



ACCET Document 3.MT – Massage Therapy Template

Introduction

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

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 bodyworkers. 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.

Standard IV – Curriculum Design and Development

The institution's curriculum design and instructional materials are up-to-date, educationally sound, and appropriate for the expected outcomes of the program/courses.

- A. Educational Goals and Objectives: The institution's programs and courses have appropriate and measurable educational goals and objectives. The curriculum content and learning experiences are preplanned and present a sound, systematic, and sequential learning experience for students. The content and length of programs ensure that sufficient and appropriate knowledge and skill elements are included to meet the specific and measurable performance outcomes expected for the courses and programs. The institution must demonstrate that the length of the program is appropriate to provide a student with the requisite knowledge and skills of the courses and programs.

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, and 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. The institution provides 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 for students to practice their skills on clients and other students.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Massage Therapy:

- Provide copies of syllabi or catalog course descriptions, which demonstrate the inclusion of the topics enumerated above in the Specific Field Criteria.
- Utilizing Document 25.6 – Subject Hour Breakdown, 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.
- Identify the name(s), qualifications, and responsibilities of the clinic supervisor(s).

Standard VI – Qualification and Supervision of Instructional Personnel

The institution ensures that qualified instructors, under professional and capable direction, effectively deliver educational and training services.

- B. Supervision of Instruction: Individuals with relevant education and experience in instructional delivery and management supervise instructional personnel. Supervisors of instructional personnel demonstrate effective evaluation and direction of such personnel. At least annually, qualified supervisors conduct and document an in-class observation, and review with the instructor that classroom observation, to include any administrative responsibilities as applicable to the institution and any collected student feedback.

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 Questions/Statements for Massage Therapy:

- Provide a copy of the license/certification of the instructional staff and supervisor of instruction.

Standard VII – Admissions and Student Services

The institution recruits and enrolls only qualified students who can reasonably be expected to benefit from the education and training services and provides student services appropriate to their needs.

- B. **Admissions/Enrollment:** The institution's written policies for admissions and enrollment are 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 to benefit from the education and training services, consistent with ACCET policies. The enrollment process, including any online process, is preplanned, effective, and regularly monitored by the institution to ensure its integrity.

The written enrollment agreement, contract, and/or application, as applicable, is furnished to appropriate parties before any payment or obligation is made and clearly identifies the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of all parties. This document includes, at a minimum, (1) all costs stated in clear and explicit language, and (2) cancellation and refund policies that comply with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements.

Specific Field Criteria for Massage Therapy: During the enrollment process, the institution provides clear written notice to prospective students that self-employment is a common vocational objective for massage therapists. Prior to enrollment, enrollees must acknowledge in writing their understanding that self-employment is a common outcome of the massage therapy program.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Massage Therapy:

- Provide a written copy of the institution's enrollment policy for massage therapy programs, which clearly indicates at what point in the enrollment process students are made aware that self-employment is a common outcome for graduates of the massage therapy programs.
- Provide documentation to demonstrate that enrollees have attested to their understanding that self-employment is a common outcome of the massage therapy program.
- How does the institution inform enrollees of local/national licensing/certification requirements and restrictions?

Standard VIII – Student Assessment and Achievement

The institution utilizes appropriate and educationally sound methods to assess student performance, attendance, and achievement.

- A. **Performance Measurements:** Performance measurements are written, periodically evaluated, and updated to ensure instructional effectiveness. The institution has an educationally sound, written assessment system that appropriately relates to the performance objectives of the program or course and includes at a minimum, the grading scale, grading criteria and weighting, and means of assessment such as tests, quizzes, reports, projects, attendance, and participation. The institution clearly and effectively communicates the assessment system to students at orientation and/or the beginning of the course/program.

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 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 IX – Institutional Effectiveness

The institution utilizes appropriate methods of evaluation to assess institutional effectiveness and to ensure that student outcomes are consistent with the institution's mission and the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

D. Completion and Job Placement: The institution establishes and implements written policies and procedures that provide 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 students who complete the programs and courses in which they enroll is consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.
- Job 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. Prior to enrollment, prospective students must acknowledge in writing their understanding that self-employment is a common vocational objective of the massage therapy program. In addition, self-employed graduates must sign an attestation, no sooner than 30 days after graduation, acknowledging that the graduate is satisfied with self-employment as a massage therapist and that he/she is making training-related income. Institutions are referred to ACCET Document 28 – Completion and Job 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 Questions/Statements for Massage Therapy:

- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedures for working with graduates who seek self-employment. How are they documented and tracked? Include a sample copy of the attestation form required to be signed by self-employed graduates at least 30 days after graduation.
- Describe the measures taken by the institution to facilitate students taking and passing any required certification/licensure examinations on a timely basis.

- For institutions citing delayed placements due to excessive time for students to take required licensing/certification exams and receive licensure/certification, provide a copy of ACCET Document 28.1 – Completion and Placement Statistics for the year previous to this calendar year, as necessary, to demonstrate placement results.