



Program Accreditation Committee
Standards for Accreditation

A. POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION STANDARDS

1. The post-secondary institution and affiliates, if any, must be accredited by Universities Canada or the Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan).
2. For programs in which academic and clinical instruction and revised practice are provided by two or more institutions, responsibilities for program administration, instruction, supervision, and other functions of the sponsoring institutions and of each affiliate must be clearly documented in a formal affiliation agreement.
3. Accredited educational programs must be established in a degree-granting post-secondary academic institution which meet standards for education in athletic therapy.
4. Post-secondary institutions assume primary responsibility and autonomy for meeting and maintaining Canadian Athletic Therapists Association (the Association) Standards for Accreditation.
5. The institution must ensure full liability protection for students during field and clinical practicums. A contract that outlines an agreement between the University/College and the practicum sites must be maintained at all times. This contract should include proof of liability from both parties.
6. The institution must be authorized under applicable provincial law and statute to provide a program of post-secondary education.

B. RESOURCES

1. Personnel Resources

a) Athletic Therapy Program Director

Qualifications: The Director of the program must be a full-time member of the academic staff. The Director of the program must be a Certified Athletic Therapist of the Association for a minimum of 10 years.



Academic qualifications for the Program Director are PhD preferred, thesis-based Master's required.

Responsibilities: This individual is responsible for:

- overseeing the curriculum of the program, inclusive of programmatic and course changes
- a PEP for core athletic therapy competencies and associated EPAs
- oversee and monitor program effectiveness
- working with all faculty and staff involved in the athletic therapy program in effective planning and implementation of student academic and practicum experience in the athletic therapy program

b) Core Athletic Therapy Teaching Faculty

Qualifications: The full-time core athletic therapy teaching faculty must be a Certified Athletic Therapist of the Association for a minimum 3 years and be full-time members of the academic staff. Academic qualifications for the core athletic therapy teaching faculty are PhD preferred, thesis-based Master's required.

Number: To ensure academic quality and effective student support, the minimum full-time faculty complement for accredited athletic therapy programs shall maintain a ratio of one (1) core athletic therapy faculty member for every eight (8) students, based on the program's first-year intake.

In cases where a faculty member takes a leave of absence exceeding twelve (12) months, the institution must submit a comprehensive explanation along with supporting documentation. A minimum of two (2) FT core faculty members must be maintained at all times including leaves. This submission must include a clearly articulated plan outlining how the faculty member's teaching, research, and service responsibilities will be fulfilled during the period of absence.

It is expected that faculty workloads related to teaching, research, and service will be appropriately considered within the established ratio. Where such responsibilities are substantial, institutions may be required to increase the number of core faculty to meet program needs and maintain educational standards.

Responsibilities: These faculty members are responsible for teaching and developing the athletic therapy curriculum.

c) Support Staff

- Teaching / Instructional Assistants/Laboratory Demonstrators



Qualifications: Any individual assisting with the instruction of core athletic therapy courses and labs must be a current Certified Athletic Therapist of the Association.

Responsibilities: As per institutional position responsibilities.

- Administrative Support Staff

Sufficient clerical and other support staff should be readily available to the athletic therapy program.

d) Practicum Personnel

The Practicum Coordinator and Practicum Instructor are two distinct roles which must both be accounted for separately in the workload. The Practicum Coordinator role must have dedicated time (e.g., 0.5 FTE) and cannot be simply absorbed into general faculty duties.

- Practicum Coordinator

Qualifications: The Practicum Coordinator must be a Certified Athletic Therapist of the Association. This ongoing role actively manages the full student placement lifecycle, including planning, coordinating, implementing, and conducting follow-ups for all placements.

Responsibilities: The Practicum Coordinator is responsible for the administration and oversight of practicum experiences. This includes, but is not limited to, alignment with program curriculum, orientation and ongoing support of clinical educators, and evaluation of site suitability. Key responsibilities include:

- Oversee and manage all practicum experiences
- Ensure alignment between curriculum competencies and EPAs.
- Identify and approve appropriate practicum sites
- Coordinate contracts and insurance requirements
- Orient and support clinical educators
- Provide training and ongoing development for clinical educators
- Assign students to practicum placements
- Evaluate site suitability, educator performance, and overall placement quality

- Practicum Instructor



Qualifications: The Practicum Instructor must be a current certified athletic therapist of the Association. This person is a faculty member (e.g., contract or full-time).

Responsibilities: The Practicum Instructor will work in conjunction with the Practicum Coordinator and Clinical Educators. They must work closely with the clinical educator(s) to evaluate student competence. The Practicum Instructor allocates the final grade for practicum experiences.

- Clinical Educators

Qualifications: A clinical educator should be a current Certified Athletic Therapist of the Association. A maximum of 25% of a student's practicum experience may be supervised by Allied healthcare professionals. This individual is not required to be an institutional employee. Provisional Certification Candidates are not permitted to be Clinical Educators.

Responsibilities: A clinical educator provides supervision and education of students in the practicum aspects of the athletic therapy education program. This includes but is not limited to engagement with program curriculum, orientation, training, and student evaluations. They work with the Practicum Instructor to complete student evaluation and provide feedback that optimizes student progress and competency development.

2. Professional Development

At minimum, individual full-time athletic therapy faculty must be allocated financial support by the sponsoring institution for professional development opportunities.

3. Financial Resources

The financial resources for the athletic therapy educational program must be ensured to fulfil obligations for ongoing program development and delivery.

4. Physical Resources

a) Facilities

The classrooms, laboratories, clinical and other facilities, faculty, and administrative offices must ensure adequate experiential learning opportunities for all students enrolled within the athletic therapy program to support the knowledge, skills and aptitudes



needed for a competent entry-level athletic therapist.

b) Equipment and Supplies

There must be appropriate and sufficient equipment, supplies, and storage space to ensure adequate experiential learning opportunities to support the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes needed for a competent entry-level athletic therapist.

There must be appropriate instructional and audio-visual aids including, but not limited to:

- anatomical models
- modalities
- treatment tables
- Consumables (tape, ultrasound gel, etc.)
- emergency care equipment
- rehabilitation tools and equipment

Refer to the CATA Competency Framework to ensure your equipment can support competency development.

c) Learning Resources

Students in the athletic therapy program must have orientation and access to an adequate supply of current books, journals, periodicals, and other reference materials related to the curriculum.

C. STUDENTS

A student handbook will be provided with the following information:

1. Admission Policies and Procedures

Standards for admission of students must be made in accordance with clearly defined and published policies of the institution and athletic therapy program.

2. Transfer of Credits

The policies and standards regarding advanced placement, transfer of credit (see Appendix I for sample) and credit for experiential learning must be available to students.

3. Evaluation of Students

a. Student Course Evaluation Methods

The criteria for successful completion of each course of the curriculum shall be given in advance to each student. Evaluation methods shall include content related to the objectives and competencies described in the curriculum.

b. Frequency and Level of Competency Evaluation

The program must identify the frequency, level and type that each competency is evaluated. Levels: introduction, applied, entry level competence and Type: theory, practical, authentic assessment.

Mechanisms should be in place for students to document appropriate learning experiences and curriculum sequencing to develop the CATA competencies necessary for graduation, which may include appropriate instructional materials, classroom presentations, discussions, demonstrations, supervised clinical and on-field practicums, and other practical evaluations.

4. Practicum Guidelines & Expectations

Students will be provided expectations around hours, travel, code of conduct, and other responsibilities related to practicums.

5. Graduation Requirements

- a. The program specific graduation requirements must be made available to each student.
- b. Ensure that there is a process in place for adequately documenting degree progression and completion.
- c. Each Institution must have a policy regarding minimum passing grades for all courses.

D. OPERATIONAL POLICIES

1. Fair Practices

- a. The program marketing and advertising must accurately reflect the program offered.



- b. Student admission, faculty and staff recruitment, and faculty and staff employment practices shall be non-discriminatory.
- c. The institution must accurately publish credit requirements and full program costs to the student (including additional specific program fees).
- d. The institution shall have a defined and published policy and procedure for processing student appeals. The published policy needs to include the consultation of Program Director to ensure that competencies and professional standards are maintained. If the Program Director is in a conflict of interest because they are teaching a class where there is a grade appeal, the next level of appeal (i.e. Department Chair, Director or Dean) may consult a Certified Athletic Therapist educator to ensure the competencies and professional standards are maintained.
- e. The policies and procedures for students' withdrawal, and for refunds of tuition and fees, shall be published.
- f. The programs must submit a student code of conduct which clearly outlines the program expectations.
- g. Essential Requirements and Accommodation:

Programs must indicate that reasonable accommodation will be considered in accordance with institutional policies and applicable provincial human rights legislation. If a requested accommodation cannot be reasonably provided without compromising public or patient safety, academic integrity, or professional standards, programs must document the decision-making process in consultation with institutional accessibility services and relevant legal guidance.

2. Student Records

- a. Records must be maintained for student admission including applications to admissions ratio.
- b. Grades and credit for courses shall be recorded on the student transcript and permanently maintained by the post-secondary institution in a safe and accessible location. In partnership with the Office of the Registrar, a process must be established for accessing and/or verifying student records when required.

E. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

The program must:

1. Include, in the reaccreditation application, information on its educational effectiveness since last accreditation:
 - Graduate time to completion
 - Employment rates
 - Attrition rates
 - Graduate/Alumni satisfaction
2. Meet annually to review, update and maintain a curriculum map, PEP, EPAs, CATA certification rates, and program policies and procedures.

F. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

Definitions

Curriculum: Courses and their descriptions that are outlined in university/college calendar.

Curriculum Map: A curriculum map is a visual chart or table that outlines program courses and their sequencing.

Competency Framework: The Athletic Therapy Competency Framework & Competencies has been developed and defined by the CATA.

Competency-Based Education: is a strategy that progressively exposes students to a continuum of learning that fosters the development of general and specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions. CBE requires a combination of instruction, experiential learning, and assessment.

Programmatic Evaluation Plan (PEP): A programmatic evaluation plan guides and coordinates all courses, practicums, and evaluations in the program. It ladders the evaluation of competency development and Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) through theoretical, practical, and authentic assessments to demonstrate learning over time.

Entrustable Professional Activities: Performance-based skills and benchmarks integrated into the educational timeline. Students are expected to achieve these benchmarks by a designated course, semester, and year as delineated in the curriculum map.

Description of the Program

1. The program description must have institutional approval that is articulated in a calendar.
2. Learning and scholarship must be demonstrated in all competencies in the framework.
 - Curriculum
 - Formal Calendar
 - Syllabi for all courses in curriculum map
 - Curriculum map
 - PEP
 - EPA
 - Resources
3. Practicum courses must be integrated and sequenced simultaneously with other theoretical and experiential learning in the curriculum. The curriculum shall include practica under an approved clinical educator and practicum setting. All programs must have a practicum in the final four semesters of the program.
 - a. Practicum experiences must be initiated early in the student's program and designed to provide the student with sufficient opportunity to develop specific competencies and ladder EPAs based on the PEP.
 - b. Practicum experiences must expose students to diverse populations and a range of clinical educators. Practicums must be non-discriminatory with respect to race, creed, age, sex, disability, orientation, and ethnical origin. Students must be in practicums that address the continuum of care that prepare a student to function in a variety of settings with patients engaged in a range of activities with conditions aligned with the knowledge, skills, and responsibilities expected of a Certified Athletic Therapist.
 - c. Clinical practicums must be directly supervised by a clinical educator. There must be a ratio which does not exceed four (4) students to one clinical educator during the student's practicum at a single time.
 - d. Field practicums must ensure that the clinical educator is readily accessible and/or on site based on the level of autonomy that was assessed according to the EPAs. For example, earlier in the curriculum when students have some theoretical knowledge and testing, they would require direct supervision until enough experience is gained to entrust students with varying and safe levels of guided autonomy and First Responder Certification is obtained. Once more knowledge



and experiences are gained by the students and those competencies are well-documented, students should be given more guided, autonomous professional activities. There must be a ratio which does not exceed eight (8) students to one clinical educator during the student's practicum at a single time.

- e. Students in a practicum cannot replace regular staff.
- f. Interprofessional educational opportunities should be part of practica.
- g. Practicum courses must have a structured classroom component where students can discuss their practicum experiences with instructors and refine their skills for real-world application.
- h. All practicum courses should provide a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 24 practical hours a week not including travel.
- i. There must be a sufficient number of practicum sites and clinical educators based on the total number of students in the program.