



## A Guide for Prospective Physiotherapy Students in Namibia and South Africa

### What is Physiotherapy?

Physiotherapy is a healthcare profession dedicated to the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of physical dysfunction and pain caused by injury, disease, aging, or environmental factors. Physiotherapists use movement, manual therapy, and exercise—along with education and advice—to restore physical function and improve overall well-being.

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### Types of Facilities Physiotherapists Work In

Physiotherapists may work in a variety of settings, including:

- Public hospitals and clinics
  - Private practices
  - Community health centres
  - Rehabilitation and long-term care facilities
  - Sports teams and fitness centres
  - Occupational health and corporate wellness settings
  - Educational institutions and research facilities
  - Rural outreach programmes
  - Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
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### What is APS?

**APS** stands for **Admission Point Score**, a system used by most South African universities to assess whether a prospective student meets the minimum academic requirements for entry into a programme.

Each subject passed in the final National Senior Certificate (NSC) exam earns a point based on the level of achievement:

NSC Level	Percentage Range	APS Points
Level 7	80 – 100%	7
Level 6	70 – 79%	6
Level 5	60 – 69%	5

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### NSC Level Percentage Range APS Points

Level 4	50 – 59%	4
Level 3	40 – 49%	3
Level 2	30 – 39%	2
Level 1	0 – 29%	1

The total APS is calculated by adding the points for a student's **best six subjects**, excluding Life Orientation at most institutions.

### Scope of Physiotherapy Practice

Physiotherapists are first-line practitioners who assess, diagnose, treat, and prevent conditions affecting movement and physical function. Their scope includes:

- **Musculoskeletal rehabilitation:** Managing joint, muscle, and bone injuries
- **Neurological rehabilitation:** Treating patients with stroke, spinal cord injuries, or cerebral palsy
- **Cardiopulmonary physiotherapy:** Supporting patients with respiratory or cardiac conditions
- **Paediatric physiotherapy:** Developmental support for children with congenital or acquired conditions
- **Geriatric physiotherapy:** Managing mobility disorders and age-related degeneration
- **Women's health:** Addressing pelvic floor dysfunction and pregnancy-related conditions
- **Sports physiotherapy:** Preventing and treating athletic injuries
- **Occupational health:** Preventing workplace injuries and promoting ergonomics
- **Community-based rehabilitation (CBR):** Promoting access and inclusion in rural or under-resourced areas

Physiotherapists also contribute to **health promotion, education, and research**, and often work in **multidisciplinary teams**.

### Physiotherapy Training in Namibia and South Africa

#### Namibia



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### University of Namibia (UNAM)

- **Programme:** Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)
  - **Duration:** 4 years
  - **Campus:** Hage Geingob Campus, Windhoek
  - **Entry Requirements:**
    - Minimum of 30 points in five subjects including English, Mathematics, and Biology
    - C symbol or better in English, Mathematics, and Physical or Life Sciences
    - Aptitude test and/or interview may apply
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### South Africa

#### University of Cape Town (UCT)

- **Programme:** BSc in Physiotherapy
- **Entry Requirements:**
  - UCT uses **Faculty Points Score (FPS)**, calculated from actual percentage marks in the best six subjects (excluding Life Orientation), totalling up to 600.
  - For example, 6 subjects with 80% each = FPS 480.
  - **National Benchmark Tests (NBTs)** in Quantitative and Academic Literacy are required.
  - The **Weighted Points Score (WPS)** may adjust for school background or disadvantage.
  - An FPS of 480 is competitive due to high demand and limited space, not equivalent to APS.

#### University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)

- **Programme:** BSc in Physiotherapy
- **APS:** ~42+
- **Subjects:** English, Mathematics, Physical Sciences
- **NBT:** Required

#### University of Pretoria (UP)



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- **Programme:** BPhysT
- **APS:** 30–35
- **Subjects:** English, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences

### **Stellenbosch University**

- **Programme:** BSc in Physiotherapy
- **APS:** 35+
- **Subjects:** Mathematics (Level 5), Physical Sciences (Level 5), Life Sciences
- **NBT:** Required

### **University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)**

- **Programme:** BPhysT
- **APS:** 33+
- **Subjects:** Mathematics, Physical Sciences, English (Life Sciences recommended)

### **University of the Free State (UFS)**

- **Programme:** BSc Physiotherapy
- **APS:** 34+
- **Subjects:** Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, English

### **Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU)**

- **Programme:** BSc in Physiotherapy
- **APS:** 32+
- **Subjects:** Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, English

### **University of the Western Cape (UWC)**

- **Programme:** BSc in Physiotherapy
- **APS:** Minimum 40
- **Subjects:**
  - English (Level 5)

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- o Mathematics (Level 4)
  - o Life Sciences and Physical Sciences (Level 4 or higher)
  - **Selection Criteria:**
    - o Interview or motivational letter
    - o Prior exposure to physiotherapy (e.g., job shadowing)
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### **Career Outlook for Physiotherapists**

The outlook for physiotherapists is strong in Namibia and South Africa, with increasing demand in both urban and rural settings.

#### **Employment Opportunities:**

- Public hospitals and clinics
- Private practices
- Rehab and long-term care centres
- NGOs and outreach programs
- Corporate wellness and sports medicine
- Academic institutions and research

#### **Global Opportunities:**

- South African and Namibian qualifications are recognised in countries such as the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (registration may be required).

#### **Specialisation & Advancement:**

- Fields include orthopaedics, neurology, sports, paediatrics, cardiopulmonary, and pain management.
- Opportunities exist for practice ownership, postgraduate studies, and public health leadership.

Physiotherapy is a **rewarding, respected profession** with a strong sense of purpose and societal impact.



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### Additional Notes for Applicants

- Applications typically open **May–September** for the following academic year.
- **NBTs** must be written early.
- Equity policies may influence selection.
- Meeting minimum criteria **does not guarantee** admission.
- **Shadowing** a physiotherapist and gaining relevant experience can enhance your application.