

This resource has been developed for the purposes of assisting in the identification and development of rehabilitation programs for injured or ill employees, and to provide detailed information about **common** job demands. When supporting an injured employee in their return to work this document is used in conjunction with Workplace Specific Details to ensure information is customised.

DISCLAIMER - *This job profile explains the common work activities and physical demands of a therapist (including Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist and Physiotherapist). Due to the different settings and circumstances where this role may be undertaken, there may be differences to times and activities as outlined in the job profile.*

This document indicates the average time spent during a working day on common work activities and physical work

Description of the role of the Therapist:

Speech Pathologists/Occupational Therapist/Physiotherapists (therapists) work within the school community to establish and maintain collaborative relationships between teaching staff and health providers. Therapists work with other stakeholders to provide specialist advice and targeted or group interventions to assist with advancing equitable outcomes, opportunities and experiences of students. They have a pivotal role in working collaboratively with external agencies and creating referral pathways for students and families to child and family support agencies.

The therapist aims to improve the wellbeing of students through specialised support and intervention. The therapist may provide training to other therapists and support staff in managing complexities that may arise.

demands that have been identified as essential to the successful performance of the role. The frequency of these work tasks is described using one of the following measures: Descriptor, Percentage of Time, or Amount of Time, based on an average 7-hour working day.

Descriptor	Percentage of Time	Amount of Time based on 7 hours per day
Not present	0%	0
Rare	1% - 7%	From 4 mins to 30 mins
Occasional	8% - 33%	35 mins to 2 ¼ hours
Frequent	34% - 66%	2 ½ hours to 4 ½ hours
Constant	67% - 100%	4 ¾ hours to 7 hours

This table is derived from the US Department of Labor Physical Demand Characteristics of Work, 1996

Hours of Work and Scheduled Breaks

Hours of Work: Full-time therapists are contracted and paid to work a 35-hour week, 5 days a week for 7 hours per day, excluding breaks. They are required to work during student vacation periods unless on a form of approved leave has been submitted. During term time, therapists must perform all their duties from their respective schools unless stated otherwise in their role description.

Meal Breaks: The standard lunch break is 1 hour. In accordance with the Flex Agreement, a therapist may reduce their lunch break to a minimum of 30 minutes or increase it up to a maximum of 3 hours in agreement with their principal.

Therapists work within the school community to establish and maintain collaborative relationships between teaching staff and health providers. Therapists work with stakeholders to provide specialist advice and targeted or group interventions to assist with advancing equitable outcomes, opportunities and experiences for student learning. They have a pivotal role in working collaboratively with external agencies and creating referral pathways for students and families to child and family support agencies.

Job Profile – Functional Summary for the position of a therapist (inclusive of Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist)

Frequency of Physical Job demands (Average % of Full Time Work Day)

Note: If absent then assume it is rare (1-7%) or not present			
	Occasional (8-33%)	Frequent (34% - 66%)	Constant (67%-100%)
Sitting			
Standing -Static			
Standing – Dynamic			
Walking – Flat Terrain			
Walking – Slippery/Gravel			
Climbing – Step stools/Ladders			
Climbing – Stairs			
Stooping			
Kneeling			
Couching – One off			
Crawling			
Balancing – above ground			
Reaching			
Handling			
Pushing			
Pulling			
Lifting			
Carrying			
Fine Motor			
Tactility			
Driving			
Visual Function			
Speech			
Auditory			

Job Profile – Functional Summary for the position of a therapist (inclusive of Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist)

Tools/ Equipment Handled
Pens/pencils/whiteboard markers and books
Computer workstation/telephone
Assessment resources – approximately 5 – 8kg. Use of trolley bag when travelling if resources are required for assessment purposes

Loads Lifted & Carried (Average % of Full Time Work Day)					
Weight range	Not present	Rare (1-7%)	Occasional (8-33%)	Frequent (34 -66%)	Constant (67 – 100%)
0-5 kg			Floor to Waist to Shoulder		
6-10kg		Floor to Waist			
11-15kg	X				
15-20kg	X				
21-25kg+	X				

Note: - Loads are a guide of maximum required in a full time work day.

Common Job Activities (used in conjunction with Workplace Specific Details)		Average Time	Critical Job Demand
1	Therapists Students who are referred to therapists may require support regarding difficulties that impact their learning opportunities in school. The therapist supports staff and students through targeted and group interventions. As part of this process the therapist may act as a mediator between parties, may develop and deliver programs or may liaise with school staff, external stakeholders and non-government organisations. Therapists have a pivotal role in working collaboratively with external and other government agencies, creating referral pathways for students and families to access support needed.	Up to 4 periods per day (8 students generally seen in a day); Cognitive assessments can take 2 hours	Yes
2	Parent liaison Therapists liaise with parents via telephone or in meetings as required to discuss specific issues.	Parent meetings can take 30 – 60 minutes each	Yes
3	Computer based tasks Include emails, assessments, research, and writing reports. Report writing forms a large component of the role.	As required	Yes

**Job Profile – Functional Summary for the position of a therapist
(inclusive of Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist)**

Common Job Activities (used in conjunction with Workplace Specific Details)		Average Time	Critical Job Demand
In support of the above activities performed during rostered duty time, the activities below may be performed by therapists.			
4	Meetings Staff meetings/liaison with staff members: involving face to face meetings at which day to day operational issues, short term and long term strategic planning for the school occur.	Varies according to school	Yes
5	Committee meetings Therapists may also be required to, or choose to, participate in certain school-based committees (for example the school's professional learning committee).	Varies according to school	No
6	Extra curricula activities Therapists may also participate in extra-curricular activities most of which are of a voluntary nature. These include: • excursions • school camps		No

Job Profile – Functional Summary for the position of a therapist (inclusive of Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist)

Environmental Factors

The following environmental factors exist in the workplace.

Low - level ambient noise (from students, practical activities e.g. music practice) requiring considerable voice projection to be heard.

Often offices have limited space which makes it difficult to maintain personal space or to hold group sessions.

Worker/ team relationships – the work environment may require the employee to adjust to and manage different working styles, and demonstrate an ability to work cooperatively.

Shortened work breaks may be taken on a voluntary basis.

While deadlines exist for many tasks, the level of demand is dependent upon the school environment and staffing level. Therapists may also be required to address multiple demands, and a large number of unplanned interruptions may occur throughout the working day.

The nature of this role means that the Therapists may need to deal with people who are undergoing stressful or emotional events.

Core Workplace Expectations (Organisational, Interpersonal, and Psychosocial).

The following major workplace expectations have been identified with reference to Department Policies and Guidelines.

All employees have a responsibility to comply with legislation, departmental policy, procedures and the Department Code of Conduct, perform their duties effectively, provide impartial and accurate advice and act in a manner that promotes a productive and harmonious working environment.

Negotiating with others - In dealing with other people, employees should be able to accommodate and tolerate different opinions and perspectives and sort out their disagreements by rational discussion.

Departmental employees have a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of the students in their charge.

Establishing and maintaining effective communication – includes appropriate communication with supervisors, peers, subordinates, students, parents and community members

Employees who work with students have a special responsibility in presenting themselves as appropriate role models for those students.

Therapists assist in maintaining safe and effective strategies to support the management of student learning and the maintenance of a safe working and learning environment include WHS procedures, student welfare procedures, curriculum and environmental management.

Investigations – participate in reporting investigation and resolution processes, including mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect, and participation as a witness or party to performance, discipline, grievance, WorkCover or other processes.

Have the capacity to be flexible, adaptable and willing to work in an environment where the day-to-day priorities and tasks may vary considerably. Have the capacity to maintain their own mental health and a balanced approach to life when constantly dealing with challenging situations.

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The use of this terminology, referred to in Frequency of Physical Job demands table on page 2, helps to establish a common language for key stakeholders when describing job demands in terms of frequency of activity performance, type of posture or movement and the level of strength/ lifting required.

Definition of Physical Job Demands	
LIFTING	Raising or lowering an object from one level to another (includes upward pulling and/or exerting upward force to hold an object in static position).
CARRYING	Transporting an object, usually holding in the hands, arms or on the shoulder.
PUSHING	Exerting force upon an object so that the object moves away from the force (including stooping, striking, kicking, treading and exerting force to hold an object in static position).
PULLING	Exerting force upon an object so that the object moves toward the force (including jerking and exerting force to hold an object in static position).
SITTING	Remaining in a seated position.
STANDING	Remaining on one's feet in an upright position without moving greater than three steps.
WALKING	Moving about on foot greater than 3 steps.
CLIMBING	Ascending or descending ladders, stairs, scaffolding, ramps, poles and the like, using feet and legs, or hands and arms.
BALANCING	Maintaining body equilibrium to prevent falling when walking, standing, crouching, or running on either elevated and unguarded, narrow, slippery or erratically moving surfaces.
STOOPING	Bending the body forward and downward by bending spine at waist, requiring full use of lower extremities and back muscles.
KNEELING	Bending legs at knees to come to rest on knees.
CROUCHING	Bending body forward and downward by bending legs and spine.
CRAWLING	Moving about on the hands and knees.
REACHING	Extending arms(s) in any direction.
HANDLING	Seizing or grasping, holding, turning or otherwise working with the hands. Fingers are only involved to the extent that they are extensions of the hand.
FINE MOTOR	Picking, pinching, or otherwise working with the fingers, other than with the whole hand or arm as in handling.
TACTILITY	Perceiving attributes of objects, such as size, shape, temperature, or texture by touching with skin; particularly that of fingertips.