

## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Soft Tissue Manipulations

**Unit code:** F1BF 35

**Unit purpose:** This Unit has been designed to prepare candidates for industry by giving them the underpinning knowledge and skills required to perform soft tissue manipulations as an adjunct to, and in conjunction with, remedial massage techniques, thus extending the candidate's range of skills and ability to more accurately meet the client's needs.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Explain the benefits, uses and contra-indications of a variety of soft tissue manipulations.
- 2 Consult with clients and assess needs prior to treatment.
- 3 Perform soft tissue manipulations.
- 4 Evaluate the effectiveness of a treatment and provide appropriate aftercare and homecare advice.

**Credit points and level:** 2 HN Credits at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8\*).

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** It is strongly recommended that candidates have achieved the HN Units:

- ◆ F1BN 34 Complementary Therapies: *Anatomy and Physiology*
- ◆ DN6C 33 *Body Massage*
- ◆ Xxxx xx *Health & Safety Legislation*
- ◆ First Aid qualification

**Core Skills:** There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Problem Solving and Communication at Higher in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

**Context for delivery:** If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

## **General information for centres (cont)**

**Assessment:** Evidence for this Unit should be demonstrated through practical demonstrations and written assessments.

Outcome 1 may be assessed by a project.

Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 should be assessed holistically in the form of practical demonstrations supported by case studies and verified through a viva.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Soft Tissue Manipulations

**Unit code:** F1BF 35

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### **Outcome 1**

Explain the benefits, uses and contra-indications of a variety of soft tissue manipulations

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Anatomy and physiology
- ◆ Benefits, uses and contra-indications
- ◆ Myofascial release
- ◆ Neuromuscular techniques
- ◆ Deep tissue massage
- ◆ Trigger point release

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the benefits, uses and contra-indications of the following soft tissue manipulations: myofascial release, neuromuscular techniques, deep tissue massage, trigger point release
- ◆ the evidence should be generated through a comprehensive written project complete with diagrams and illustrations where necessary with a minimum of 3,000 words

#### **Assessment guidelines**

Candidates should demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical aspects of the soft tissue manipulations outlined.

### **Outcome 2**

Consult with clients and assess needs prior to treatment

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Communication skills and consultation techniques including informed consent
- ◆ Contra-indications/special care situations
- ◆ Body assessment techniques and palpation
- ◆ Treatment planning
- ◆ Recording of details

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Soft Tissue Manipulations

### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ communicate effectively and professionally with a client throughout the process of consultation and assessment
- ◆ identify contra-indications and/or special care situations
- ◆ perform postural assessment, range of movement (ROM) and strength tests to determine areas of tension
- ◆ perform palpation techniques to pin point areas of tension
- ◆ devise and agree an appropriate treatment plan and obtain consent from client
- ◆ record all details accurately and legibly on pre-prepared consultation and body assessment forms

### **Assessment guidelines**

Assessment of this Outcome should be combined with Outcomes 3 and 4 as part of a holistic practical assessment, details of which are given under Outcome 4 below.

## **Outcome 3**

Perform soft tissue manipulations

### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Preparation of environment/candidate/client
- ◆ Working posture
- ◆ Draping and positioning of client
- ◆ Client care and comfort
- ◆ Application of techniques

### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ ensure the environment, candidate and client are prepared appropriately
- ◆ demonstrate correct and appropriate working posture and hand/arm biomechanics
- ◆ demonstrate correct draping and positioning of client: prone, side-lying and supine
- ◆ demonstrate accurate and appropriate use of myofascial release techniques to release tension in various body parts using one and two handed stretches, skin rolling and transverse diaphragm releases
- ◆ demonstrate accurate and appropriate use of neuromuscular techniques to perform a basic spinal and basic abdomino-pelvic treatment to release bodily tension using both thumb and finger technique
- ◆ demonstrate accurate and appropriate use of deep tissue techniques using lengthening, anchor and stretch, cross-fibre and passive and active movements whilst employing a number of application techniques such as thumbs/fingers; knuckles; fist; forearm; elbow
- ◆ demonstrate accurate and appropriate use of trigger point release by using finger or thumb technique

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Soft Tissue Manipulations

### **Assessment guidelines**

Assessment of this Outcome should be combined with Outcomes 2 and 4 as part of a holistic practical assessment, details of which are given under Outcome 4 below.

### **Outcome 4**

Evaluate the effectiveness of a treatment and provide appropriate aftercare and homecare advice

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Evaluation of treatment
- ◆ Client feedback
- ◆ Treatment planning
- ◆ Aftercare and homecare advice
- ◆ Recording of treatment details

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment using a variety of modalities including ‘feel’ of tissues, oral feedback from client and musculo-skeletal changes in posture, ROM and strength
- ◆ reassess treatment plan to confirm or adapt as necessary
- ◆ give appropriate aftercare and homecare advice to client
- ◆ demonstrate and explain specific stretching and strengthening exercises to meet client’s needs
- ◆ record all details accurately and legibly on pre-prepared treatment record cards

Evidence should be generated through practical tasks. Candidates should be assessed on three separate occasions with three different clients (can be case studies) in a realistic workplace environment. The candidate must carry out three case studies to include five treatments per client. It is not required to apply all soft tissue manipulations on each client. However it is expected that the practical tasks will cover the full range. Observational checklists must be supported by client consultation and body analysis forms, informed consent, treatment records and evaluation.

Candidates will undergo oral questioning on their case studies to verify underpinning knowledge and appropriate use of the different soft tissue manipulations.

#### **Assessment guidelines**

Assessment of this Outcome should be combined with Outcomes 2 and 3 as part of a holistic practical assessment for the Unit.

## Administrative Information

**Unit code:** F1BF 35  
**Unit title:** Soft Tissue Manipulations  
**Superclass category:** HK  
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**Version:** 01

### History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

**Source:** SQA

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## Higher National Unit specification: support notes

### Unit title: Soft Tissue Manipulations

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

### Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

The purpose of this Unit is to prepare candidates for industry by giving them the underpinning knowledge and skills required to perform soft tissue manipulations as an adjunct to, and in conjunction with, remedial massage techniques, thus extending the candidate's range of skills and ability to more accurately meet the client's needs.

It is strongly recommended that candidates only undertake this Unit having achieved the following:

HN Units:

- ◆ Anatomy and Physiology
- ◆ Body Massage
- ◆ Health and Safety Legislation

and

- ◆ A First Aid qualification

**Outcome 1** requires candidates to explain the benefits, uses and contra-indications of myofascial release techniques, neuromuscular techniques, deep tissue massage and trigger pointing. The candidates will need to demonstrate an understanding of the anatomy and physiology of skeletal, muscular and nervous systems, their interaction in wellness and consequences of their dysfunction that underpin the rationale of the soft tissue manipulations indicated. It is expected that candidates would consider the causes and consequent changes of soft tissue dysfunction prior to explaining the general and specific benefits, uses and contra-indications of the various manipulations.

**Outcome 2** requires candidates to consult with clients and assess their needs. Candidates should demonstrate accurate assessment skills, postural analysis, ROM, active, passive and resisted techniques to identify areas of restriction or tension, and confirm the results through palpation of the skin, fascia, muscle and bony structure. Candidates should devise a treatment plan and record all details accurately and legibly on appropriate forms.

**Outcome 3** requires candidates to perform the soft tissue manipulations previously outlined.

The importance of health and safety procedures should be reinforced throughout the practical element of the Unit. In particular; treatment environment, candidate preparation, therapist and client positioning and a safe range of techniques.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Soft Tissue Manipulations

**Outcome 4** requires candidates to evaluate the effectiveness of a treatment.

The evaluation of the process is continuous throughout the treatments and candidates should be able to react and respond to any changes that may occur. Over all evaluation should be carried out at the conclusion of the treatment to ensure future treatment plans are accurate. Appropriate aftercare and homecare advice should be given to the client as part of the evaluation.

### Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Outcome 1 can include lectures, videos and demonstrations on relevant aspects of the Unit. A project brief can be presented to the candidate that allows for development, extension and increased understanding of the concepts presented.

The practical elements of Outcome 2, 3 and 4 should be delivered by demonstration with the candidate practising the skills required on a variety of different clients. Candidates could devise consultation, body analysis forms, and treatment record cards, which could then be used for their own case studies. Competency will be assessed through practical observation. The oral questioning can only take place once all three case studies have been submitted.

#### References:

Cassar, M-P. (2004). *Handbook of Clinical Massage*. Churchill Livingstone UK

Chaitow, L. (2003). *Modern Neuromuscular Techniques*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Churchill Livingstone UK.

Finando, D & Finando, S. (1999). *Informed Touch: a clinician's guide to the evaluation and treatment of myofascial disorders*. Healing Arts Press: Canada

Manheim, C. (2001). *The Myofascial Release Manual*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Slack USA

Riggs, A. (2002). *Deep Tissue Massage: a visual guide to techniques*. North Atlantic Books USA

Travell, J & Simmons, D. (1983). *Myofascial pain and dysfunction: the trigger point manual*. Vol 1. Williams & Wilkins USA

Travell, J & Simmons, D. (1992). *Myofascial pain and dysfunction: the trigger point manual*. Vol 2. Williams & Wilkins USA

#### *Opportunities for developing Core Skills*

All treatments are preceded by an in depth interview with clients, involving a detailed analysis of requirements which takes into account a range of factors such as health, lifestyle, available resource and safety considerations. Candidates will require to examine theoretical and practical problems and issues in the assessment of clients prior to the development of appropriate treatment strategies.



## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Soft Tissue Manipulations

Formative work in which they identify and consider all variable factors in situations, and analyse the significance of each before planning and justifying an appropriate strategic approach will provide opportunities to develop problem solving skills to an advanced level. Evaluation which examines all stages of treatment and its potential and actual impact will be on-going, and will also offer opportunities to maximise analytical problem solving skills in a full review of the effectiveness of treatment.

Candidates will be encouraged to enhance oral and written communication skills as they undertake the Unit. It will be critical to achievement that essential information and advice is conveyed accurately and in a manner appropriate to each client and within professional standards. Written records will offer opportunities for the formal presentation of complex information which is in a recognised format, and technically accurate.

Practical delivery of appropriate treatments will enhance and develop essential Numeracy skills. Candidates need to carry out sustained complex calculations involving physiological data, checking to ensure accuracy as they carry out assessment of relevant risk factors. They will also measure and calculate a range of data related to general health, environmental issues and health and safety. Accurate understanding and interpretation of significant graphical data relating to such factors as client heart condition, blood pressure and weight will be essential. Measurements and calculations related to safe positioning of equipment and personnel will also require that candidates develop a high level of competence in relevant components of the skill.

### Open learning

The theoretical aspects of this Unit are appropriate for open and distance learning. However, due to the practical nature of the skills involved in soft tissue manipulation, it would be difficult to deliver the practical aspects by open or distance learning.

For further information and advice please refer to *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 — publication code A1030).

### Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## **General information for candidates**

### **Unit title:** Soft Tissue Manipulations

This Unit is designed to provide you with the necessary knowledge and skills to perform soft tissue manipulations in addition to remedial massage techniques. This will extend your skills and ability to more accurately meet the needs of your client.

It is recommended that you have gained a background knowledge in Anatomy and Physiology, Body Massage, Health and Safety Legislation and First Aid to allow you to progress. During the Unit you will extend your Anatomy and Physiology knowledge of the musculo-skeletal and nervous system, discover what causes these systems to malfunction and the consequences of these malfunctions to the body. You will then learn why and how myofascial release techniques, neuromuscular techniques, deep tissue massage and trigger point release — all forms of soft tissue manipulation — can help in assessing and normalising the changes that have occurred.

In order to achieve this Unit you will need to demonstrate competence in both theoretical and practical aspects. You will be expected to produce a project which covers the benefits, uses and contra-indications of the soft tissue manipulations outlined above.

For the practical aspects of the course, you will be shown demonstrations of how to perform the soft tissue manipulations and you will be expected to develop your skills to the required standard through practice. Client consultations, assessment, record keeping and evaluation are important aspects of a full treatment and you will also be expected to practise and demonstrate these skills on a regular basis.

Your practical assessment will consist of three parts:

#### Part 1:

You are required to submit three case studies. Each case study will involve a different client who you will treat on five occasions. You do not have to use each soft tissue manipulation with all three clients, however, your case studies will have to show that you have used all four manipulations. Each case study needs to include a client consultation and body analysis form, informed consent, treatment records, a summary (of the client's presenting condition, treatment plan and adaptations, treatment records) and a client evaluation form completed at the end of the treatment.

#### Part 2:

You will be observed performing three different treatments on three different clients. These may be your case studies. You do not have to treat each client with all of the soft tissue manipulations, however, by the end of the three observations the range of manipulations will have been covered.

#### Part 3:

You will have an interview with your tutor to discuss the Outcome of your case studies.