



Qualification  
Specification

# Active IQ Level 3 Technical Specialist in Sports Massage Therapy (Diploma)

Qualification  
Accreditation Number:  
**610/3925/1**  
Version AIQ006427

**Active iQ**

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# Active IQ Level 3 Technical Specialist in Sports Massage Therapy (Diploma)

Qualification accreditation number: 610/3925/1

## Introduction

The Active IQ Level 3 Technical Specialist in Sports Massage Therapy (Diploma) is at level 3 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). This qualification has been approved by IfATE, Ofqual and DfE to be recognised as an **Additional Specialist Technical Qualification**. This qualification builds on the outcomes within an occupational standard and enables an individual to specialise in an occupation having achieved the specialist qualification in addition to their attainment of outcomes set out in the standard.

<b>Guided learning hours:</b>	295	<b>Total qualification time:</b>	390
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## Entry requirements:

- There are no specific entry requirements.
- Performing sports massage is a physical activity, therefore a degree of physical fitness is necessary.
- There is an element of communication (discussing, presenting, reading and writing) involved and learners should have basic skills in communication pitched at level 3.

## Qualification outline

### Target learners:

- Learners aged 16+.
- Individuals wishing to become a sports massage therapist.

### Purpose

The purpose of this qualification is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to provide sports massage treatments to clients.

This qualification includes the essential knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the minimum requirements for deployment.

This additional specialist qualification supports practitioners to work with clients who have dysfunctional tissue but do not have acute/post-acute injuries or underlying pathological conditions.

Learners who achieve this qualification will:

Understand:

- How to apply knowledge of human anatomy and physiology to sports massage.
- The principles of soft tissue dysfunction.
- How to determine the appropriate techniques for specific clients.
- The legal obligations and requirements for professional practice.

Have demonstrated:

- How to collect information and carry out a range of subjective and objective assessments.
- How to construct a specific sports massage treatment plan for their client.
- How to apply a range of sports massage techniques.
- How to evaluate sports massage treatments and provide appropriate aftercare.

### **Progression**

This qualification provides progression on to:

- Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Sports Massage Therapy.
- Active IQ Level 3 Technical Occupational Entry in Personal Training (Diploma).
- Apprenticeship in Personal Training.

### **Links to National Standards**

The qualification is underpinned by the overarching professional standards for:

- The Personal Trainer Apprenticeship Trailblazer standard ST0302.
- Skills for Health CNH27 Provide sports massage therapy to clients.

# Occupational competence statements for tutors, assessors and internal verifiers

**This section outlines the requirements for tutoring, assessing and internally verifying Active IQ qualifications.**

## **Required criteria**

All tutors, assessors and internal verifiers must:

- Possess a discipline-specific qualification equivalent to the qualification being taught.
- Have relevant industry experience.
- Demonstrate active involvement in a process of industry-relevant continuing professional development during the last two years (this may be discipline-/context-specific or relevant to tutoring assessing or quality assurance).

## **Tutors and assessors**

Tutors must hold, or be working towards, a teaching qualification.

The following are acceptable:

- Level 3 Award in Education and Training.
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training.
- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training.
- Certificate in Education (including professional and postgraduate).
- Qualified Teaching and Learning Skills.

## **Assessors**

Assessors must hold, or be working towards, any of the following:

- Level 3 Award in Understanding the Principles and Practices of Assessment.
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement.
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment.
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement.
- A1 (previously D32, D33).

## **Internal verifiers**

Internal verifiers must hold, or be working towards, any of the following:

- Level 4 Award in Understanding the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice.
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice.
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice.
- V1 (previously D34).

All new assessors and quality assurance staff must be given a clear action plan for achieving the appropriate qualification(s) and should be countersigned by an appropriately qualified individual until the qualification(s) has been achieved.

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## Qualification structure

Learners must complete the five mandatory units.

Unit	Unit accreditation number	Level	GLH	TQT	
1	Anatomy and physiology for sports massage therapy	M/650/7781	3	80	100
2	Professional practice in sports massage therapy	R/650/7782	3	45	60
3	Understand the principles of soft tissue dysfunction, injury and repair	T/650/7783	3	35	50
4	Client consultation, assessment and treatment planning for sports massage therapy	Y/650/7784	3	70	90
5	Sports massage therapy treatment, aftercare, and remedial exercise	A/650/7785	3	65	90

## Assessment Design

The assessments for the Active IQ Level 3 Technical Specialist in Sports Massage Therapy (Diploma) have been designed to ensure they are valid, fit for purpose and meet the requirements of a technical specialist qualification. We have focused on the reliability and validity of the assessments, to ensure that a learner who successfully completes this qualification is well placed to secure employment in roles related to this standard.

The assessments for this Additional Specialist Technical Qualification consist of the following:

Assessment	Assessment component title	Assessment method	Unit/s
<b>1</b>	Structural organisation of the body and the skin	Knowledge assessment	Unit 1: Anatomy and physiology for sports massage therapy
<b>2</b>	Skeletal system, joints, and posture		
<b>3</b>	Muscular and nervous systems		
<b>4</b>	Cardiorespiratory system		
<b>5</b>	Lymphatic, endocrine, digestive and urinary systems		
<b>6</b>	The physiological effects of sports massage		
<b>7</b>	Legislation, standards, and scope of professional practice	Knowledge assessment	Unit 2: Professional practice in sports massage therapy
<b>8</b>	Soft tissue in sports massage	Knowledge assessment	Unit 3: Understand the principles of soft tissue dysfunction, injury, and repair
<b>9</b>	Client consultation, assessment, and communication	Knowledge assessment	Unit 4: Client consultation, assessment, and treatment planning for sports massage therapy
<b>10</b>	Client consultation, assessment record, and remedial exercise plan	Case study	
<b>11</b>	Sports massage physical assessment	Observation and questioning	

Assessment	Assessment component title	Assessment method	Unit/s
12	Sports massage therapy treatment, aftercare, and remedial exercise	Knowledge assessment	Unit 5: Sports massage therapy treatment, aftercare, and remedial exercise
13	Perform an upper body sports massage treatment	Observation and questioning	
14	Perform a lower body sports massage treatment	Observation and questioning	
15	Perform a pre/post event sports massage treatment	Case study including Observation and questioning	

## Assessment methods

The following lists the assessment methods used in this qualification, with a description of how they are intended to work.

- **Knowledge assessment**

The knowledge assessments use a range of different question types to assess the learner's cognitive abilities, retention of knowledge and factual recall. The different types of questions include multiple choice, short answer, drag and drop into text and scenario-/video-based questions and answers. The different question types give learners an opportunity to demonstrate achievement in a range of different contexts, allowing learners to apply their knowledge in real-life scenarios linked to the qualification's purpose. Each knowledge assessment has a minimum pass mark of 70%.

- **Case Study**

These assessments use a clearly constructed case study brief and associated marking scheme to allow learners to demonstrate application of knowledge and skills in a specific context. This assessment method allows for synoptic assessment of target proficiency utilising real-life scenarios and problems. These assessments allow learners to demonstrate problem solving; analytical, research and planning skills; alongside application and transfer of knowledge and use of initiative in response to complex concepts. The case study has a minimum pass mark of 80% against a pre-set mark scheme.

- **Observation and questioning**

An observation assesses the learner's competence, skills and behaviour through the application of knowledge. This assessment method will also provide an opportunity for the learner to be assessed holistically across the standard.

The focus of the questioning will be on the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are assessed within the observation and in particular on criteria that the learner was unable to demonstrate competence in due to them not occurring naturally. Questions may also be on criteria that have been partially demonstrated during the observation. The purpose of the questions and answers session is not to re-assess criteria that the learner did not achieve as a result of not being competent.

The performance observed and responses to questions will be assessed holistically as part of this assessment method. This assessment is a valid way to assess the learner's knowledge, skills and behaviours in a real-life context, and suitably prepares the learner for the role and demands of a sports massage therapist. Observations are either pass or refer against set criteria.

## Grading

To achieve this qualification, learners must achieve a pass in all of the assessments.

The overall grade for this qualification is **Pass/Refer**.

**Unit 1** M/650/7781 **Level:** 3 **GLH:** 80 **TQT:** 100  
**Unit Title:** Anatomy and physiology for sports massage therapy

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
1. Understand the structural organisation of the human body	1.1 Outline the structural organisation of the human body 1.2 Describe the basic structure of a human cell 1.3 Describe the primary functions of a human cell 1.4 Describe the different types of human tissue relevant to sports massage 1.5 Explain the functions of the different types of human tissue relevant to sports massage 1.6 Identify anatomical landmarking and movement-related <b>terminology</b>	<b>Terminology</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Orientation</li> <li>• Positioning</li> <li>• Regional</li> <li>• Directional</li> <li>• Plane of movement</li> </ul>
2. Understand the structure and functions of the skeletal system	2.1 Describe the structure of the skeletal system 2.2 Describe the functions of the skeletal system 2.3 Explain the <b>classification</b> of bones 2.4 Explain the stages of bone growth and repair	<b>Classifications</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long</li> <li>• Short</li> <li>• Flat</li> <li>• Irregular</li> <li>• Sesamoid</li> </ul>
3. Understand the structure and functions of joints	3.1 Describe the different <b>joint categories</b> 3.2 Explain the structure of synovial joints 3.3 Explain the characteristics of ligaments 3.4 Explain the characteristics of tendons 3.5 Describe the anatomical movements available at the major <b>joints</b>	<b>Joint categories</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fibrous</li> <li>• Cartilaginous</li> <li>• Synovial</li> </ul> Major freely moveable <b>joints</b> must include those within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neck and spine.</li> <li>• Shoulder, elbow, wrist, hand, and fingers.</li> <li>• Hip, knee, ankle, foot, and toes.</li> </ul>



<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
4. Understand the fundamental biomechanics of postural alignment	4.1 Describe ideal, balanced standing posture 4.2 Define neutral spinal alignment 4.3 Describe <b>spinal alignment</b> variations 4.4 Identify and describe the most common standing <b>postural types</b> in relation to dominant pelvic and joint positions	<b>Spinal alignment</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neutral</li> <li>• Kyphosis</li> <li>• Lordosis</li> <li>• Scoliosis</li> </ul> <b>Postural types</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hollow back (Anterior pelvic tilt)</li> <li>• Flat back (Posterior pelvic tilt)</li> <li>• Sway back (Forward hip translation)</li> <li>• Weight shift (Lateral pelvic tilt)</li> </ul>
5. Understand the structure and functions of the muscular system	5.1 Describe the different types and characteristics of <b>muscle tissue</b> 5.2 Explain the biomechanical principles of muscle contraction 5.3 Explain the different types of muscle contraction 5.4 Describe the roles of muscles during movement 5.5 Identify and locate the major anterior and posterior skeletal muscles 5.6 Identify and locate the attachment sites for the <b>major muscles</b> of the body 5.7 Describe why knowledge of the muscle attachment sites is beneficial to sports massage therapy practice 5.8 Describe the joint movements caused by contraction of the major anterior and posterior skeletal muscles	<b>Muscle tissue</b> types may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardiac</li> <li>• Smooth</li> <li>• Skeletal</li> </ul> <b>Major muscles</b> may include those located around the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neck, spine, and trunk</li> <li>• Shoulder, elbow, wrist, hand, and fingers</li> <li>• Pelvis, hip, knee, ankle, foot, and toes</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
6. Understand the structure and functions of the nervous system	6.1 Describe the structure of the nervous system 6.2 Outline the functions of each <b>subdivision of the nervous system</b> 6.3 Explain the structure of a neuron 6.4 Describe the transmission of an action potential	The <b>subdivisions of the nervous system</b> must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central and peripheral</li> <li>• Sensory and motor</li> <li>• Somatic and autonomic</li> <li>• Sympathetic and parasympathetic</li> </ul>
7. Understand the structure and functions of the skin	7.1 Describe the structure of the skin 7.2 Describe the <b>functions</b> of the skin 7.3 Describe the importance of the skin in relation to sports massage therapy	<b>Functions</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection</li> <li>• Thermoregulation</li> <li>• Sensation</li> <li>• Formation of vitamin D</li> </ul>
8. Understand the structure and functions of the respiratory system	8.1 Describe the structure of the respiratory system 8.2 Describe the <b>functions</b> of the respiratory system 8.3 Identify the main respiratory <b>muscles</b> 8.4 Describe the passage of air through the respiratory system, including gaseous exchange 8.5 Describe how breathing methods can be used as an aid to sports massage therapy practice	<b>Functions</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaseous exchange</li> <li>• Filtration of air</li> <li>• Warm and humidify air</li> <li>• Help create vocal sounds</li> </ul> <b>Muscles</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diaphragm</li> <li>• Intercostal</li> <li>• Scalene</li> <li>• Sternocleidomastoid</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
9. Understand the structure and functions of the cardiovascular system	9.1 Describe the structure of the cardiovascular system 9.2 Describe the <b>functions</b> of the cardiovascular system 9.3 Describe the flow of blood around the circulatory system 9.4 Describe the composition of blood 9.5 Describe blood pressure and its diagnostic categories 9.6 Describe the factors that may affect blood pressure 9.7 Describe the local and systemic effects of sports massage on the circulatory system	<b>Functions</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport dissolved gasses</li> <li>• Transport nutrients</li> <li>• Transport hormones</li> <li>• Fluid balance</li> <li>• Thermoregulation</li> <li>• Immunity</li> </ul>
10. Understand the structure and functions of the lymphatic system	10.1 Outline the structure of the lymphatic system 10.2 Describe the <b>functions</b> of the lymphatic system 10.3 Describe the structure of a lymph node 10.4 Explain the functions of a lymph node 10.5 Identify the location of the major lymph nodes 10.6 Describe the effects of sports massage on the lymphatic system	<b>Functions</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tissue fluid management</li> <li>• Filtration of fluids</li> <li>• Immunity</li> <li>• Lipid absorption following digestion</li> </ul>
11. Understand the structure and functions of the endocrine system	11.1 Describe the structure of the endocrine system 11.2 Describe the general functions of the endocrine system 11.3 Explain the physiological process regarding hormones and how they exert their effects 11.4 Identify a range of hormones and their actions 11.5 Identify the potential effects of sports massage on the endocrine system	
12. Know the structure and functions of the digestive system	12.1 Outline the basic structure of the digestive system 12.2 Outline the basic <b>functions</b> of the digestive system 12.3 Identify the potential effects of sports massage on the digestive system	<b>Functions</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakdown of food</li> <li>• Absorption of nutrients and water</li> <li>• Preparation and excretion of waste</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
13. Know the structure and functions of the urinary system	13.1 Outline the basic structure of the urinary system 13.2 Outline the basic <b>function</b> of the urinary system 13.3 Identify the potential effects of sports massage on the urinary system	<b>Functions</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filtration of the blood</li> <li>• Excretion of waste products</li> <li>• Fluid management</li> <li>• Electrolyte balance</li> </ul>
14. Understand the physiological effects of sports massage on body systems	14.1 Identify and introduce a range of fundamental <b>sports massage techniques</b> 14.2 Explain the basic physical and mechanical effects of a range of fundamental <b>sports massage techniques</b> 14.3 Explain the physiological and neurological effects of a range of fundamental <b>sports massage techniques</b>	Fundamental <b>sports massage techniques</b> must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effleurage</li> <li>• Petrissage</li> <li>• Tapotement</li> <li>• Compressions</li> <li>• Vibrations</li> <li>• Frictions</li> <li>• Trigger point therapy</li> <li>• Passive stretching</li> <li>• Muscle-energy techniques</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	Knowledge assessments	

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
<p>1. Understand legislation requirements within sports massage therapy</p>	<p>1.1 Explain the current legal obligations that relate to the sports massage therapist and their practice</p> <p>1.2 Describe insurance requirements for sports massage therapy practitioners</p> <p>1.3 Explain the importance of obtaining and working within the boundaries of informed consent</p> <p>1.4 Describe what information needs to be given to clients prior to obtaining informed consent</p> <p>1.5 Explain the role and responsibility of a sports massage therapist in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults</p> <p>1.6 Explain the importance of having a chaperone present at all times when working with children and vulnerable adults</p> <p>1.7 Summarise the consequences of non-compliance with legislation and professional standards</p>	

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
2. Understand scope of practice and referral in sports massage	2.1 Describe the general cautions and <b>contraindications</b> to sports massage. 2.2 Distinguish the actions to take if presented with cautions or <b>contraindications</b> 2.3 Identify circumstances when client referral to another healthcare practitioner is recommended 2.4 Describe the referral procedure when working with other healthcare professionals 2.5 Describe how to communicate appropriately with other healthcare professionals 2.6 State the information required within a referral or follow up letter 2.7 Describe the potential consequences of not adhering to recommended advice provided by another healthcare professional	<b>Contraindications</b> must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local</li> <li>• Systemic</li> </ul>
3. Understand the professional standards relevant to sports massage practitioners	3.1 Explain the purpose of professional regulation 3.2 Identify a range of common working principles and standards stipulated by professional sports massage associations 3.3 Summarise the roles and requirements of professional associations relating to sports massage 3.4 Explain the need for high standards of personal and professional conduct as a sports massage practitioner 3.5 Explain the importance of lifelong learning and professional development to keep knowledge and skills up to date	

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
4. Understand the principles of professional practice in sports massage	4.1 Explain the importance of professionalism in client interactions and massage practice 4.2 Explain the importance of respect, equality, and diversity when working with a range of client types 4.3 Explain the personal and clinical standards expected of the sports massage therapist 4.4 Explain the importance of good client communication skills before, during, and after sports massage treatment 4.5 Describe the advantages/disadvantages of different means of <b>communication</b>	<b>Communication</b> methods may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal in-person</li> <li>• Video call</li> <li>• Audio call</li> <li>• Written paper</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Digital messaging</li> <li>• Online</li> </ul>
5. Understand how to produce, maintain, and store client records	5.1 Explain the importance of accurate, confidential, and secure client <b>record</b> keeping 5.2 Explain what information should be recorded in relation to a sports massage therapy client 5.3 Explain the principles and procedures to apply when recording and documenting client treatments 5.4 Explain the legal requirements for the storage, management, and disposal of client data and <b>records</b>	<b>Record</b> keeping types may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand-written records/forms</li> <li>• Digital, printed records/forms</li> <li>• Digital only records/forms</li> </ul>
6. Understand the importance of environmental and personal cleanliness and hygiene when performing sports massage therapy	6.1 Explain the ongoing personal hygiene and cleanliness standards required of a sports massage therapist 6.2 Explain the <b>cleanliness and hygiene</b> requirements for the massage environment to reduce and avoid cross-contamination 6.3 Explain how to encourage massage clients to contribute to a clean and hygienic environment	<b>Cleanliness and hygiene</b> may relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massage clinic</li> <li>• Home-based massage</li> <li>• Massage in a clubhouse or changing room</li> <li>• Massage on a sports field</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
7. Understand the current health and safety legislation for equipment used during massage treatment	7.1 Identify the current legislation relative to the use of sports massage equipment during treatments performed within the clinical working environment	
<b>Assessment</b>	Knowledge assessments	



<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
1. Understand soft tissue injury	1.1 Define and describe soft tissue <b>injuries</b> 1.2 Explain the different types of soft tissue <b>injury</b> 1.3 Describe common causes of soft tissue <b>injury</b> 1.4 Describe signs and symptoms of soft tissue <b>injury</b> 1.5 Identify reasons for <b>referral</b> of treatment 1.6 Explain how overtraining may increase the risk of soft tissue <b>injury</b> 1.7 Identify the signs and symptoms that may indicate overtraining	A range of <b>injuries</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress fractures</li> <li>• Muscle and tendon strains</li> <li>• Joint sprains</li> <li>• Skin injuries</li> </ul> Identify the following in relation to <b>referral</b> of soft tissue injury: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red flags</li> <li>• Local injury issues</li> <li>• Systemic injury issues</li> </ul>
2. Understand soft tissue dysfunction	2.1 Define and describe soft tissue <b>dysfunction</b> 2.2 Explain the different types of soft tissue <b>dysfunction</b> 2.3 Describe common causes of soft tissue <b>dysfunction</b> 2.4 Describe signs and symptoms of soft tissue <b>dysfunction</b> 2.5 Identify reasons for deferral of treatment 2.6 Explain how delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) may temporarily create soft tissue <b>dysfunction</b> 2.7 Identify the signs and symptoms that may indicate delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS)	A range of <b>dysfunctions</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscular weakness</li> <li>• Shortened muscle tissue</li> <li>• Lengthened muscle tissue</li> <li>• Neuromuscular inefficiency</li> <li>• Soft tissue adhesions</li> <li>• Fascial restrictions</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
3. Understand the process of soft tissue repair	3.1 Describe the process and phases of soft tissue repair 3.2 Describe factors that may positively or negatively influence soft tissue repair 3.3 Explain the importance of appropriate levels of inflammation as part of the soft tissue repair process 3.4 Identify a <b>progressive list of priorities</b> to help manage and support the soft tissue repair process	<b>Progressive list of priorities</b> may include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prevent injury or condition from further deterioration</li> <li>2. Control excessive inflammation and pain</li> <li>3. Enhance soft tissue quality</li> <li>4. Improve circulation (blood &amp; lymph)</li> <li>5. Restore joint mobility</li> <li>6. Restore or increase joint stability and proprioception</li> <li>7. Restore or increase muscle strength and function</li> <li>8. Resume and strengthen daily physical activities</li> </ol>
4. Understand the effects of nutrition upon injury and soft tissue repair	4.1 Identify and explain the primary macronutrients that support growth and repair of soft tissues 4.2 Identify and explain the primary micronutrients that underpin biological processes involved in growth and repair of soft tissues 4.3 Explain the importance of long-term healthy eating habits in relation to soft tissue maintenance, growth, and repair 4.4 Explain the importance of adequate hydration for soft tissue health	Beneficial <b>nutrients</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protein</li> <li>• Omega 3 fatty acids</li> <li>• Vitamin C</li> <li>• Vitamin E</li> <li>• Curcumin</li> <li>• Collagen</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	Knowledge assessments	

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
<p>1. Understand the importance of obtaining relevant information to inform sports massage treatment</p>	<p>1.1 Explain the value of client consultation</p> <p>1.2 Identify the type of <b>information</b> that may be gathered during a sports massage consultation</p> <p>1.3 Explain the importance of acquiring detailed and relevant client <b>information</b> prior to treatment</p> <p>1.4 Explain why client <b>information</b>, assessment results, and treatment details must be kept confidential</p> <p>1.5 Explain how the <b>biopsychosocial model</b> may be beneficial in gathering <b>information</b> relevant to the sports massage therapy treatment process</p> <p>1.6 Summarise the basic tenets of the <b>biopsychosocial model</b></p> <p>1.7 Describe how to apply the <b>biopsychosocial model</b> in a sports massage therapy practice</p>	<p>Gathered <b>information</b> must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-existing conditions</li> <li>• Cautions, contra-indications, and red flags</li> <li>• An informed client hypothesis</li> <li>• Potential treatment strategies</li> </ul> <p><b>Biopsychosocial model</b> must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biological factors</li> <li>• Psychological factors</li> <li>• Social factors</li> </ul>
<p>2. Understand the importance of respecting equality, diversity, and providing an inclusive service</p>	<p>2.1 Explain the value of respecting <b>equality, diversity, culture</b>, and client beliefs</p> <p>2.2 Explain how to adapt sports massage treatments and business practices to meet the needs of different groups, communities, and individuals</p> <p>2.3 Identify and describe how to adapt sports massage practices to the physical, psychological, or emotional needs of individuals.</p>	<p>Consider the following <b>equality, diversity</b> and <b>cultural</b> factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Identity</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Ethnicity</li> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Socio-economic status</li> <li>• Beliefs</li> <li>• Disability</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
3. Understand how to screen and assess clients prior to sports massage treatment	3.1 Explain how to screen clients prior to sports massage assessment or treatment 3.2 Explain the importance of accurate client assessment and reassessment 3.3 Describe what is meant by subjective and objective assessment 3.4 Explain the reasons for use of subjective and objective assessment methods 3.5 Describe methods of applying subjective and objective client assessment	
4. Be able to perform sports massage client assessments	4.1 Carry out <b>subjective client assessments</b> 4.2 Obtain informed consent prior to a client's objective physical assessment 4.3 Carry out a range of <b>objective physical assessments</b> upon the client	<b>Subjective client assessments</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Client lifestyle questionnaire</li> <li>• Medical history</li> <li>• Questions regarding physical condition</li> </ul> <b>Objective physical assessments</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posture and asymmetry</li> <li>• Soft tissue palpation</li> <li>• Active joint range of movement</li> <li>• Passive joint range of movement and end feel</li> <li>• Muscle strength</li> </ul>
5. Be able to assess static posture, asymmetry, and signs of biomechanical dysfunction	5.1 Determine the joint and muscular characteristics of common <b>postural types</b> 5.2 Use an effective procedure for assessment of static, standing posture 5.3 Perform a static posture/asymmetry assessment using a suitable observation record form 5.4 Determine how postural assessment results may influence sports massage treatment planning	<b>Postural types</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hollow back (Anterior pelvic tilt)</li> <li>• Flat back (Posterior pelvic tilt)</li> <li>• Sway back (Forward hip translation)</li> <li>• Weight shift (Lateral pelvic tilt)</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
6. Be able to assess the palpatory characteristics of normal and abnormal body tissues	6.1 Determine how normal and abnormal soft tissue feels upon palpation 6.2 Explain the purpose and procedure for using palpation to assess soft tissue 6.3 Perform a soft tissue palpation assessment 6.4 Explain how palpation assessment findings may influence sports massage treatment planning	
7. Be able to assess active joint range of movement	7.1 Describe the typical range of movement available at the major <b>joints</b> 7.2 Determine the purpose and procedure for assessing active <b>joint</b> range of movement 7.3 Perform a selection of active <b>joint</b> range of movement assessments 7.4 Explain how the active <b>joint</b> range of movement assessment results may influence sports massage treatment planning	<b>Joints</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neck</li> <li>• Shoulder girdle</li> <li>• Shoulder and elbow</li> <li>• Spine</li> <li>• Hip and knee</li> <li>• Ankle and foot</li> </ul>
8. Be able to assess passive joint range of movement and joint end feel	8.1 Describe normal and abnormal joint end feel for each of the major <b>joints</b> 8.2 Describe the purpose and procedure for assessing passive range of movement and <b>joint</b> end feel 8.3 Perform a selection of passive <b>joint</b> range of movement assessments and also determine joint end feel 8.4 Determine how the results of the passive <b>joint</b> range of movement and end feel assessments may influence sports massage treatment planning	<b>Joints</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neck</li> <li>• Shoulder girdle</li> <li>• Shoulder and elbow</li> <li>• Spine</li> <li>• Hip and knee</li> <li>• Ankle and foot</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
9. Be able to assess muscular strength using a recognised therapeutic testing scale	9.1 Define a validated <b>grading system</b> used to classify therapeutic muscle strength 9.2 Describe the purpose and procedure for assessing therapeutic muscular strength 9.3 Perform a selection of therapeutic muscular strength assessments 9.4 Determine how the results of the therapeutic muscular strength assessments may influence sports massage treatment planning	A <b>grading system</b> must be scientifically validated rather than a subjective client/therapist rating (e.g. Oxford muscle grading scale).
10. Be able to devise sports massage therapy treatment plans	10.1 Devise specific massage strategies relevant to the client consultation and the collated, interpreted assessment information 10.2 Use treatment plans that align with the current stage of soft tissue repair and the recommended <b>progressive treatment priorities</b> 10.3 Present the intended massage goals and strategies to each client 10.4 Provide opportunities for clients to clarify understanding of their current physical condition and the intended treatment plan 10.5 Agree treatment strategies and obtain informed consent from the client prior to initiating the intended therapy plan	<b>Progressive treatment priorities</b> may include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prevent injury or condition from further deterioration</li> <li>2. Control excessive inflammation and pain</li> <li>3. Enhance soft tissue quality</li> <li>4. Improve circulation (blood &amp; lymph)</li> <li>5. Restore joint mobility</li> <li>6. Restore or increase joint stability and proprioception</li> <li>7. Restore or increase muscle strength and function</li> <li>8. Resume and strengthen daily physical activities</li> </ol>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
11. Understand the indications and contraindications for a range of sports massage therapy techniques	11.1 Describe the indications for a range of sports massage therapy <b>techniques</b> 11.2 Describe the cautions and contra-indications for a range of sports massage therapy <b>techniques</b> 11.3 Describe the required action(s) when presented with cautions or contra-indications related to specific sports massage therapy <b>techniques</b>	Sports massage therapy <b>techniques</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effleurage</li> <li>• Petrissage</li> <li>• Tapotement</li> <li>• Compressions</li> <li>• Vibrations</li> <li>• Frictions</li> <li>• Trigger point therapy</li> <li>• Passive stretching</li> <li>• Muscle-energy techniques</li> </ul>
12. Understand the potential impact of psychological effects resulting from therapist/client interaction	12.1 Describe the characteristics and consequences of inadequate verbal and non-verbal communication between client and therapist 12.2 Describe interpersonal skills which are supportive of good communication between client and therapist in a clinical or sports setting	
13. Understand how to plan client-matched mobilisations and remedial exercises	13.1 Describe how to apply joint/muscle anatomy and physiology in the process of selecting client-matched flexibility and mobility <b>exercises</b> 13.2 Describe how to apply muscle anatomy and physiology in the process of selecting client-matched remedial <b>exercises</b> 13.3 Develop a client-matched mobility and exercise plan to support and enhance specific sports massage therapy treatment outcomes	<b>Exercises</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common flexibility/mobility for short/restricted muscles</li> <li>• Common remedial exercises for targeting weak or dysfunctional muscles</li> <li>• Exercise considerations</li> <li>• Isolation to compound</li> <li>• Open and closed chain</li> <li>• Remedial to functional</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	Knowledge assessment Case study Observation and questioning	

**Unit 5** A/650/7785    **Level:** 3    **GLH:** 65    **TQT:** 90  
**Unit Title:** Sports massage therapy treatment, aftercare, and remedial exercise

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
1. Understand foundational considerations for applying sports massage treatments	1.1 Explain the different <b>contexts</b> in which sports massage therapy may be applied 1.2 Explain how the timing of a sports massage treatment can affect neuromuscular function and physical performance 1.3 Explain how the total number of intended treatments and frequency of treatments may affect the plan of action for each individual sports massage treatment 1.4 Explain the requirements of a suitable environment for sports massage therapy treatment 1.5 Identify a range of equipment needed for sports massage therapy, giving reasons for their use	<b>Context</b> for sports massage may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-event</li> <li>• Inter/intra-event</li> <li>• Post-event</li> <li>• Maintenance</li> <li>• Soft tissue dysfunction</li> <li>• Injury rehabilitation</li> </ul>



<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
2. Be able to prepare the treatment area and position the client effectively	2.1 Determine how to prepare the sports massage <b>environment</b> , available equipment, and the practitioner for treatment 2.2 Prepare clients to receive sports massage therapy treatments <b>2.3 Position</b> clients for optimal comfort, maintenance of dignity, and for efficacy of treatment 2.4 Explain when and how the use of <b>props</b> and supports may benefit sports massage therapy 2.5 Apply careful towel technique where appropriate, to maintain body warmth, prevent exposure, and maintain client dignity	Massage <b>environment</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massage clinic</li> <li>• Home-based massage</li> <li>• Massage in a clubhouse or changing room</li> <li>• Massage on a sports field</li> </ul> Client <b>position</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lying prone, supine, or side</li> <li>• Seated</li> <li>• Standing</li> </ul> <b>Props</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Towels</li> <li>• Pillows</li> <li>• Bolsters</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
<p>3. Understand how to select effective sports massage therapy techniques and mediums</p>	<p>3.1 Describe how to perform a range of sports massage therapy <b>techniques</b></p> <p>3.2 Describe the intended treatment effects for a range of sports massage <b>techniques</b></p> <p>3.3 Correlate the relevant sports massage <b>techniques</b> and methods with a range of sports massage therapy <b>outcomes</b></p> <p>3.4 Select appropriate massage <b>techniques</b> for the client and the intended treatments</p> <p>3.5 Describe how to structure and combine a range of different sports massage <b>techniques</b> into a cohesive, flowing treatment</p> <p>3.6 Describe the properties of different massage <b>mediums</b> and how these are suited for use during different sports massage techniques</p> <p>3.7 Explain how different massage <b>mediums</b> may be suited to different client skin types</p> <p>3.8 Identify the typical content of a range of massage <b>mediums</b> with regard to potential allergens that may contraindicate to their use</p> <p>3.9 Describe effects and benefits of commonly used <b>mediums</b> in sports massage therapy</p> <p>3.10 Explain the advantages and disadvantages of commonly used <b>mediums</b> in sports massage therapy</p> <p>3.11 Select appropriate massage <b>mediums</b> for the client and the intended treatments</p>	<p>Sports massage <b>techniques</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effleurage</li> <li>• Petrissage</li> <li>• Tapotement</li> <li>• Compressions</li> <li>• Vibrations</li> <li>• Frictions</li> <li>• Trigger point therapy</li> <li>• Passive stretching</li> <li>• Muscle-energy techniques</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes</b> for sports massage techniques may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-event</li> <li>• Inter/intra-event</li> <li>• Post-event</li> <li>• Maintenance</li> <li>• Soft tissue dysfunction</li> </ul> <p><b>Mediums</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oils</li> <li>• Cream / lotion</li> <li>• Gel</li> <li>• Wax</li> <li>• Powder</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
<p>4. Be able to apply sports massage treatments</p>	<p>4.1 Apply a range of sports massage <b>techniques</b> correctly that meet the presentation and needs of the client</p> <p>4.2 Demonstrate how to combine and flow from one massage <b>technique</b> to another, maintaining treatment continuity</p> <p>4.3 Demonstrate how to position self and use body weight to ensure effective <b>application</b> of massage <b>techniques</b></p> <p>4.4 Describe how massage speed and depth of pressure affect the treatment outcome</p> <p>4.5 Adapt own posture and position throughout sports massage to ensure safe and effective <b>application</b> of selected <b>techniques</b></p> <p>4.6 Monitor visual, tactile, and oral feedback and adapt the treatment strategy where appropriate</p> <p>4.7 Demonstrate how to apply therapeutic mobility and flexibility techniques appropriate to the treatment aims and objectives</p> <p>4.8 Remove massage medium when necessary to ensure effective ongoing treatment</p> <p>4.9 Sustain appropriate interaction and communication with clients throughout the massage</p> <p>4.10 Uphold and apply professionally accepted standards throughout sports massage treatments</p> <p>4.11 Carry out post-massage assessment of clients to identify any resulting physical change or improvement</p> <p>4.12 Restore the working massage environment to a safe and hygienic condition after the completion of treatment</p>	<p>Sports massage <b>techniques</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effleurage</li> <li>• Petrissage</li> <li>• Tapotement</li> <li>• Compressions</li> <li>• Vibrations</li> <li>• Frictions</li> <li>• Trigger point therapy</li> <li>• Passive stretching</li> <li>• Muscle-energy techniques</li> </ul> <p>Consider the following in relation to sports massage <b>application</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contour of hands</li> <li>• Mode of application</li> <li>• Body position and placement</li> <li>• Practitioner posture</li> <li>• Depth of pressure</li> <li>• Direction of massage strokes</li> <li>• Pace and rhythm of massage strokes</li> </ul>

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
5. Be able to provide treatment aftercare and instruct mobility and remedial exercise	5.1 Explain why it may be necessary to remove the massage medium after treatment to comply with specific sporting regulations 5.2 Advise the client regarding potential contra-actions or side effects that may occur following sports massage treatment 5.3 Discuss with the client appropriate actions to take in the event of an adverse response to sports massage treatment 5.4 Instruct home-based mobility or remedial exercises to further enhance or complement the effects of sports massage therapy treatment 5.5 Offer appropriate <b>lifestyle</b> advice in support of treatment aims within the scope of professional practice for a sports massage therapist 5.6 Check and confirm client understanding of all components of treatment aftercare 5.7 Plan and schedule follow-up care to enhance client accountability and exercise compliance	Fundamental <b>lifestyle</b> advice as appropriate, may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy diet</li> <li>• Regular physical activity</li> <li>• Stress reduction</li> <li>• Sleep and rest</li> <li>• Smoking reduction or cessation</li> <li>• Moderate alcohol intake</li> </ul> Aftercare must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Client post-treatment advice</li> <li>• Condition management</li> <li>• Flexibility and mobility exercises</li> <li>• Remedial exercises</li> <li>• Additional, supportive lifestyle advice</li> <li>• Client questions to clarify and confirm understanding</li> </ul>
6. Understand the evaluation of sports massage treatments	6.1 Describe methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of sports massage treatments 6.2 Explain why accurate reassessment of a client after sports massage is an important treatment evaluation tool 6.3 Explain the importance of seeking opportunities for client feedback 6.4 Explain the importance of self-reflection in relation to sports massage treatment performance	

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>Indicative content</b> <i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>
7. Be able to evaluate sports massage treatments	7.1 Obtain feedback from clients regarding the sports massage treatment 7.2 Review feedback received and engage in self-reflection of the treatment 7.3 Evaluate the treatment and identify areas and opportunities for future improvement 7.4 Record massage sessions as legally required	
<b>Assessment</b>	Knowledge assessment Observation and questioning Case study	

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