

MASSAGE THERAPY TEMPLATE

INTRODUCTION

The Massage Therapy (MT) Template must be completed by institutions offering vocational Massage Therapy programs to supplement and augment ACCET Document 3.1 – Analytic Self-Evaluation Report, which incorporates the ACCET Standards for Accreditation (Document 2). The template expands upon the ACCET Standards specifically referenced herein by adding Specific Field Criteria and Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements, in order to elicit a more relevant and valid self-evaluation of the institution and emphasize those standards where unique characteristics are identified.

MASSAGE THERAPY PROGRAMS

Massage Therapy programs are those programs specifically offered to students to prepare them to become massage therapists in Western or Eastern modalities and may include massage therapists, licensed massage therapists, myomassologists, holistic health practitioners, and professional body workers. Also included are advanced or specialty modalities and courses that may be part of a vocational program, such as Reiki, Cranio-Sacral therapy, hot rock therapy, sports massage, spa specialties, and Thai massage that are not offered as stand-alone courses. Areas not included in this template are additional alternative health modalities, life coaching, psychology, fitness training, Tai chi, and yoga instruction.

SPECIFIC FIELD CRITERIA & SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS/ STATEMENTS

STANDARD IV – CURRICULA

- A. Educational Goals and Curricular Objectives: The institution's programs and courses have appropriate educational goals and curricular objectives. The curricular content and learning experiences are preplanned and present a sound, systematic, and sequential educational methodology. Sufficient and appropriate knowledge and skill elements are included to ensure adequate preparation for the expected performance outcomes in the specific program or course for which the students enroll.**

When required as part of a program, an externship/internship or other training-related work experience is based on a preplanned outline of the specific knowledge, skills, and experience to be acquired.

Specific Field Criteria for Massage Therapy: Massage therapy programs are at least 500 clock hours in length. Massage therapy programs contain the following topics as part of their curricula:

- *General Knowledge of the Body System (Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, Kinesiology)*

- *Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Techniques (including SOAP Notes, Palpations, and Posture Analysis)*
- *Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Application (including Body Mechanics, Standard Precautions, CPR/first aid, Assessment, Maintaining Client Files, Contraindications, Draping)*
- *Professional Standards, Ethics, Business and Legal Practices (including Client Communication, Confidentiality, Independent Contractor, etc.)*

Massage therapy programs have appropriate prerequisites for advanced classes/modalities. Institutions provide training to ensure that students recognize and appropriately support the client experiencing deep emotional experiences during massages. Massage therapy programs contain a supervised student clinic/practicum.

Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements for Massage Therapy:

- Provide copies of catalog course descriptions, or syllabi, which demonstrate the inclusion of the topics enumerated above in the Specific Field Criterion.
- Utilizing Document 25.6 – Subject Hour Breakdown provided as part of the response to Document 3.1, indicate which courses have prerequisites and what those are. Provide a sample syllabus that indicates such prerequisites.
- How does the institution prepare students for working on the general public prior to the clinical component of the program? Provide a copy of the syllabus for that/those lesson(s).
- Describe the process by which the student is trained to recognize and support the client experiencing deep emotions during the massage.

C. Performance Measurements: Performance measurements are written and are periodically evaluated and updated to ensure instructional effectiveness. The institution has a sound, written assessment system that contains a set of defined elements, such as a grading scale, weighting factors, tests, quizzes, reports, projects, attendance, and/or participation, which are appropriately related to the performance objectives of the program or course.

Specific Field Criteria for Massage Therapy: Massage therapy programs assess the performance of students utilizing both written and practical (hands-on) assessments based on pre-determined skill sets.

Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements for Massage Therapy:

- How does the institution determine criteria for practical assessments? How does it ensure consistency and objectivity in their application?

- Provide a copy of a sample instrument for conducting practical assessments.

STANDARD VI – INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

- B. Supervision of Instruction: Individuals with relevant education and experience in instructional delivery and management supervise instructional personnel. Supervisors of instructional personnel demonstrate good practice in the evaluation and direction of instructors. Classroom observations, along with student, peer, and supervisory feedback, are effectively utilized.**

Specific Field Criteria for Massage Therapy: Instructional supervisors of massage therapy programs hold appropriate current certifications/licenses for the jurisdiction in which they supervise instructional personnel.

Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements for Massage Therapy:

- Provide a copy of the instructional supervisor's certificate(s)/license(s).

STANDARD VII – ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT SERVICES

- B. Enrollment: The institution's policy for enrollment is clearly stated, defined, and in compliance with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. Reliable and regular means are utilized to ensure that, prior to acceptance, all applicants are able and qualified to benefit from the education and training services. The enrollment process is preplanned, effective, and regularly monitored by the institution to ensure its integrity.**

The institution provides in its enrollment agreement or contract full disclosure of the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of all parties, including (1) all costs stated in clear and explicit language, and (2) cancellation and refund policies that comply with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. The written enrollment agreement or contract is furnished to appropriate parties before any payment or obligation is made.

Specific Field Criteria: Self employment is a common vocational objective for massage therapists. Institutions providing massage therapy programs must provide information on this objective to enrollees prior to their signing a contract, and enrollees must indicate that they understand this potential employment outcome.

Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements:

- Provide a written copy of the institution's enrollment policy for massage therapy programs, to clearly indicate at what point in the enrollment process students are made aware of the common vocational outcome of self employment.
- Provide documentation to demonstrate that enrollees have attested to their understanding of this outcome.

- How does the institution inform enrollees of local/national licensing/certification requirements and restrictions?

STANDARD VIII – EVALUATION

E. Completion and Placement: Written policies and procedures are followed that provide an effective means to regularly assess, document, and validate the quality of the education and training services provided relative to completion and placement rates, as applicable.

- **Completion: The number of participants who complete the programs and courses in which they enroll is consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.**
- **Placement: Institutions offering vocational programs provide job placement assistance to graduates and document the results to enhance the effectiveness of the training services provided. The quality of such programs is validated by positive training-related outcomes consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.**

Specific Field Criteria for Massage Therapy: Self-employment is a common vocational objective for massage therapists. Institutions providing massage therapy program document that those students who pursue self-employment, upon graduation, sign a statement acknowledging that they seek self-employment and that such employment fulfills their vocational and monetary objectives. Further, no sooner than 30 days following graduation, these students must sign a statement acknowledging that they are making satisfactory progress toward building a client base in the field, they are continuing to meet their vocational and monetary objectives, and that they are earning training-related income. Institutions are referred to ACCET Document 28 – Completion and Placement Policy.

In addition, it is recognized that licensure requirements in certain jurisdictions may prolong the placement process, as those graduates must first obtain their license/certification before practicing massage therapy.

Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements for Massage Therapy:

- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure for working with graduates who seek self-employment. How are they documented and tracked? Include a sample copy of an acknowledgement form signed at graduation and at least 30 days thereafter.
- Referencing its answers to questions in Standard IV-E, Certification and Licensing, describe the impact of the measures taken by the institution to track students who are scheduled to take a certification/licensure exam, and the impact this delay has on placement.
- For those institutions citing exam administration schedules as a factor in delayed placements, and based upon the stated timeline for passing the exam and obtaining

employment, provide a copy of ACCET Document 28.1 for the year previous to this calendar year, as necessary, to demonstrate placement results.