COURSE OUTLINE

SPX302 Exercise in Musculoskeletal Health

School: School of Health - Sport and Exercise Science

2026 | Trimester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast | BLENDED LEARNING | Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Please go to unisc.edu.au for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

This advanced course provides opportunities for you to develop knowledge and skills that are required for independent and team provision of professional sport and exercise care for people with musculoskeletal issues. You will be directed to explore a client-focused and evidence-based approach. This course includes knowledge you will need when working with clients to achieve their functional and sporting performance goals, and to develop and deliver appropriate exercise programs for individuals and groups with musculoskeletal health concerns.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Various learning materials are provided before each of the twelve teaching weeks of trimester to facilitate students' exploration of and engagement with targeted knowledge and concepts.	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – This Workshop is used to - enhance the enhance theoretical application of knowledge and concepts from learning materials before their practical application in labs - explore questions regarding the week's topics - facilitate deeper engagement with learning materials. At least one week in the trimester will require students to explore learning materials independently without a related workshop.	2hrs	Week 1	11 times
Laboratory 1 – Labs focus on the practical application of knowledge and concepts and primarily take the form of scenario simulation between the clinician and patient. At least one week in the trimester will require students to explore a topic independently and guided by online learning materials (i.e. no on-campus lab will be scheduled that week).	2hrs	Week 1	11 times

1.3. Course Topics

- Professional practice (including scope of practice and referral pathways for team care)
- Clinical reasoning, assessment, and assessment-informed exercise prescription (including subjective and objective assessment, relative and absolute contraindications to exercise, goal setting, self-reflection, biopsychosocial and client-focussed care, exercise prescription principles for different purposes and tissue types, and basic imaging interpretation)
- Tissue response to injury, disuse, exercise, and surgery (including ligament, muscle, tendon, bone, cartilage, nerves)
- Introduction to contemporary pain science
- Common musculoskeletal issues by region of the body

2. What level is this course?

300 Level (Graduate)

Demonstrating coherence and breadth or depth of knowledge and skills. Independent application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Meeting professional requirements and AQF descriptors for the degree. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory or developing knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally undertaken in the third or fourth full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Exercise and Sports Science Australia
1 Demonstrate and integrate professional knowledge of scope of practice, code of conduct, exercise theory, practices and principles in the context of care of clients with musculoskeletal health concerns.	Engaged Collaboration	1.2.1, 2.2.5
2 Evaluate subjective and objective assessment findings from screening processes to tailor exercise programs that align with musculoskeletal client's capacity and goals.	Empowered	3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.5, 4.2.1
3 Demonstrate professional skills and knowledge, including cultural sensitivity to design, prescribe, modify, and document musculoskeletal interventions for a range of musculoskeletal clients across the lifespan.	Creative and critical thinker Problem solving	1.2.4, 1.2.5, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3
4 Critically evaluate and apply scientific evidence to inform and design service delivery of tailored exercise programs to musculoskeletal clients, including those with complex presentation in musculoskeletal health.	Ethical	2.2.5, 4.2.2

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
EXERCISE AND SPORTS SCIENCE AUSTRALIA	
1.2.1	Practise with integrity within the scope of practice for an AEP, the ESSA Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice, and jurisdictional Codes of Conduct.
1.2.4	Develop effective, concise, respectful, and informative clinical documentation, including case notes and reports, and apply appropriate record keeping practices.

CODE	COMPETENCY
1.2.5	Practise in a culturally safe, inclusive, sensitive, respectful, and responsive way and according to person-centred care principles.
2.2.5	Evaluate research findings and apply exercise prescription principles to develop recommendations and interventions, including targeted exercise prescription for the purposes of optimising health status, function, recovery, independence, and participation.
3.2.1	Formulate appropriate screening processes to evaluate and stratify risk for participation in assessments and interventions, including consideration of appropriate service modalities for clients.
3.2.2	Formulate safe, effective, and culturally sensitive assessments to collect relevant information, social and cultural determinants of health, client history, and client needs, preferences, barriers, facilitators, and goals.
3.2.3	Formulate appropriate assessments and outcome measures relevant to treatment and client goals, and evaluate health status, function, capacity, and progress, to inform clinical reasoning and to monitor the delivery and outcomes of interventions.
3.2.5	Evaluate and record assessment outcomes in a timely and accurate manner to inform practice and communicate outcomes and relevance to goals effectively to clients and relevant others.
4.2.1	Formulate evidence-based exercise prescription, interventions, and recommendations that address health and treatment related client needs, preferences, goals, and abilities, assessment findings, and social and cultural determinants of health.
4.2.2	Design, prescribe, deliver, and monitor safe and effective movement, physical activity, and exercise-based interventions for clients with complex presentations, including those with acute and chronic health conditions and multiple comorbidities.
4.2.3	Formulate and apply strategies to manage risks, evaluate progress, and adapt recommendations and interventions in partnership with clients based on needs and measured outcomes.

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the UniSC Glossary of terms for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

SPX221 and (SPX201 or SPX202)

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Resuscitation and first aid competencies Gross human anatomy and human physiology (incl. homeostasis and generic healing) The acute effects and management of musculoskeletal injury. The language of human movement and the roles of individual muscles in function. Common parameters for exercise prescription (e.g. acute training variables), types of fitness (e.g. strength, speed and stamina) and adaptations to load (e.g. specificity and progressive adaptations) Common musculoskeletal injuries and their basic initial assessment (e.g. systems approach, TOTAPS) The use of client assessment processes (i.e. client interview and goal setting), interview tools (e.g. ESSA pre exercise questionnaire), movement screening tools (e.g. SPX300 functional battery) and the precise assessment of movement parameters (e.g. range of motion measures, standardised measures of function and fitness)

5.5. Microcredential Information

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Limited Grading (PNP)

Pass (PU), Fail (UF). All assessment tasks are required to be passed for successful completion of the course.

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Early feedback on progress is first offered via the regular optional quizzes and the portfolio assessment tasks. Students will also receive regular peer-to-peer and tutor feedback on key practical skills during laboratory classes and during a mock practical exam run through.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Code of Conduct	Individual	For the duration of the course	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	To Supervisor
All	2a	Quiz/zes	Individual	60 minutes	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	In Class
All	2b	Practical / Laboratory Skills	Individual	2 hours in-class time and 2 hours of additional time outside of class	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	In Class
All	3a	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	60 minutes	Exam Period	Online Test (Quiz)
All	3b	Practical / Laboratory Skills	Individual	2.5 hours (including reading time & simulation of client for your partner)	Exam Period	Exam Venue

All - Assessment Task 1: Code of Conduct

GOAL:	To demonstrate consistent professional and ethical conduct in accordance with the ESSA Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice and the UniSC Student Charter, across all clinical learning activities in SPX302.
PRODUCT:	Code of Conduct
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:	
FORMAT:	You will be expected to confirm that you have read and understood the ESSA Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice and the UniSC Student Charter by the end of Week 2. During your entire course experience, you are required to conduct yourself in a professional, respectful and appropriate manner.
CRITERIA:	**No.** / **Learning Outcome assessed** 1 Behaviour that is in accordance with the ESSA's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice — 1 2 Adherence to USC's Student Conduct - Governing Policy — 1
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration

All - Assessment Task 2a: In-Class Quiz

GOAL:	To demonstrate essential knowledge of musculoskeletal anatomy, tissue pathophysiology, assessment principles, and assessment-informed exercise prescription for common musculoskeletal presentations.
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:	
FORMAT:	Online, in-class, bring-your-own-device quiz which relates to the learning materials and experiences covered. You will complete the quiz during timetabled tutorial time. Applications for assessment extension (AAE) must be based on valid grounds (see Grounds and evidence for exemption from penalties in the Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs – Procedures), be adequately evidenced, and must be submitted prior to the assessment due date. Alternative arrangements for students with a learning access plan (LAP) must be made prior to the scheduled assessment time. Total marks must reach 50% (rounded) or greater to pass this task.
CRITERIA:	**No.** / **Learning Outcome assessed** 1 You will be assessed on your ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of musculoskeletal anatomy, tissue pathophysiology, assessment principles, and assessment-informed exercise prescription for common musculoskeletal presentations. — 1 2 3 4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Problem solving, Applying technologies

All - Assessment Task 2b: Portfolio Tasks

GOAL:	To demonstrate proficiency in a suite of essential clinical skills required for entry-level exercise physiology practice in musculoskeletal rehabilitation. This includes professional communication and documentation, subjective assessment and clinical history-taking, goal setting, identification of occupational and functional requirements, safety screening, delivery of feedback to a peer, and structured self-evaluation and reflection. Completion of all portfolio elements is required to pass this task.
PRODUCT:	Practical / Laboratory Skills
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:	
FORMAT:	You will be required to demonstrate essential professional skills which may include: record keeping, professional communication, assessment and management of musculoskeletal concerns, evaluation of occupational requirements, demonstration of specific safety checks & instructions, provision of feedback to a peer and self-evaluation and reflection. See Canvas for task requirements. You will be allocated time in the tutorial classes to collect data for the portfolio tasks, please see Canvas for details. [Note - In the context of competency-based training and assessment of practical skills, if you do not demonstrate competent practice on your first attempt you will be given the opportunity to resubmit.]
CRITERIA:	**No.** / **Learning Outcome assessed** 1 You will be required to demonstrate safe and effective assessment and practice, including communicating your rationale. — 1 2 3 4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Organisation

All - Assessment Task 3a: Final Exam

GOAL:	To demonstrate critical knowledge of musculoskeletal pathophysiology, signs, symptoms, assessment, and assessment-informed exercise prescription.
PRODUCT:	Examination - Centrally Scheduled
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:	
FORMAT:	A one-hour online exam consisting of True/False and multiple choice questions. Questions vary in complexity from questions requiring recall of musculoskeletal health knowledge and principles to their application in case scenarios. Total marks must reach 50% (rounded) or greater to pass this task.
CRITERIA:	

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	Questions will be framed to test your ability to describe, explain and apply the discipline knowledge, principles and skills covered across the trimester.	1 2 3 4

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Applying technologies

All - Assessment Task 3b: Practical Exam and Oral Case Study Defence

GOAL:	To demonstrate competency in planning, justifying, and delivering a clinical assessment and assessment-informed exercise intervention for a client with musculoskeletal concerns, using evidence-based practice and current rehabilitation guidelines. This task requires you to demonstrate clinical reasoning in the integration of clinical history, physical examination findings, and exercise prescription, with consideration of client needs, preferences, and biopsychosocial factors. You will be required to defend your clinical decisions in a structured oral case study defense.
PRODUCT:	Practical / Laboratory Skills
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:	
FORMAT:	Students will be required to design, prescribe, deliver and monitor an exercise intervention for a case study on a person with musculoskeletal concerns. Students will need to communicate appropriate client support strategies, and consider client needs, preferences and accessibility when assessing for, designing, prescribing, delivering, and monitoring their exercise program, and justify their choice of assessments and exercises to the examiner. Students will also be expected to simulate a client with musculoskeletal health concerns in a professional manner. Students must meet a minimum competency of safe and at least moderately effective practice in all rubric criteria to pass this task.
CRITERIA:	

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	Active Engagement in Learning - Proactive learning, resource utilisation, time management and preparedness	1
2	Practical Skill Competency - Demonstrates foundational skill competency and safety in all exercise assessment and delivery skills	1 2 3 4
3	Clinical Reasoning Competency - Demonstrates at least moderately effective clinical decision making for exercise assessment, prescription and delivery	1 2 3 4
4	Response to Feedback - Openness to feedback and prompting, reflective practice and accountability	1
5	Professional Communication and Conduct - Professional appearance, effective communication, ethical conduct, teamwork (positive contribution to the healthcare team)	1 3

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Applying technologies

6.4. Assessment to competency mapping

PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODE	ASSESSMENT TYPE	TITLE	COMPETENCY	TEACHING METHODS
ESSA ACCREDITED EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS 2021				
All delivery modes	Code of Conduct	Code of Conduct	1.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			2.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Final Exam	1.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.2.4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			2.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
	Practical / Laboratory Skills	Portfolio Tasks	1.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.2.4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			2.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed

PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODE	ASSESSMENT TYPE	TITLE	COMPETENCY	TEACHING METHODS
			3.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
		Practical Exam and Oral Case Study Defence	1.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.2.4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			2.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
	Quiz/zes	In-Class Quiz	1.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.2.4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			2.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed

PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODE	ASSESSMENT TYPE	TITLE	COMPETENCY	TEACHING METHODS
			3.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			3.2.5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

You need regular access to the resource(s) below. Many texts are available as ebooks through the Library at no additional cost.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	Peter Brukner, Karim Khan	2026	Clinical Sports Medicine: Managing Injuries	6th Edition (Volume 1A)	McGraw-Hill Education (also available as an e-text via USC Library)
Required	Peter Brukner, Karim Khan	2025	Clinical Sports Medicine: Foundations of Clinical Practice	6th Ediition (Volume 1B)	McGraw-Hill Education (also available as an e-text via USC Library)

8.2. Specific requirements

This course includes an assessment of a professional competency task deemed necessary to meet the Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA) Professional Standards. Therefore, your attendance and participation in practicals/laboratories, tutorials and attendance at your placement site is required. Feedback will be provided to you during your classes and will provide you with support and guidance to become competent in the ESSA Professional Standards addressed in this course. For any work that is missed you will need to demonstrate to your course provider that you have covered the required material. This will usually take the form of a detailed summary and reflection of the directed study activities and practical skills for the missed class.

Course Focus Requirements:
In this course students will be required to take part in practical sport and exercise science activities, which may include vigorous exercise, physical contact with other members of the class, or connection to instruments for scientific measurement. This course has a particular focus on treating all individuals with respect. This is essential in clinical practice (incl. simulations) where there are well-recognised risks of harm with disrespectful behaviour and power imbalances in the client-professional relationship. Importantly, to ensure a safe environment for all, students may be directed to leave the class and/or course if they demonstrate disrespectful behaviour.

Clothing Requirements:
You will need clothes suitable for clinical assessment and exercise for all classes. You should wear clothes that allow you to move whilst preserving your modesty (e.g. gym clothes or similar). In particular you should prepare by wearing clothing that allows, with your informed consent only, the clinician to observe the body region that is the focus of the week and the lower back whenever core control is relevant.

Course Specific Risks:
This course does include various activities with some risk (e.g. musculoskeletal injury with physical assessment and exercise interventions) but overall the risk is low or negligible given that the demands of the learning experiences are less than reasonably expected in general sport and activities of daily living. It is possible that classes may have to shift to being conducted via Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching (TELT) as per University direction, please monitor your emails closely and ensure that you are signed up to the course announcements for the duration of the course in case of alternative arrangements for class or assessments.

Technology Requirements:
Access to a reliable laptop and/or portable tablet device for in-class assessment tasks (including video and audio options for videoconferencing)
Reliable internet connectivity and sufficient bandwidth to enable active engagement in TELT classes (incl. the use of videoconferencing)

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Risk assessments have been performed for all laboratory classes and a moderate level of health and safety risk exists. Moderate risks are those associated with laboratory work such as working with chemicals and hazardous substances. You will be required to undertake laboratory induction training and it is also your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the online induction training for students, and following the instructions of the University staff

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

This course will be graded as Pass in a Limited Grade Course (PU) or Fail in a Limited Grade Course (UF) as per clause 5.1.1.3 and 5.1.1.4 of the Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA) - Academic Policy.

In a course eligible to use Limited Grades, all assessment items in that course are marked on a Pass/Fail basis and all assessment tasks are required to be passed for a student to successfully complete the course. Supplementary assessment is not available in courses using Limited Grades.

Limited Graded Course: This course will be graded as Pass in a Limited Grade Course (PU) or Fail in a Limited Grade Course (UF) as per clause 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 of the Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA) - Institutional Operating Policy of the USC. In a course eligible to use Limited Grades, all assessment items in that course are marked on a Pass/Fail basis and all assessment tasks are required to be passed for a student to successfully complete the course. Supplementary assessment is not available in courses using Limited Grades.

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

You must contact your Course Coordinator and provide the required documentation if you require an extension or alternate assessment.

Refer to the Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs – Procedures.

10.4. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching

10.5. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The Student Charter sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.6. General Enquiries

For course-specific questions, contact your teaching staff or Course Coordinator.

For other enquiries or to access support, please contact Student Central:

- UniSC Student Central
- UniSC Adelaide Student Central