

ELEANOR O'BRIEN

PHYSIOTHERAPY

CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

Senior School Subjects

- Year 11: English, Specialist Mathematics, Japanese, Biology, Physical Education, Religion and Society Units 3 + 4 Early Advancement.
- Year 12: English, Mathematical Methods, Japanese, Biology, Physical Education.



Why did you choose these subjects? In Year 9 or 10 I had already decided I was interested in pursuing a career in health, specifically in something like Physiotherapy or Podiatry. This made choosing my subjects fairly easy. I chose subjects I was interested in, had good scaling with marks and were prerequisites for the course at most universities. I also asked teachers about the subject to get an idea if it was what I wanted to learn/was interested in.

What was your course like? My course was really good, although it required a lot of hard work and dedication to studying. The first year was mostly general theory subjects about healthcare, anatomy and physiology, and a subject covering the basic foundations of physiotherapy. Second year and third year covered more specific subjects for physiotherapy, but still a lot of theory learning.

Fourth year was mostly clinical placements to put all the theory and practical skills we learnt into practice. I think a really important thing to know about the course is that you don't spend four years learning 'typical' physiotherapy, like you might see in a sports practice for example, which is generally what most people would know physiotherapy to be.

A lot of time is spent on learning the mechanics of movement, neurological and cardiorespiratory physiotherapy as well. So even if your goal after the course is to become a sports physiotherapist, you need to pass the theory subjects and clinical placements in other areas to get through the course and have a good foundation of the whole scope of physiotherapy

What did you love about your course? Getting to go on clinical placement and put the theory and skills you've learnt at uni into practice was good. I also enjoyed most of our physio specific subjects because we had a really good cohort of people so they were always fun classes! Doing the course in a smaller town, compared to Melbourne for example, was also good because the class sizes are smaller and it allowed the tutors and lecturers to get to know every student personally, as well as knowing everyone in the course really well.

How did your senior school subjects prepare you for your course?

- **Biology and Physical Education** were good bridging subjects into the course. Some of the first year subjects cover the exact same things so it was a lot easier for me to get through those subjects compared to people who hadn't done those subjects at school.
- **Japanese and Mathematical Methods** are both great subjects for building good problem solving skills, which are essential skills to have as a physiotherapist.
- **English** - I didn't really enjoy English as a subject at school, however it did help because it's really important to have good English skills to go well in university assignments.

What are you doing now in your graduate position? I work as a Grade 1 Physiotherapist at Southwest Healthcare in Warrnambool. It is a rotating position, which means I change the area I work in every 4 months to get experience in all the different areas of Physiotherapy. So far I have completed rotations in inpatient rehabilitation, general inpatient wards, outpatient neurological rehabilitation, outpatient orthopaedic rehabilitation and I am currently doing home based rehabilitation.

I am moving to Melbourne in August to another rotating position at Northern Health. I plan to get more experience in acute hospital wards, like stroke ward and intensive care, before specialising in critical care Physiotherapy and/or Neurological Rehabilitation.

What do you enjoy about your job? I really enjoy the fact that my job is to help people. It's really great to know how to help a person who isn't able to do something as simple as getting up out of bed by themselves, whether it be from a stroke, a broken hip, back pain or from lying in ICU for a couple of days. Having the skills and knowledge to treat such a wide range of conditions is great, because I have the ability help a wide range of people

Course information - Bachelor of Physiotherapy, Charles Sturt University, <http://bit.ly/1MNixVs>