapies in addition to their usual methods.

### Employment Settings

Physiotherapy graduates are employed in the following types of settings:<sup>1</sup>

- Private and public hospitals
- Rehabilitation facilities
- Community health services
- Private clinics
- Residential aged care facilities
- Schools

Many physiotherapists choose to start their own practices as well, although this usually happens once you are a well-established practitioner.

## Maximising Your Physiotherapy Experience

Different employers will place different emphasis on your experience. It is important to read all the information available in job advertisements and on the company website, in order to understand what they are looking for in candidates.

**All settings:** Having a thorough knowledge of the details of your placement experience is essential. Employers will want to know what health conditions, therapies, settings and client groups you've had experience with.

**Queensland Health:** Your placements are going to be of greatest interest and having at least one clinical placement supervisor (once you have asked their permission) as a referee on your resume is important.

**Private Clinics:** May have a greater emphasis on your business acumen and transferrable skills e.g. managing appointment times, customer service, service pricing. As such, previous work experience in any field, such as retail or hospitality, could be beneficial in this setting.

## Enhancing Your Employment Prospects

### Build Your Professional Networks

Professional Associations and peak bodies represent different professions and industries and assist with maintaining a standard of professionalism through: accreditation, professional development opportunities, networking, advocacy and representation to government and other sectors.

**Join a Professional Physiotherapy Association as a Student Member** – There are countless benefits of a student membership with a professional association including access to their newsletters, advertised jobs, conferences and networking events etc. Students usually join at a heavily discounted rate. Explore your eligibility to join:

- [Australian Physiotherapy Association](#)
- [Australian Hand Therapy Association](#)
- [Allied Health Professionals Australia](#)
- [Services for Rural and Remote Allied Health](#)



### Research Employer Expectations

Checking online job boards provides you with an understanding of various job opportunities plus requirements and expectations for the positions. You can then work towards improving gaps you may identify in any skills, knowledge or experience, so that you are competitive when entering the graduate labour market.

Following are some useful websites:

- [Hays Healthcare](#)
- [Medijobs](#)
- [Jobs4physios](#)
- [Physiohub](#)
- [Cornerstone Medical Recruitment](#)
- [Health Care People](#)
- [JCU Careerhub](#)
- [Graduate Opportunities](#)
- [Australian Job Search](#)
- [Queensland Government Jobs](#)
- [Queensland Government Graduate Portal](#)
- [Australian Public Service recruitment](#)
- [Unigrad](#)
- [Seek](#)
- [Careerone](#)
- [Indeed](#)

### International

- [Your World Healthcare](#)
- [Julie Warner Health](#)
- [GoAbroad](#)

## Key Job Search Strategies

- Use a variety of job seeking methods – do not rely solely on online job listings
- Be proactive – identify organisations you are interested in – check their websites for opportunities, follow their facebook page and Twitter feeds
- Actively participate on LinkedIn, join relevant groups, connect with professionals, develop an impressive profile
- Network to broaden your contacts and connect with future employers
- Remember, employers prefer to recruit individuals they have seen perform or know

## Volunteering

Gaining experience before you graduate is essential as employers want to know that you have put the skills and knowledge you have been developing into practice. Volunteering is a great way to form professional networks prior to graduating.

**Some opportunities to consider include:**

- [FNQ Volunteers](#)
- [Volunteering North Queensland](#)
- [My Community Directory](#)
- [Townsville City Council Community Directory](#)
- [Cairns City Council Community Directory](#)

## Show Initiative

Employers want to know you can offer more than your educational qualifications alone. Be proactive, get involved at University and in your community, in order to demonstrate your initiative. Some ideas are as follows:

- Become involved in community organisations, charities, sporting clubs etc. and think how this experience relates to your future employment in Physiotherapy
- Become a **Student Mentor at JCU**
- Become a **JCU Student Ambassador**
- Volunteer at the annual **JCU Careers Fair**
- Attend JCU Market Day, Industry Panels, Information Sessions, etc.

For further ideas go to [JCU Careers and Employment Connecting with Professionals](#).



## Using Social Media to Enhance Employment Outcomes

Social media is a key way to connect with your profession and hear of future opportunities. Careful use of LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter will expand your networks and lead to job opportunities. Social media is widely used by employers to promote job opportunities, recruit staff and research job applicants.

**Company pages:** Follow employers of choice and ensure you don't miss their updates and job listings, e.g. Performance Physio; North Queensland Physiotherapy Centre; Cairns Total Physio; Physio Plus; Accident & Injury Physio Rehab clinic; and use a keyword search for physiotherapy and specialist areas to reveal more.



**LinkedIn** is fast becoming an employer's favored recruitment method. In addition, most employers will google you when considering you for a position.

*You need to ensure you maintain a professional online presence – a professional LinkedIn profile is the key way to achieve this.*

## Considering Postgraduate Study?

- Post-graduate study can provide you with the opportunity to specialise in a particular field and can offer a competitive edge to enhance your career
- JCU offers the Master of Rehabilitation, majoring in Physiotherapy and the Graduate Diploma in Rural Generalist Practice
- Explore the range of other Postgraduate courses on offer from JCU: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/courses-and-study/course-level/postgraduate>

## Final Word

- Graduate success is dependent on your active engagement with your future career throughout all of your degree.
- Physiotherapy graduates should consider the opportunities available in rural settings, where you may be exposed to clinical settings and case-loads which are harder to access in metropolitan cities<sup>4</sup>
- Graduates are strongly encouraged to consider positions in hospitals, as you will rotate through various departments and get exposure to a wide variety of settings, caseloads and diagnoses<sup>4</sup>
- JCU provide a range of useful career resources on the Careers and Employment homepage <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment>
- Aim to develop your knowledge, skills, experiences and professional connections during your degree, so that you can meet employer expectations and be ready to maximise opportunities when they arise upon graduation.

### References

1. Australian Physiotherapy Association (2017). *Physiotherapy in Australia*. Accessed on 29 September 2017 from [https://www.physiotherapy.asn.au/APAWCM/Physio\\_and\\_You/physio/APAWCM/Physio\\_and\\_You/physio.aspx](https://www.physiotherapy.asn.au/APAWCM/Physio_and_You/physio/APAWCM/Physio_and_You/physio.aspx)
2. Job Outlook (2017). Physiotherapists: Career Overview. Accessed on 29 September 2017 from <http://joboutlook.gov.au/occupation.aspx?code=2525>
3. Australian Physiotherapy Association (2017). Titles and scope of practice. Accessed on 29 September 2017 from [https://www.physiotherapy.asn.au/APAWCM/Resources/FAQs/Titling\\_and\\_scope\\_of\\_practice\\_FAQs.aspx](https://www.physiotherapy.asn.au/APAWCM/Resources/FAQs/Titling_and_scope_of_practice_FAQs.aspx)
4. Flanagan, S. (2017). The Physio Hub: Top 5 Tips for Physio Grads. Accessed on 29 September 2017 from <https://www.cmr.com.au/news/tips-for-grads/7412/>

Visit our website to [jcu.edu.au/careers](http://jcu.edu.au/careers) to explore...

### Follow us on Facebook and subscribe to our newsletter

- Follow JCU Careers and Employment on Facebook for the latest news.
- Subscribe to the CareerHub Newsletter to be sent a range of job opportunities and news from JCU Careers.

### Individual Support

- Our team supports students with their career planning, decision making and job applications. Contact our office to make an appointment.
- During semester visit our **Drop-in desk** on Level 1 in the Library. You can receive feedback on your resume, cover letter, LinkedIn profile or ask us a career related question.  
Townsville sessions are held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (2 - 3 pm),  
Cairns sessions are held on Tuesday and Wednesday (2 - 3 pm)
- Phone and email support is available to external students or students unable to attend an appointment.

### Career Action Plan

- The Career Action Plan is a checklist of actions you can take to increase your chances of graduate employment. We have developed specific plans relating to each stage of your student journey.
- The Career Action Plan is available on our website or call into our office for a copy.

### CareerHub

- JCU's online job portal. It lists part-time, casual, vacation, volunteer and graduate opportunities. It also lists career events, news and resources.
- Use your JCU username and password to log in.

### Career Development Program

- Develop the skills to increase your employability.
- The Program offers a range of self-help career management modules.

### Big Interview

- Learn the best interview techniques.
- Practice just about every question you are likely to get in over 20 industries.
- Video your responses and get feedback from your peers.

### Develop an Enterprising Mindset – Skills and Attributes for Career Success

- Job markets are becoming more complex and globalized, so employers now target graduates who are innovative thinkers and leaders. This program contains eight self-paced modules to help you gain these key skills and be competitive in the future job market.

#### Cairns Campus

Phone: (07) 4232 1150

Location: Level 1, Library

Monday to Friday 9 am – 4 pm

#### Townsville Campus

Phone: (07) 4781 4711

Location: Level 1, Library

Monday to Friday 9 am – 4.30 pm

Email [careers@jcu.edu.au](mailto:careers@jcu.edu.au)

Website [jcu.edu.au/careers](http://jcu.edu.au/careers)

