



Core Curriculum

**Training Standards for
Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy (NSRT) Profession**

NSRT CORE CURRICULUM

Introduction

This document is the result of consultation between the Board members of the British Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy Association (BNSRTA) and with the Aromatherapy & Allied Practitioners' Association (AAPA), who externally validate and examine our diploma courses.

The consultation process identified the core components required for Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy. The Core Curriculum is applicable to all education/training programmes offering such courses, so that their graduates are registerable with the General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies (GRCCT). Course providers should be aware that, from time to time, there are legal, safety, and/or ecological issues which will not be addressed within the Core Curriculum until each is revised, but may need to be addressed more immediately.

The Core Curriculum provides the core framework around which the delivery of courses/programmes leading to the professional practice of NSRT should be developed. In terms of content, associations, awarding bodies and course providers are encouraged to go beyond the standards specified here, in the detailed delivery of the programmes they offer in furtherance of developing best practice.

The requirements of the Core Curriculum are specific and should be followed completely as set out in this document.

The setting of minimum course content requirements is part of the process of regulatory registration to ensure safe, competent, effective and reflective practitioners aware of the scope and limitations of their NSRT practice and the need to continue reviewing and developing their skills.

This document can be adapted into a syllabus and the Guidance Notes attached include clarification and outlines for development of a course syllabus separated out for each component part, as well as recommended reading, in order to facilitate the development of the qualification.

Format

The Core Curriculum is divided into four units. The Core Curriculum is intended to be viewed as a linear progression. Each component should be read in conjunction with the Guidance Notes which are intended to help course providers in the development of their syllabi and will be updated from time to time.

A. Tutors Qualifications

- B. Training Period**
- C. Assessment Methods**
- D. Course Components**

A. Tutors Qualifications

Course providers must be satisfied that any NSRT training course not only meets the stated requirements in terms of class hours and content but that the principle tutors of courses have themselves received sufficient in-depth training, and are qualified to ensure a high standard of instruction in their specific area. (See guidance note A.)

NSRT tutors should be

- a. qualified practitioners able to evidence in depth experience of the theory and practice of Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy over a period of time which is not less than two years post qualification, and
- b. hold a Department of Education recognised teaching qualification, and
- c. Be at least an Affiliate Member of the Institute for Learning

B. Training Period

The training period from commencement to qualification (including theory, practice and completion of all assessments and case studies) should be at least one academic year, whether full or part-time. The only exception is the short course created for Osteopaths/Physiotherapists/Chiropractors where the training is shorter and 6 months is given for completion of course work and case studies. Training should include in class hours where appropriate and may cover distance learning (both correspondence and e learning).

In all cases the pre-requisite for training in Neuroskeletal Re-alignment is a minimum recognised A&P qualification and a recognised qualification in massage therapy or aromatherapy.

The following table gives guidance as to contact, distance learning and home study hours. The content of each course component is detailed in D. Course Components

COURSE COMPONENT	CONTACT HOURS/ DISTANCE LEARNING*	HOME STUDY
	HOURS	HOURS
NSRT:		
Applied NSRT	48	175
Theory	60*	175
Case Studies		50
Advanced Massage	12	24
Reflective Practice	3	26
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>450</u>

** Indicates components which may be taught by distance learning. All other components are taught along with practical demonstration/interaction/ evaluation and observation and hours which are not asterisked refer to contact hours.*

C. Assessment Methods

- These should effectively demonstrate whether or not the learning outcomes detailed in each course component have been achieved.
- Each component of the Core Curriculum should be evidenced by relevant formative and/or summative assessments. These should not only prove the authenticity of the student's knowledge and understanding both during and at the end of a course but also their ability to practise safely and competently as a NSRT Practitioner.
- Each core component will lend itself to various types of assessment. Quizzes / multiple choice questions and tests, for example may be suitable for some elements whereas a more discussive, reflective approach would be required for reflective practice and the development of treatment programmes. Role playing and practical demonstration may be used for practical NSRT.
- Case studies are required in order to evidence not only practical skills but the ability to develop treatment programmes and adapt to the differing needs of clients. The Core Curriculum requires 50 case studies where a minimum of 15 people receive at least 3 treatments over a period of weeks in order to achieve this, plus they must also carry out a treatment on a pregnant woman at least twice, a baby and two animals. For the separate postgraduate certificate in Advanced Massage & Trigger Point Therapy, students will need to complete 2 treatments on 4 clients. In both cases a reflective practice evaluation needs to be completed for each client used as a case study for both massage and NSRT.
- The overall programming of assessments and their variety should help lead the student from recalling information to applying knowledge, reflecting, analysing and developing
- Whatever methods are used, they should be evidenced in a student workbook or portfolio so that a final assessment will take into account not only any summative exam, demonstration and/or oral but also a range of suitable, varied and robust formative evidence in order to ensure safe and competent practitioners.

D. Course Components

This is intended to be viewed as a linear progression.

1. Theory of Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy
2. Applied Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy
3. Advanced Massage & Trigger Point Therapy
4. Reflective practice

1. Theory of Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy

Aims

- a. To introduce students to the therapy, how it is performed plus any adaptations for specific client types, contraindications and precautions
- b. To provide a detailed understanding of what NSRT is and how it works
- c. To provide knowledge of postural analysis in order to track progress of each subsequent treatment, plus an understanding of ergonomics
- d. To enable students to make sound judgement on suitability for treatment.
- e. To enable students to consider both the physical, emotional and energetic effects of treatment.
- f. To provide knowledge of basic orthopaedics, including understanding X-Rays, MRI scans and other medical tests when accompanied by a medical report.
- g. To provide knowledge of basic neurological studies in respect of the pathological conditions that respond well to this therapy
- h. To enable students to understand basic energetics, including meridians and how this correlates with NSRT points.
- i. To enable students to utilise this knowledge to assess and carry out appropriate NSRT treatments and to develop treatment plans for clients.
- j. To enable the safe and legal adaptation of NSRT treatments on animals.
- k. To provide a basic understanding of Inversion Therapy and how this should be used alongside NSRT in specific cases.
- l. To provide a basic understanding of strengthening exercise and how to decide on referrals to other practitioners.
- m. To provide an awareness of the importance of the case study and its relevance in the safe treatment of clients and the need for the maintenance of thorough records for each client and treatment.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- i. Identify the most suitable treatment plan for each individual client based on detailed case notes.
- ii. Write up case studies/client record sheets accurately and legibly.
- iii. Select safe and appropriate NSRT treatments to meet the needs of clients.
- iv. Give appropriate aftercare advice and offer support to the client.

2. Applied Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy

Aims

- a. To enable students to select the most appropriate treatment methods for each client and perform treatments safely, effectively and holistically.
- b. To ensure students are competent to provide sound advice to clients.

- c. To ensure the client receives the treatment most appropriate to their needs on every appropriate level and that the treatment is holistic and effective.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this component students will be able to:

- i. Demonstrate that they can develop an appropriate treatment plan for clients taking into account contraindications and safety aspects related to the treatment being offered.
- ii. Demonstrate that they can perform a safe and effective full NSRT sequence; that s/he can competently incorporate any additional points appropriate to the client's needs
- iii. List the contraindications to Inversion Therapy treatment, be able to identify them through their consultation with a client and explain them clearly to a client. Be aware of when and how to contact a client's GP or other healthcare provider if necessary for information regarding a client's condition and/ or to confirm whether or not an NSRT treatment would be appropriate in their medical opinion.
- iv. Be able to provide appropriate verbal and written instructions for clients on aftercare and what to expect following treatment.
- v. Provide necessary equipment, such as treatment couch, cushions, stool, bolsters, pendulum, myrrh oil etc. to enable them to perform the treatment.
- vi. Understand how to apply the points and how to dowse for energy leaks and explain this to the client in layman terms.

3. Advanced Massage & Trigger Point Therapy

Aims

- a. To introduce students to the Remedial Massage Techniques & Trigger Point Therapy, how it is performed plus any adaptations for specific client types, contraindications and precautions
- b. To provide a detailed understanding of what Remedial Massage & Trigger Point Therapy is and how it works.
- c. To enable students to select the most appropriate treatment methods for each client and perform treatments safely, effectively and holistically.
- d. To ensure students are competent to provide sound advice to clients on aftercare advice
- e. To ensure the client receives the treatment most appropriate to their needs on every appropriate level and that the treatment is holistic and effective.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this component students will be able to:

- i. Demonstrate that they can develop an appropriate treatment plan for clients taking into account contraindications and safety aspects related to the different techniques.
- ii. Demonstrate that they can perform a safe and effective full body massage sequence incorporating these techniques appropriate to their client's

needs, taking into account safety aspects related to each technique and contraindications.

- iii. List the contraindications to advanced massage treatment, be able to identify them through their consultation with a client and explain them clearly to a client. Be aware of when and how to contact a client's GP or other healthcare provider if necessary for information regarding a client's condition and/ or to confirm whether or not advanced massage treatment would be appropriate in their medical opinion.
- iv. Be able to provide appropriate verbal and written instructions for clients on aftercare.
- v. Provide necessary equipment, such as massage couch, towels, cushions, essences, base oils, bottles etc. to enable them to perform the treatment.
- vi. Know where to source appropriate, high quality products for performing this type of massage.

4. Reflective Practice

Aims

- a. To develop a sense of self awareness to enhance the learning experience;
- b. To enable therapists to reflect on the manner and effectiveness of their treatments;
- c. To enable therapists to learn from their experiences, both for their own benefit and for that of their future patients;
- d. To enable students to use their experiences to direct their professional development in a conscious and deliberate way, both as an individual and as part of practice development
- e. To enable students to carry out a review of their clinical practice and reflect on improvements that can be made on a continual basis.

Learning outcomes

The module will provide students with the skills and knowledge to:

- i. Increase their self-awareness by identifying their own attitudes, beliefs, interests, priorities and values in relation to health and well being.
- ii. Enable them to understand the importance of recognising the impact these have on their personal and professional life.
- iii. Enable them to review and evaluate their own knowledge and practice in relation to their professional codes of conduct.
- iv. Identify their strengths and limitations.
- v. Enable them to devise development/action plans that will build on their strengths and improve their limitations.
- vi. Recognise appropriate learning opportunities for developing their knowledge and practice.
- vii. Improve their ability for recording/building documentary evidence of their own knowledge and practical experience.
- viii. Identify and utilise support systems and networks appropriate to their practice.

NEUROSKELETAL RE-ALIGNMENT THERAPY CORE CURRICULUM

GUIDANCE NOTES

A. Tutors Qualifications

i. a. Two years experience refers to a full time NSRT practitioner with a range of clients and depth of experience. For part time practitioners a proportionally longer period of post graduate experience will be required of 3 years.

b. This may include a tutor who is either in the process of gaining a relevant teaching qualification or appointed on the basis that they will complete such a qualification during the course they are teaching. It is advisable that this is included as a condition of their Contract of Employment to avoid confusion. Relevant teaching qualifications include City & Guilds 7407 Certificate in Education for Further Education Stage 1 or equivalent as a minimum with the addition of Stage 2 being desirable. Older qualifications which predate this qualification and are specific to further education will be acceptable such as City & Guilds 7307 or Certificate in Education (FE) Stage 1.

NB It would be unacceptable for courses to be run by unqualified tutors, whether as teachers or NSRT practitioners, relying on the occasional presence of a qualified member of staff or Principal.

B. Training Period

Within these hours, the relationship between contact hours and home-study hours and distance learning will depend on the design of the course and the previous learning, experience and abilities of the students. Some components do, however, require contact hours and a differentiation is made between these and components suited to distance learning. All component parts of a course and assessments, including case studies, should be completed before a qualification certificate is awarded.

C. Assessment Methods

The Core Curriculum states that tutors should either hold or be in the process of obtaining relevant adult education teaching qualifications. This means that trained tutors will already be familiar with the range of assessment methods available and may also have to integrate the specific requirements of either Awarding Bodies or associations into their own methodology.

Recommended Reading List

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/2_learntch/methods.html

<http://www.qca.org.uk>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/returning/betterlearner/learningstyle/g_teaching_adults_01.shtml

Seven Decisions when Teaching Students Bligh D. (1981)

Paperback 352 pages Publisher: Intellect Books **ISBN:** 0905314042

D. Course Components

1. Theory of Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy

Outline of Syllabus Contents

1. History and development of NSRT; this will include revisiting the central nervous system; nerve roots and pathways, skin dermatomes. Correlation between the points and acupuncture meridians and tsubo - body energy flow. Understanding the human energy field; kirlian photography, energy holes, dowsing. Looking at how the points also correlate to related muscle insertion and origin points.
2. Basic orthopaedic studies; this will include medical terminology related to orthopaedics including surgical procedures : spinal surgery - laminectomy, discectomy & fusion; prostheses; disc problems - herniations, prolapses; fractures; arthritis pain management; spondylosis; ankylosing spondylitis; congenital deformities; scoliosis; kyphosis, lordosis; spondylolisthesis; spina bifida; sciatica; whiplash injuries; osteoporosis; general back pain, common pathologies and sporting injuries. Also related pharmacology; analgesics, anti-inflammatories and corticosteroids, spinal block, epidurals.
3. Basic Neurology; this includes Neurological disorders: cerebrovascular accidents; multiple sclerosis; trapped nerves; motor neurone disease, spinal cord injuries. Looking at supporting rehabilitation, emotional issues etc. Associations which help support patients - i.e. The Stroke Association and getting in touch with local groups.
4. Radiology - examining X-rays and MRI scans and other medical diagnosis. How to obtain X-rays and other reports from local hospitals and/or the GP. Procedures when patient is receiving Physiotherapy or Osteopathy treatments.
5. Postural analysis; reading the body for obvious problems - including muscular aches and tension resulting. Reading shoe wear patterns to help diagnose skeletal imbalances.
6. Working with animals, legal requirements of the Veterinary Act.
7. Inversion Therapy and its indications and for use alongside NSRT. Includes contraindications for use.
8. Working with pregnant women, disabled clients, babies and children including how to adapt the treatment to suit individual needs.
9. Ergonomics – specifically to give advice in the workplace
10. Strengthening exercises to include Pilates, Yoga and other exercises, such as swimming and walking that help mobilisation.
11. Arthritis management and making realistic treatment plans in this respect.

2. Applied Neuroskeletal Re-alignment Therapy

Outline of Syllabus Contents:

1. Introduction to the points used in NSRT, initially the full treatment that is offered every treatment and then add in the additional points for specific conditions.
2. Practical: Presentation and preparation - environment for treatment, equipment, comfort, consultation set up, professionalism - attitude, dress, client management, time management, hygiene, consultation contraindications, physical signs, client welfare.

3. Full NSRT sequence (including K1 for grounding) – point location, benefits of points in relation to meridians, acupoints and muscle groups, sequence of points, how long to hold each point; use of body - posture of therapist; energy; intention and integrity of therapist - the therapeutic exchange; protection of therapist and client; practice sessions on fellow students and models.
4. Additional points (knees, ankles, thoracic cage, clavicle, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers, face, skull sutures, sciatic points, bo points etc.) – location and when they should be used

Recommended Reading

- **Concise System of Orthopaedics and Fractures** (Paperback)
by A.Graham Apley (Author), Louis Solomon (Author) Butterworth Heinemann; 2Rev Ed edition (27 Jun 1994) **ISBN-10:** 0750617675
- **Essential Neurology (Essentials)** (Paperback)
by Iain Wilkinson (Author), Graham Lennox (Author) WileyBlackwell; 4th Edition edition (25 Feb 2005) **ISBN-10:** 1405118679
- **Listen to Your Pain: The Active Person's Guide to Understanding, Identifying, and Treating Pain and Injury** (Paperback)
by Ben E. Benjamin (Author), Norman Campbell (Illustrator) Penguin Books; Rev Upd edition (27 Nov 2007) **ISBN-10:** 0143111957
- **Pocketbook of Orthopaedics and Fractures (Pocketbook Series)** (Paperback) by Ronald McRae (Author) Churchill Livingstone; 2 edition (31 Mar 2006) **ISBN-10:** 0443102724
- **Sarah Key's Back Sufferers' Bible (Paperback)** by Sarah Key (Author) Vermilion (22 Jun 2000) **ISBN-10:** 0091814944
- **The Pilates Prescription for Back Pain: A Comprehensive Program for Developing and Maintaining a Healthy Back** (Paperback) Ulysses Press (1 Mar 2004) **ISBN-10:** 1569753946

3. Advanced Massage & Trigger Point Therapy (separate AAPA certificate) Outline of Syllabus Contents

1. Introduction to techniques – what is remedial massage (principles and practice of) – what is Trigger Point work.
2. Practical: Presentation and preparation - environment for massage, equipment, comfort, consultation set up, professionalism - attitude, dress, client management, time management, hygiene, consultation contraindications, physical signs, client welfare.
3. Body Massage - names of specific muscles to be worked on using these techniques, (trapezius, supraspinatus, infraspinatus, subscapularis, levator scapulae, rhomboids, latissimus dorsi, sacrospinalis, quadratus lumborum, gluteus maximus, gluteus medius, piriformis, biceps femoris, semitendinosus, semimembranosus, gastrocnemius, soleus, anterior tibialis, peroneus longus, rectus femoris, gracilis, sartorius, vastus lateralis, vastus medialis, rectus abdominis, pectoralis, sternocleidomastoid, biceps, triceps, wrist extensors and flexors) sequence of strokes, how to perform strokes; use of body - posture of therapist; intention and integrity of therapist - the therapeutic exchange; protection of therapist and client; practice sessions on fellow students case studies.
4. Adaptation of positioning for disabled clients and pregnant women.

Recommended Reading

- **Basic Clinical Massage Therapy: Integrating Anatomy & Treatment** by James H. Clay and David M. Pounds (*excellent muscle diagrams*), Lippincott Williams and Wilkins; Har/DVD edition (15 Feb 2007) **ISBN-10:** 078176307X
- **Sport & Remedial Massage Therapy (Paperback)** by Mel Cash (Author) Ebury Press (1 Aug 1996) **ISBN-10:** 0091809568
- **The Muscle Book (Spiral-bound)** by Paul Blakely (Author) Himalayan Institute Press; Spi edition (30 Jul 2008) **ISBN-10:** 0893892637
- **Trail Guide to the Body: How to Locate Muscles, Bones, and More (Spiral-bound)** by Andrew R. Biel (Author), Robin Dorn (Illustrator) Books of Discovery; 3 Spi edition (15 Jul 2005) **ISBN-10:** 0965853454

4. Reflective Practice

Outline of Syllabus Contents

1. An introduction to the philosophy of reflective practice and its relevance to the NSRT practitioner
2. Understanding Self Attitudes, beliefs, and values; what they are and how they develop and the factors that influence their development. Defining health and well-being.
3. Identifying the therapist's own attitudes and beliefs. The effect these might have on clients and others with whom the therapist may work.
4. Interpersonal skills. The nature of inter-personal relationships, the therapeutic relationship and working with others. How these relationships may affect the therapist's ability to work effectively. To recognise and deal effectively with own behaviour and practice, when it adversely affects working with different people.
5. Effective learning and development. Review and evaluate existing knowledge and professional practice using Professional Code of Practice to identify strengths and limitations. Knowing how we learn, learning styles, what they are, to improve upon the limitations identified above.
6. Learning from experience. To learn effectively from experience requires analysis and interpretation of the event so that it leads to new understanding. Structuring the process to identifying the experience, returning to the experience and describing it, attending to feelings, making sense of the experience and assessing competence.
7. The role of reflective journaling as part of the learning and self development process
8. Writing a development plan. Produce a Portfolio of learning evidence and detail programme for future professional progress.
9. Support for learning and development to gain knowledge of various types of support systems and networks and how to access them.

Recommended Reading

AAPA Guide to Reflective Practice (Reflection Handbook) – available from their website for free download www.aapa.org.uk

Reflection - <http://www.trainer.org.uk/members/theory/process/reflection.htm>

Boud D, Keogh R & Walker D; (1985) Reflection: turning experience into learning, Kogan Page

Johns C. (2002) Guided Reflection Blackwell Science
Johns C. (2000) Becoming a reflective practitioner; a reflective and holistic approach to clinical nursing, practice development and clinical supervision Blackwell Science
Johns C (1994) Guided reflection. In reflective practice in nursing (Palmer A et al eds) Blackwell science, Oxford
Reflection - <http://www.trainer.org.uk/members/theory/process/reflection.htm>