



# The IRONE Project

(Inherent Requirements of Nursing Education)

Trevor Allan, Head, SEWDS  
Amanda Johnson, Senior Lecturer  
IRONE Project Leader SoNM





# Project Team

Amanda Johnson Senior Lecturer SoNM (Project Leader)

Trevor Allan Head Student Equity, Welfare & Disability Services

Toni Azzopardi Deputy Director Clinical Simulation, SoNM

Cathy Dickson Deputy Director Clinical, SoNM

Mary Goldsmith Assoc. Lecturer & School Disability Coordinator, SoNM

Assoc. Prof Cecily Hengstberger–Sims Director Undergraduate  
Studies, SoNM

Kirrilee Phillips Project Officer



# Why IRONE Project?

- 2009 Changes to DDA
  - Burden of Proof
  - Obligation to Prevent Discrimination
- SoNM/Disability Service identified need
- Experiences with students
- Lack of existing IR statements at UWS and elsewhere
- Develop a model and process as exemplar of best practice



# Project Vision

- The vision of this project is to articulate the inherent requirements of the Bachelor of Nursing programs, offered at UWS. The expression of these statements will facilitate informed decision making relating to potential and current students and will assist academics to accommodate reasonable adjustments whilst maintaining the integrity of the course.



# Why Inherent Requirements?

- Critical aspect of determining “Reasonable Adjustments” under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Disability Education Standards (The Standards)
- One of the few limitations on obligations to adjust for effects of a disability
- Integral part of the process of maintaining academic integrity
- Facilitates timely determination of adjustments as required by DDA
- Prevents indirect discrimination due to non-disclosure of information necessary for informed decision making about courses, enrolments, etc.



# Definition

- ***Inherent Requirements*** are the fundamental components of a course or unit, that are essential to demonstrate the capabilities, knowledge and skills to achieve the core learning outcomes of the course or unit, while preserving the academic integrity of the university's learning, assessment and accreditation processes. (Note: making a requirement compulsory does not necessarily make it an *Inherent Requirement*.) Academic Senate Education Committee, 2010)



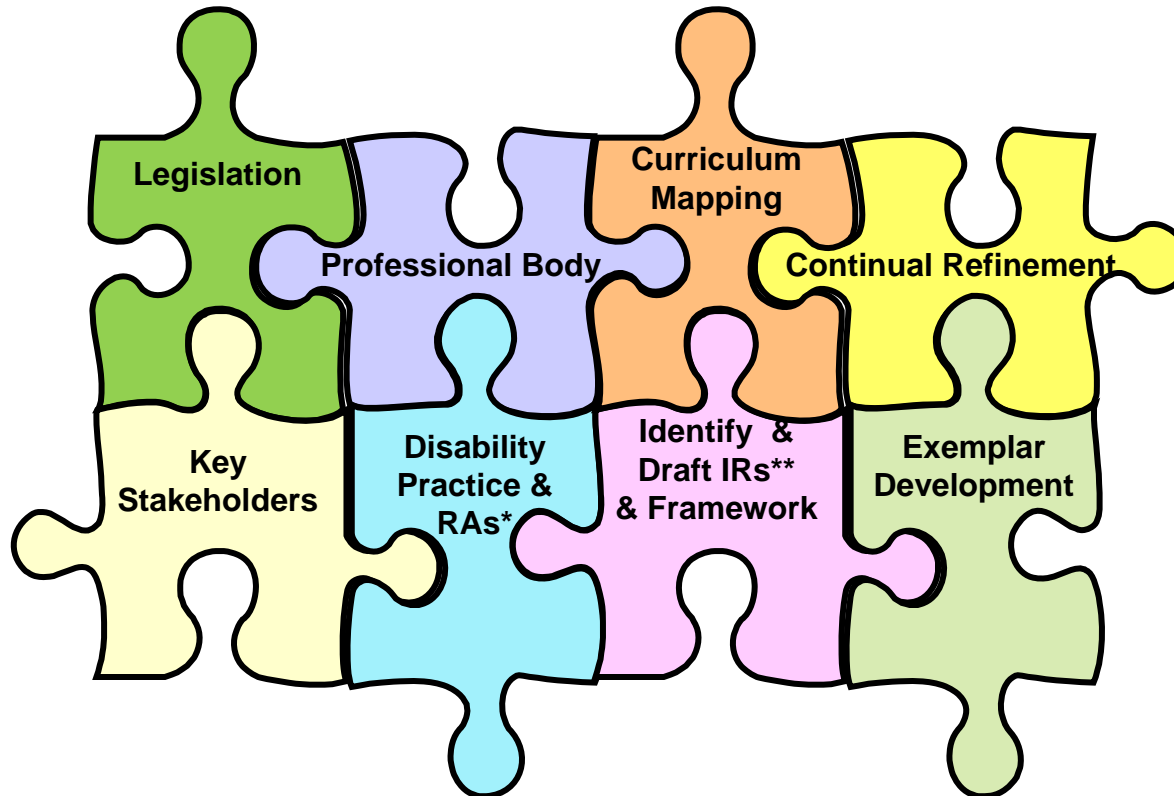
- *E.g. One Inherent Requirement for a Nursing Unit may be to demonstrate the ability to accurately measure the blood pressure of a patient. Traditionally, this has meant the use of a stethoscope, but a student with a Hearing Impairment may use a powered stethoscope, or an automatic Blood Pressure meter that does not require the use of a stethoscope to meet this Inherent Requirement. Another student with quadriplegia, may be able to demonstrate the necessary knowledge of how to measure blood pressure, but does not have the physical capability to conduct the test, and consequently cannot meet this inherent requirement. However, this same student may be able to meet an inherent requirement of a Biology course that requires students to analyse the blood pressure readings of a number of patients, by instructing an assistant to measure the blood pressure of patients, then conducting an appropriate analysis of the results, using voice recognition software to dictate the analysis into a computer.*



# Process

## Phase 1: Getting Started

## Phase 2: Development



\*Reasonable Adjustments

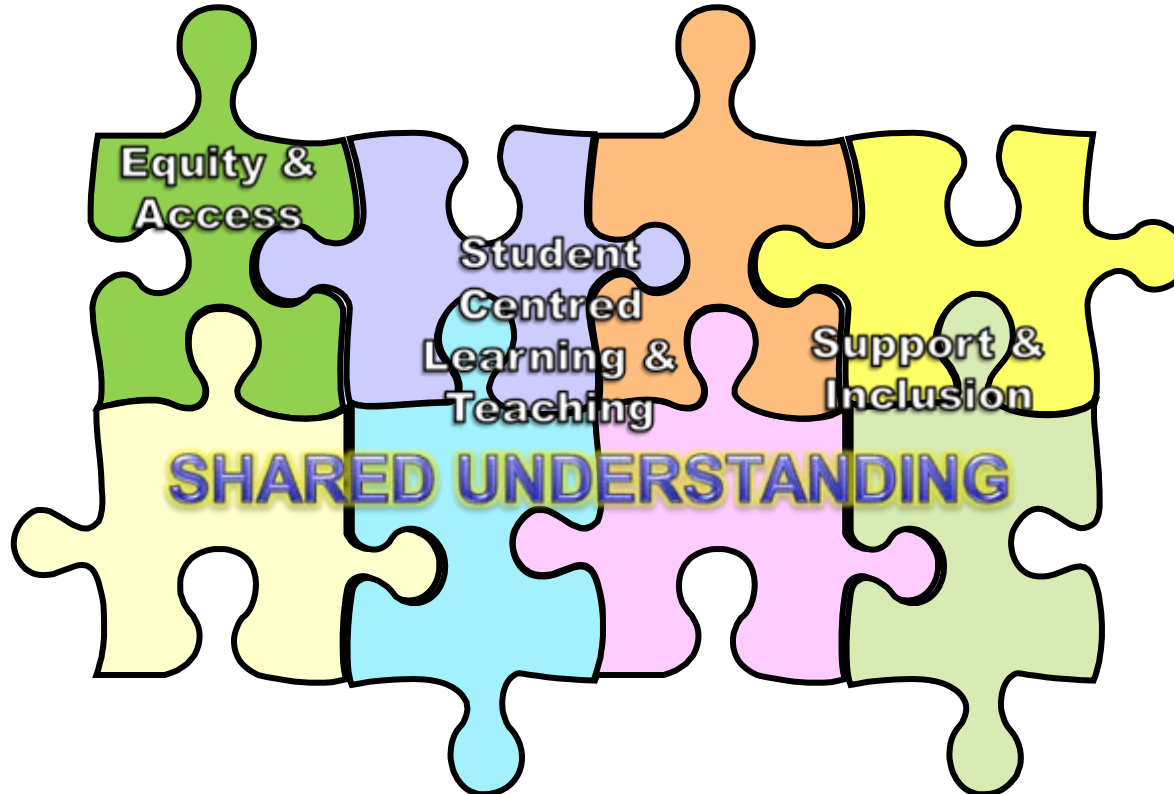
\*\* Inherent Requirements





# Process

## Phase 3: Outcomes





# Process

## Phase 4: Articulation

### UWS SoNM Inherent Requirements

<u>2</u>	Demonstrates consistent and sustained level of physical energy to complete a specific task in a timely manner and over time Able to perform repetitive activities with a level of concentration that ensures a capacity to focus on the activity until it is completed appropriately
<u>3</u>	<b><i>Inherent Requirement because:</i></b> •Nursing practice is contingent on a person being consistently responsive to provide total patient care. Sufficient physical and mental endurance is an essential requirement needed to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide good safe quality of care without compromise.
<u>4</u>	<b>Adjustments</b> may include reasonable variations in the duration of shifts to adjust for the effects of a disability, but performance must be consistent and sustained over the whole of that period.
<u>5</u>	Exemplar: Participating in tutorials, lectures, skills throughout the day. Exemplar: Demonstrating ability to perform patient care on allocated patients.
<b>Level</b>	<b><u>Inherent Requirement Statements</u></b>
<u>1</u>	To perform nursing skills safety requires adequate sight.
<u>2</u>	Possess sufficient visual acuity to perform a range of skills
<u>3</u>	<b><i>Inherent Requirement because:</i></b> Nursing students will need to demonstrate: •effective observational skills, •the capacity to operate and monitor equipment, •safely perform tasks such as injections, and •the safe preparation and administration of correct medication dosages (not comprehensive list).
<u>4</u>	<b>Adjustments</b> for vision impairments must address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in clinical practice. Any strategies to address the effects of the Vision impairment, including technological solutions, must be effective, consistent and not compromise patient treatment or safety.
<u>5</u>	Exemplar: Entering data on standardised forms/charts. Exemplar: Accurately drawing up medication to administer.



# IR Framework

## **5 Components:**

- 1** Inherent Requirement statement
- 2** Description of skills & capabilities required
- 3** Inherent because (why/justification)
- 4** Characteristics of Adjustments
- 5** Exemplars



# Why this Approach?

- Previous approaches have simply stated requirements, without justifying inherency or considering adjustments
- Need to address the difference between compulsory and inherent requirements
- Lack of clarity can lead to discriminatory requirements and/or undermining academic integrity
- Need to consider whether adjustments are reasonable, consistent with Inherent Requirements



# IR Categories

- Ethical Behaviour
- Emotional Stability
- Legal
- Communication (Verbal, Non-Verbal, Written)
- Cognition (Incl. Literacy & Numeracy)
- Sensory (Auditory, Vision, **Olfactory**, Tactile)
- Motor Skills (Fine & Gross)
- Sustainable Performance



# IR Example

## Communication

A person's practice is reliant on the ability to convey and receive messages to support the safe delivery of care. A nurse's practice involves three modes of communication: verbal, non verbal and written.

### *Verbal*

<u>Levels</u>	<u>Inherent Requirement Statements</u>
<u>1</u>	Effective and efficient verbal communication is an essential requirement to provide safe and effective delivery of care.
<u>2</u>	Able to understand and respond to verbal communication accurately, appropriately and in a timely manner. Able to provide clear instructions in the context of the situation. Provide timely clear feedback and reporting.
<u>3</u>	<b><i>Inherent Requirement because:</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Communication may be restricted to verbal because of physical limitations of the patient (e.g. injury, disease or congenital conditions)</li> <li>•Speed and interactivity of communication may be critical for patient safety or treatment</li> <li>•Timely, accurate and effective delivery of instructions is critical to patient safety, treatment and management. Inaccurate instructions or unclear instructions could have negative outcomes.</li> </ul>
<u>4</u>	<b>Adjustments</b> for impaired verbal communication will need to address effectiveness, speed, clarity and accuracy issues to ensure patient safety.
<u>5</u>	Exemplar: Participating in tutorial discussions. Exemplar: Responding to a patient care request in the clinical setting.



# IR Assessment Tool

- Designed to provide a structure and process to develop IRs for individual Units
- Also for analysing effects of disabilities and determining possible adjustments for those effects and the capacity to meet IRs.



University of Western Sydney School of Nursing and Midwifery

Inherent Requirements

Course: Bachelor of Nursing

Unit: Clinical Practice 1001

Student:

IR Statement	Task Description	Skills/ Capabilities Required	Reason Why Inherent	Effects of Disability/Potential Adjustments
<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>Verbal:</b> Able to understand and respond to oral communication accurately</p>	<p>Responding to a patient care request in the clinical setting</p>	<p>Capacity to perceive, understand and respond appropriately to oral requests from patients. Nursing Student acts appropriately and in a timely manner in response to request, including the provision of feedback to patient.</p>	<p>Response to Patient care requests is an essential and critical aspect of nursing practice. Nurses must be able to perceive and respond to oral requests, since many patients will not be able to advise nursing staff of their needs in any other way, and a failure to identify the need and act appropriately will frequently compromise the comfort, treatment, recovery and/or safety of the patient. The provision of feedback to patients is often a critical factor in ensuring patients follow through on appropriate instructions to facilitate appropriate behaviours, actions and treatment outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Effects:</b> Slow, slurred speech – Difficult to understand.</p> <p><b>Potential Adjustments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use electronic speech device – slow, difficult to understand. Could delay treatment.</li> <li>2. Have another person translating speech – takes longer, and translator would need strong Nursing or medical background to ensure correct translation. Prone to delays and potential misunderstandings that could affect patient safety.</li> </ol> <p><b>Depends on severity of speech impairment</b></p>
<p>Able to provide clear instructions in the context of the situation.</p>	<p>Discussing post operative orders with patient/staff</p>			
<p><b>Non verbal:</b> Capacity to recognise, interpret and respond appropriately to behavioural cues.</p>	<p>Being able to determine when a patient wants to talk or needs time alone.</p>			





# Project Outcomes

- Identify the inherent requirements in the Bachelor of Nursing programs at UWS.
- Formulate statements to express the inherent requirements of the Bachelor of Nursing programs at UWS.
- Provide potential and current students with clear statements of the inherent requirements in an undergraduate nursing program to enable individuals to make an informed decision regarding admission and continuance in the nursing programs.
- Provide clear parameters for the determination of reasonable adjustments to enable admission and timely progression of students with disabilities in the Bachelor of Nursing programs.
- Develop a best practice model related to inherent requirements to inform other disciplines at UWS.
- Inform UWS course and unit approval policy and procedures in relation to inclusion of inherent requirement statements and processes.
- Disseminate project outcomes through a range of scholarly activities.



## POT-SHOTS — Brilliant Thoughts in 17 words or less

POT-SHOTS NO. 0364 ©ASHLEIGH BRILLIANT 2005

I HAVE SOME  
WONDERFUL  
ANSWERS ~

DO YOU HAVE  
ANY  
INTERESTING  
QUESTIONS?

Ashleigh  
Brilliant.com

