

QUESTIONS • ANSWERS

About Medical & Non Medical Requirements
for the School of OT

The Ontario government and the organizations offering you a practice placement have mandated specific medical and non-medical requirements that must be met by you, before you can begin your practice placement. These measures are there to protect you, your co-workers and those that you will serve in your placement. The School of Occupational Therapy is committed to meeting standards of practice by ensuring that students attain and maintain required certifications and meet recommended immunization standards.

What's the rush?

Trust us, this is a time consuming task. It's best to begin the collection process early to ensure you have all your documents in check in time for your appointment with Health Services. This deadline may seem early, however, in the first month of the program there are two observation days that are part of your first course. These observations days require you to be cleared by Student Health Services.

How does this affect me?

If you don't complete your requirements, you will not be permitted to begin your placement. If you do not attend your placement (or complete enough hours), you will not progress in the program. Failure to adhere to the requirement deadline may result in your offer of admission being **REVOKED**.

Have questions?

We understand that you may have questions throughout the placement requirement process. To help you, we've collected some commonly asked questions:

Q. What are my responsibilities?

You must complete the following:

- Thoroughly review the Pre-Placement Requirement Information document.
- Plan ahead! Complete all requirements in time for your Student Health Services appointment, and prior to the deadline.

- Book your appointment well in advance of the deadline.
- Email Wendy Bernier by July 1st to confirm you have made an appointment.
- Attend your scheduled appointment with your form fully completed and all documentation ready to be scanned into the Health Services database. You keep your originals.
- *Keep all of your original documents (including a copy of your completed form) in a safe place that is easily accessible. It is very important to note that the Fieldwork team does NOT have access to documents that you provide to Health Services, therefore it is YOUR responsibility to provide these again should your placement site want to see them.*
- Ensure your requirements are valid throughout the duration of your placement(s).

Q. Do I need to make an appointment with my health care professional?

You need to obtain documentation of all previous vaccinations and bloodwork, so you may need to book an appointment with your health care provider. If you are missing documentation and/or are not sure of your immunity status, Student Health Services can administer vaccinations and order appropriate bloodwork for you. If you need bloodwork completed, you can make an appointment with Student Health Services to receive a requisition form. This should be done in advance of your clearance appointment.

Q. How many health care appointments will I need?

Most students only need one appointment if all immunizations are current. Some students will need multiple appointments to ensure all requirements are completed.

If you are not sure if you have all of the required documentation, you can meet with an information nurse on a drop-in basis between 9:00am and 4:00pm at Student Health Services.

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Q. What do I say to my health care professional and what do I need to bring?

Tell them that you need to ensure you have proof of immunity (proof of vaccinations or bloodwork) to the requirements listed on the Student Checklist (third page of the Pre-Placement Requirement document).

You should bring the following to your appointment:

- ☐ Student Checklist
- ☐ any proof of immunization (yellow card) and/or health unit form(s) that provide a record of your immunization history;
- ☐ past blood lab results if completed by a different health professional;
- ☐ payment, if necessary.

Q. What do I say to my health professional if he/she says that I really don't need something noted on the checklist?

You must provide proof of immunity to everything listed on your Student Checklist to be eligible for placement. If you need proof of blood lab results, make sure that you obtain a copy of the report.

Q. Can I ask my local health unit to draw blood titres?

No. The Health Unit will not draw blood titres. Some may provide boosters, vaccinations, screenings, and might be able to give you an immunization card that you can take to your health care professional and/or your clearance appointment. You can also have blood titres done (in a separate visit) with the Information Nurse at Student Health Services. There is no charge for this SHS visit.

Q. Who do I submit my pre-placement requirements to?

Students are to bring their originals of all supporting documentation to Student Health Services prior to the deadline. Appointments are booked by phone at 519-661-3030. Student Health Services acts as the School's agent in clearing students on their School pre-placement requirements. You will only be cleared on what you have completed and must make a follow-up appointment (for

an additional fee) to submit any outstanding requirements or documentation – other than the WHMIS certificate and flu shot.

Your clearance status is maintained in the Student Health Service's database. *All information is kept confidential.*

Q. When do I need to submit all of my pre-placement requirement documentation?

The deadline is **the last business day of August each year**. *The deadline is not negotiable.* Your appointment should be booked before July 1. You need to confirm with Wendy Bernier after you have made your appointment.

Note: Demand for appointment times is highest the week leading up to a deadline. Students are encouraged to plan ahead and book appointments well in advance in order to make the deadline. Students also need to be flexible with their schedule when booking an appointment.

Q. What if I live outside of Ontario or am working full-time all summer?

School requirements and submission deadlines are communicated to students at least 2 months in advance of the deadline to give students adequate time to prepare and plan ahead. Completion and submission of School requirements is *mandatory* and the *deadline is not negotiable*.

The deadline is set to provide the School adequate time to verify and follow-up on students' clearance status, and complete all other requirements that practice sites may have of the School and students.

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Q. What if I don't have all requirements completed before the deadline?

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that *all* requirements are completed and submitted prior to the deadline. Failure to adhere to the requirement deadline will compromise your eligibility to complete the program and may result in your offer of admission being

REVOKED.

Students will not be cleared for placement until *all* requirements are submitted.

Q. Who pays for the costs associated with obtaining my School requirements?

Students are responsible for all costs related to placement. Costs are dependent upon each student's needs. Doctor's notes, laboratory blood work reports, x-rays, and immunizations may or may not be free of charge.

Q. How long will it take me to gather all of my placement requirements?

It may take several weeks to obtain all of your requirements, so please plan ahead.

Start the criminal record check process well in advance of your clearance appointment, as there are often long waiting periods to have these completed. Register for and attend certification courses in advance of your deadline.

Depending on your personal immunization status, it can take weeks or months to determine your level of immunity and complete all vaccination series. If you have proof of immunization or an immunization record (e.g. yellow card), take it with you to your medical appointment. If laboratory reports are required, or if immunizations are not complete, delays may occur.

Q. One of the Entering Student requirements is a Hepatitis B screening which can take up to 6 months to complete. What if I can't receive the full vaccination series before the due date noted on the form?

You can still book and attend your Student Health Services appointment as long as you have started the 3-step immunization series, and have documentation indicating this. You must complete the series and submit your final paperwork to Student Health Services.

NOTE: In some areas of the province there have been shortages of the Hep B vaccine. If this is true in your location, please call-around to different pharmacies. The Twinrix vaccination (both Hep A and B) can be used to satisfy this immunization requirement.

Q. How do I complete the criminal screening requirement?

The type of criminal record check documentation required varies depending on your age:

- Students should obtain a **police check with vulnerable sector screening (VSS)** through their local police service. Most police services have information on their website re: police check and VSS process. Students may apply to the London Police Service if they can provide proof of a local London address. Otherwise, students will need to go to their home police station.
- If you are from Toronto, you will need to have your Vulnerable Sector Screen (VSS) / Police Background Check completed in Toronto because of policies with the Toronto Police Service. If this applies to you, please contact our Fieldwork Coordinator ASAP (Dr. Ravenek – mravene@uwo.ca) as this requires you to obtain paperwork from Western. This paperwork can only be obtained in-person in London, as your identity needs to be verified.

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Please begin the criminal screening application process well ahead of time as this can be a time-consuming process.

Criminal screening is an **annual** School requirement; however, some of our placement sites request that students present a police check (VSS) no older than 1 month, 3 months or 6 months. Unfortunately, the School does not have any control over this request.

The police check (VSS) must be valid throughout the duration of all placements. *If your police check (VSS) will expire during a placement, you must renew it prior to the expiry date and submit your new documentation to Student Health Services.*

Q. I need to apply for a police check with vulnerable sector screening (VSS), how can I obtain an Authorization Letter?

Some police stations may require a VSS Authorization letter from the School, please contact Wendy Bernier (wbernier@uwo.ca) for this letter. *Determine well ahead of time what your local police service needs to fulfill your VSS application.*

Q. Where should I go to obtain a Standard First Aid certification and CPR – Level C certification?

First Aid and CPR courses are available on campus through the Student Emergency Response Team (SERT) and Campus Recreation. Please refer to the SERT website (<https://sert.uwo.ca/first-aid-courses/>) for dates and times of courses that are offered. You are also welcome to take courses off-campus at a variety of locations (e.g. your local Red Cross or Heart & Stroke Foundation, local post-secondary or municipal recreation department, etc.). *Online CPR courses are not acceptable.*

The First Aid and CPR requirements must be valid throughout the duration of all placements. *If either will expire during a placement, you must renew them prior to the expiry date and submit your new documentation to Student Health Services.*

Q. Where can I go to have a Mask Fit test done?

Students are welcome to have a Mask Fit test completed at their choice of provider. Student Health Services does offer this service (for a fee) and it can be completed during your appointment (be sure to let them know *at the time of booking* that you need this test done as it will require additional appointment time).

Q. Where can I access the WHMIS training?

Students may access Western's WHMIS training module through OWL as follows:

1. Login to [OWL](http://owl.uwo.ca) with your Western UserID. <http://owl.uwo.ca>
2. From **My Workspace**, click **Membership** on the left menu bar
3. Click **Joinable Sites** at top
4. Use the search box, top right, to **search WHMIS**.
5. Click **Join** below the **WHMIS *New***.
6. Under **My Current Sites**, you will see the **Basic WHMIS** site listed.
7. Click to go to the site and complete the **WHMIS** modules, take the quiz & print out the certificate to provide to Health Services.

NOTE: You will not have access to OWL until mid-August. Submission of this requirement can be completed without an appointment at Health Services.

Q. Why is the influenza (flu) immunization mandatory?

All students must protect themselves and their patients from influenza. Our practice partners also require this immunization and may not allow a student on placement without this vaccination.

Any student not receiving the flu vaccination will be removed from placement in the event of an influenza outbreak. This could affect completion of the placement and progression in the program.

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Q. How do I cancel an appointment with Student Health Services?

To cancel an appointment, call Student Health Services at 519-661-3030 (available 24 hours a day). Please ensure you cancel *at least 24 hours prior* to your appointment. Failure to provide 24-hours notice will result in a missed appointment fee.

Q. I'm not quite sure if I have everything I need for my clearance appointment. Who can help me?

When in doubt, you can drop-in (Mon-Fri 9am-4pm) and see a Student Health Services Information Nurse or book an appointment to review your documentation. Be sure to bring all your paperwork with you, including your requirement checklist.

Q. What do I need to bring to Student Health Services on the day of my appointment?

The original of your:

- ☐ Blood lab reports (as required)
- ☐ Yellow immunization card or other proof of immunization
- ☐ Certification cards/documents (as required – see checklist)
- ☐ Payment method (cash, debit, MC, Visa).

Q. What happens at an appointment?

A registered nurse will review all of your documents, order bloodwork, advise you to book a follow-up appointment for missing vaccinations, and determine if you can be cleared for placement. The appointment will take up to 15 minutes. Your documents are kept confidential. Upon completion of your appointment, Health Services will provide you with a 4-page summary document that shows you have been cleared for everything on the checklist. **It is important to keep this summary and original documents in a safe place should your placement site want to see it.**

Q. Can I fax or email information to Student Health Services? What if I forgot to bring some of my documentation to the appointment?

No. You must meet with a Student Health Services nurse in-person to present your medical and non-medical requirements. You are not permitted to send documents by courier, mail, fax, or email after your appointment. You must book a follow-up appointment (for a fee) to submit any outstanding requirements or documentation.

Exception: Since the influenza vaccine is not available until late fall, Student Health Services will allow students to drop off proof of influenza vaccination at their reception desk. Be sure to identify yourself as a Western OT student so the receptionist knows why you are dropping this off. This documentation is due by mid-November.

Q. What are the possible outcomes from my initial clearance appointment?

Cleared – you met all of your requirements.

Not Cleared – a requirement has not been met or supporting documentation has not been received.

Conditional Clearance – you have a *legitimate* reason for not submitting a requirement. You will be asked to contact the Fieldwork Assistant to determine if you are eligible to participate in your placement.

Q. I've been cleared on all requirements, however one (or more) will expire before the end of the school year. Is this OK?

No, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that all requirements are valid *throughout the duration of all placements*. If a requirement will expire during the school year, the student must renew it (before it expires) and submit the updated documentation to Student Health Services.

If documentation needs to be submitted for more than 1 of the requirements, an appointment is required and you will be charged. For only 1 requirement (i.e. WHMIS certificate), you can see an information nurse without an

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appointment. You must tell the information nurse at Health Services you are an OT student and require your pre-placement file to be updated.

Note: Students must also be aware of when they had their last tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis vaccination. This vaccination must be completed every 10 years and students must ensure their immunizations are up-to-date.

Q. What if I'm given a status of NOT CLEARED?

You will receive a list of requirements that you still need to complete. Once done, you must book another appointment (for an additional fee) with Student Health Services. *You will not be permitted to begin observations or placements until you have been cleared on all requirements.*

Q. What happens once I am cleared?

Your clearance status is updated in the Student Health Services' database. **Please note that even if you are cleared on your School pre-placement requirements, you may still need to submit site-specific requirements in advance of your placement. Site-specific requirements are set by the practice sites and are non-negotiable.** It is your responsibility to communicate with your placement site and ensure everything is in place prior to your placement start date.

Q. I've been cleared by Student Health Services on all requirements, but now my practice site is requesting some of the same information. Why doesn't my School submissions cover these?

Some of our practice sites have site-specific requirements that they want students to submit directly to them. Most likely, their policies require them to view all required documentation and not rely on a 3rd party clearance. This is accepted practice, and outside the control of the School.

This is why we advise our students to always keep their originals of all requirements and documentation in a safe place that they can access should their placement site wish to see them.

For more information or any questions, please contact your Fieldwork Assistant or Health Services.

Wendy Bernier, wbernier@uwo.ca,
519-661-2111, x.88754

**Student Health Services: University Community
Centre, Room 11, 519-661-3030**



Western
HealthSciences

School of Occupational Therapy