

Conscientious Objection Student Guidelines



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA

Please read all information carefully

Context:

The University of Canberra has a responsibility to advise a health facility if a student refuses, on the basis of conscientious objection, to be screened and/or immunised for any or all of the required immunisations and screenings. If there is a risk that patient or client safety may be compromised, students may be refused access to the facility and therefore delay the completion of a course.

Definition:

A conscientious belief is an individual's genuine and sustained inward conviction of what is morally right or morally wrong, and it is a conviction that is genuinely reached and held after some process of thinking about the subject. It is uninfluenced by any consideration of personal advantage or disadvantage to oneself or others.¹

1. *Grondal v. Minister of State for Labour and National Service*, 11 September 1953, Supreme Court of Western Australia, per Dwyer C.J.

Principles:

The onus is on the student who has the conscientious belief to identify their objection and to provide reasonable notice to the university.

Policy:

The University is not obliged to accommodate a conscientious belief:

1. Where such accommodation would breach legislation or expose the University to legal liability (e.g. breaches to the University's duty of care and/or Occupational Health and Safety responsibilities);
2. Where the objection to immunisation and/or screening is deemed essential or a core component of study and where, unless the task or process is completed, staff are unable to certify that the graduate has the basic competencies to fulfil the requirements of the course and/or external professional registration bodies e.g. Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency;
3. Where it will disadvantage other students in their quality of their education; and
4. Where it creates reasonable hardship.

Students MUST complete *the Conscientious Objections to Health Screening and Immunisation Requirements at the University of Canberra* form under the guidance of their GP.

Conscientious Objection to Health Screening and Immunisation Requirements at the University of Canberra



Please read all information carefully, completing all fields and signing where required prior to submitting this form.

The University of Canberra has an obligation to ensure the health and safety of students on clinical placement. The University of Canberra requires all students to ensure that they minimise the risk to themselves, health facility staff and patients of acquiring a vaccine preventable disease.

Student Declaration

I, _____ conscientiously object to the following immunisation and/or health screening requirements (*please indicate below*):

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diphtheria | <input type="checkbox"/> Tetanus | <input type="checkbox"/> Pertussis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Measles | <input type="checkbox"/> Mumps | <input type="checkbox"/> Rubella |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B | <input type="checkbox"/> Varicella | <input type="checkbox"/> Tuberculosis |

I confirm that:

I am aware that objecting to undergo immunisations and/or health screening required by the University of Canberra may result in State/Territory health authorities and other health care facilities not accepting me on placement if there is a risk that patient's safety may be compromised. **I am aware that my course progression may be delayed.**

I acknowledge that the University of Canberra must at all times comply with State or Territory laws and that such laws may require students placed in health care facilities to be immunised.

I understand that the University of Canberra and any of its health care partners cannot take responsibility for any illness incurred due to my decision not to undergo immunisations and/or health screening.

I am aware that as a Faculty of Health student, I have consented to the University of Canberra disclosing my immunisation status to the health care facilities where my placement is being requested.

If I am accepted on placement I will take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of vaccine preventable diseases for which I am not immune and follow all reasonable directions of the University of Canberra and placement provider.

Student ID: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by a GP/Doctor:

I declare that I have explained the benefits and risks associated with immunisation to the student and have informed them of the potential dangers of not being immunised, in particular when undertaking a placement in a health care facility.

Dr: _____ Medical Centre: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____