



Unit 36: Functional Sports Massage

Delivery guidance

Approaching the unit

This unit gives learners the opportunity to understand the sports massage profession and industry standards, and the importance of sports massage to the sport and exercise performer. Learners must have access to appropriate facilities.

This unit is highly practical. It will develop learners' ability to undertake client consultation and assessment, and to use findings to formulate a safe and appropriate treatment plan. Learners will also develop the practical massage skills required to perform sports massage, enabling them to implement the treatment plan in a safe manner. Practical skill application allows integration of theoretical knowledge.

You will find that learners start this unit anticipating practical activity. This eagerness should be capitalised on, as learners will be motivated by early exposure to the equipment and environment in which they will be working.

Delivering the learning aims

Learning aim A introduces the industry standards of practice, professional associations and the role of a sports massage practitioner. Professional associations could be explored through a research-based learner-centred approach, using the internet.

Learners can explore the functions of professional associations, and the standards and requirements they set for compliance within the industry. Addressing industry standards can be a little dull for learners. It is, therefore, essential to engage learners fully by applying theory to practice, using real-life working environments. This could be achieved by visiting a range of environments in which sports massage therapists work. Learners can consider, compare and contrast standards such as health and safety, environment, equipment, protocols and therapist conduct. If visits are difficult, you could use digital footage and technology. Guest speakers, such as sports massage therapists and sports therapists, could also be invited into the school/college.

Learners should understand the role and responsibilities of the sports massage practitioner in working as part of a multi-disciplinary team to deliver safe and effective massage. They will go on to explore the physical, therapeutic and psychological benefits of massage for athletes in all sports and disciplines, understanding which techniques elicit which benefits. Initially this could be a research-led learner activity: small groups of learners could, as a team, research certain aspects; the teams could then amalgamate information (snowball effect), and present to other learners. There may be aspects of tutor-led delivery or discussion included, with a heavy emphasis on contrasting sporting examples to consolidate learning.

Learning aim B focuses on the theoretical and practical skills needed for learners to undertake client consultation and assessment. Learners should have ample time to show progression across the skills required in the consultation process. There should be demonstration of skills and techniques in undertaking the assessment of clients, as well as video feedback and peer coaching. Initially, learners should have the opportunity to participate with support, but as they gain confidence, they should be allowed to take responsibility for their own performance and the safety of their clients. Target setting between sessions will encourage improvements in performance.

Learners should review their own skills, techniques and performance, and consider strengths and areas required for improvement. Besides learners reviewing their own performance, you should give them regular feedback and action points, and encourage peer review.

Learners will need to understand the findings from the consultation and assessment, in order to develop a safe and appropriate treatment plan. Discussion should form the basis for exploring



clinical reasoning and planning, using real-life examples and scenarios. Some tutor-led delivery will be required to set the parameters for proceeding with treatment, and the need for referral.

Learning aim C focuses on the practical skills needed for learners to carry out sports massage.

Learners should have ample time to show progression across all skills and techniques.

Demonstration of skills and techniques should be used, as well as video feedback and peer coaching. Initially, learners should have the opportunity to participate with support, but as they gain confidence, they should be allowed to take responsibility for their own performance and their client's safety. Target setting between sessions will encourage improvements in performance.

Learners should review their own skills, techniques and performance, and consider strengths and required areas for improvement. Besides learners reviewing their own performance, you should give them regular feedback and action points, and encourage peer review.

Some formal delivery will be required to inform learners of the factors they need to consider at all times during treatment, such as working with insurance, client-informed consent and appropriate and accurate record keeping. Learners should also be informed of the consequences of not identifying contraindications, not referring when needed and adverse reactions to treatment. Discussion should be used to develop and confirm learners' understanding and ability to justify treatments administered.



Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Explore the importance of the sports massage profession for sports performers	A1 Industry standards of practice A2 Professional associations A3 Sports massage practitioner role A4 Physical and therapeutic benefits A5 Psychological benefits	An extended essay, focused on discussing industry standard practices, professional associations and the role of the sports massage practitioner. A report evaluating the importance of sports massage and assessment in ensuring optimum performance of the sports performer.
B Undertake client consultation and assessment for a sports performer	B1 Assessment B2 Treatment plan	Appropriate treatment plans for two contrasting sports performers based on a consultation and assessment.
C Carry out sports massage on a sports performer	C1 Massage techniques and application C2 Considerations for treatment	Record of practical activity in accordance with treatment plan with written justification addressing the treatments administered and discussing the physiological, therapeutic and psychological responses to sports massage. Effectiveness, recommendations and considerations will also be justified.

Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed. There is a maximum number of two summative assignments for this unit. Tutors should refer to the assessment guidance in the specification for specific detail, particularly in relation to the requirements for Pass, Merit and Distinction grades.

For **Learning aim A**, you should set a scenario that is vocationally relevant, and of an appropriate context for the learner to fulfil the required criteria and unit content. An extended essay will be produced demonstrating understanding of the sports massage profession, including industry standards of practice, professional associations and the role of the sports massage practitioner.

As an alternative, learners can research relevant working environments independently, including clinical, non-clinical, events and sports clubs. Learners will produce an extended essay that demonstrates understanding of the sports massage profession, including industry standards of practice, professional associations and the role of the sports massage practitioner.

To achieve A.P3, learners will produce a written explanation of the physiological, therapeutic and psychological responses to massage; discussion will be specific to each performer, with examples



for A.M2, and evaluation for A.D1. There should be justification for the effectiveness of the sports massages in meeting the individual needs of the client.

Learning aims B and C are assessed in Assignment 2, which is split into two activities – one addressing learning aim B and one addressing learning aim C. The first activity focuses on learning aim B and addresses the consultation and assessment procedure, and formulation of a safe and effective treatment plan whilst the activity for learning aim C allows learners to carry out the treatment plan and perform sports massage.

Learners will select two contrasting sports performers. This means each performer has contrasting requirements (i.e., the nature of the benefits required are different for each performer). This will allow for the breadth of coverage of unit content through the assessment of all learning aims. It is essential that you monitor the selection of performers, so that learners are not disadvantaged, and to allow scope in the written requirements. Ideally, learners will conduct the consultation and assessment, and carry out the sports massage, on the same sports performer. However, so that learners are not disadvantaged, simulation may be used where required; for example, peers can be used.

For Assignment 2 activity 1, for each performer, learners will conduct a consultation and assessment. Consultation and assessment forms will need to be completed accurately and submitted with the treatment plan, which must be safe. To attain B.M3, the learner's manner must be confident and effective, and the plan must also be effective. Confident means that there should be no hesitation or uncertainty when conducting the consultation, assessment or sports massage treatment. Effective means that the procedure must be capable of producing the expected/intended results, were the consultation, assessment and sports massage to be applied in a real-life industry situation. In order to achieve B.D2, the learner must justify the consultation and assessment procedure adopted (what has the learner carried out and why), and how both treatment plans have been produced to meet the needs of the two contrasting sports performers (why have they produced that specific plan for each performer).

Assignment 2 activity 2, gives learners the opportunity to perform the safe treatment plans formulated in the first activity. On separate occasions the learner will apply and perform sports massage appropriately, upholding sports massage standards.

When conducting practical aspects, professional standards (including appearance) must be upheld. Commercially acceptable times for consultation and assessment should also be adhered to. Although timings vary, the recommendation would be between 30 and 60 minutes for consultation and assessment, and 30 and 45 minutes for conducting a sports massage. Learners should be encouraged to seek feedback to support them when addressing any future recommendations or considerations.



Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Introduction

Introduce the unit through a class discussion, with the aim of getting learners excited about a highly practical unit, the prospect of working with clients and being equipped with sports massage skills. Discussion should include learners' own experiences of sports massage, sporting environments, use of sports massage by amateur and professional sports performers. It is also useful to include digital recordings, clips on video-sharing websites and summary of the importance of sports massage and assessment in ensuring optimum sports performance.

Learning aim A: Explore the importance of the sports massage profession for sports performers

- Introduce the topic and content about industry standards of practice, professional associations and the role of a sports massage practitioner to your learners. Devise and use a quiz to assess learner knowledge.
- Divide class into small groups, with each group assigned a professional association. Using the internet, learners should research the role, function, benefits, continuing professional development (CPD) requirements and professional standards expected of the association. Each group gives a mini presentation to their peers, encouraging questions and providing answers.
- Invite a guest speaker, e.g., a sports massage therapist or a healthcare practitioner, such as a sports therapist who is also qualified in sports massage. Other speakers may include sports managers and health and safety officers. Guest speakers should discuss aspects relevant to their job role, e.g., career pathway/opportunities, environments worked in, their role as part of a multidisciplinary team, standards of practice, legal aspects, such as child protection and working with vulnerable adults, health and safety, emergency protocols and professional conduct. Learners should prepare interview-type questions to prompt the speaker, if necessary.
- Take learners to different sports massage working environments or, if not possible, use digital recordings or Google Earth to gain an appreciation of different working environments. Learners should be encouraged to reflect, compare and contrast standards of practice, requirements, and practitioner roles within different working environments.
- Use formal delivery to give an overview of the learning aim. Use questions and answers to determine learners' understanding, and the ability to give specific examples. Differentiate questioning according to the learners' abilities.
- For A4/A5, in small groups, learners allocate between themselves groups to research physical and psychological effects of sports massage. Groups who have researched the same topic snowball learning to share and consolidate their research findings. Learners prepare and give mini presentations to peers. Group discussion, following each presentation, with questions and answers, will consolidate learners' understanding.



Learning aim B: Undertake client consultation and assessment for a sports performer

- Introduce the topic and content of learning aim B to your learners. Clear class boundaries and parameters should be set, and agreed on, in order to uphold professional standards during all practical lessons.
- Give formal delivery of subjective assessment, and justification of why each piece of information is required. In a tutor-led demonstration of subjective assessment, learners to feed back on professional standards, and subjective assessment content. Oral questioning to confirm learner understanding of the requirements for each component should be performed.
- Give formal delivery of objective assessment, and justification of why each piece of information is required. In a tutor-led demonstration of objective assessment skills and techniques, learners practise extensively on a range of clients. The clients should ideally be active people and external to the class.
- Learners demonstrate subjective and objective assessment of peers.
- Learners conduct a subjective and objective assessment on a client on several occasions. Ideally, the client should not be a peer, although it may be necessary to use peers if multiple clients are not available. Video feedback and peer coaching should be used to aid learner reflection, and to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Learners select a client they have assessed and discuss, using pertinent questioning by you and peers, their clinical reasoning and planning (what are you going to do? how? and why?). Learners should be questioned about the parameters for proceeding with treatment, and when referral is required.

Learning aim C: Carry out sports massage on a sports performer

- Formal delivery should be used to introduce learners to the types of massage and massage techniques, including the use of digital clips and/or video-sharing websites. Introduce and discuss adverse reactions, aftercare and contra-indications.
- Give practical demonstration of skills and techniques, highlighting considerations for treatments. Initially, all techniques should be learned using the posterior aspect of the legs. Once techniques and confidence have developed, demonstration and practice on the anterior aspect of legs, torso and arms should be taught and learned. Feedback should be encouraged in the form of digital recording, from you and from class peers. You should encourage learners to reflect on strengths and areas for improvements, as well as setting targets for development. Oral questioning should be used frequently to ascertain learners' understanding of what they are doing and why.
- Conduct a consultation and assessment role play. Learners should formulate a safe and effective treatment plan. You should question learners during the assessment process, to justify what they have done and why.
- Learners conduct sports massage treatment, ensuring all professional standards are upheld. Ask learners during the treatment plan to justify what they have done and why.
- Before assessment, learners should reflect on the treatment they delivered, justifying its effectiveness, identifying future recommendations and considerations, strengths and further areas for improvement.
- Ask learners to write a newspaper article evaluating the physical, therapeutic and psychological effects of sports massage, and its effect on sport performance. Peer review to critique a selection of anonymous articles.



Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

- Unit 5: Self-employment in Sport and Physical Activity
- Unit 24: Applied Sports Anatomy and Physiology
- Unit 25: Sports Injuries Management
- Unit 27: Sports Psychology.

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC International L3 Qualifications in Sport. Check the Pearson website at: (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Textbooks

The following textbooks contain information about all aspects of sports massage and professional practice. They also give wider reading opportunities to stretch learners.

Benjamin PJ and Lamp SP, *Understanding Sports Massage* (Second Edition), Human Kinetics, 2004 ISBN 9780736054577

Cash M, *Sport & Remedial Massage Therapy*, Ebury Press, 1996 ISBN 9780091809560

Findlay S, *Sports Massage (Hands-on Guides for Therapists)*, Human Kinetics, 2010 ISBN 9780736082600

Fritz S, *Sports & Exercise Massage* (Second Edition), Mosby, 2013 ISBN 9780323083829

Gledhill A, Mackay N, Forsdyke D and Randerson K, *Foundations in Sports Therapy*, Heinemann, 2011 ISBN 9780435046859

Johnson J, *Postural Assessment (Hands-on Guides for Therapists)*, Human Kinetics, 2012 ISBN 9781450400961 – This book contains information that relates directly to objective assessment.

McGillicuddy M, *Massage for Sport Performance*, Human Kinetics, 2010 ISBN

Mills R and Parker-Bennett S, *Sports Massage: Candidate Handbook*, Heinemann, 2004 ISBN 9780435456528

Paine T, *The Complete Guide to Sports Massage* (Second Edition), A&C Black Publishers Ltd., 2007 ISBN 9780713685794

Ward K, *Hands on Sports Therapy*, Cengage Learning Vocational, 2004 ISBN 9781861529206



Journals

The following journals provide articles relating to varied aspects of sports massage.

British Journal of Occupational Therapy Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine International Journal of Sports Medicine

Complementary Medicine Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies

International Journal of Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork Journal of Alternative and

Journal of Physiotherapy & Sports Medicine Physical Therapy in Sport

Websites

www.basrat.org – BASRaT (the British Association of Sport Rehabilitators and Trainers) is the UK regulator for sport rehabilitation graduates who are trained in sports and exercise medicine.

www.cnhc.org.uk – The CNHC (Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council) gives a UK voluntary register of complementary therapists such as for Alexander technique teaching, aromatherapy, hypnotherapy, massage therapy, reflexology and sports therapy. Its website contains information about how to choose a complementary therapist.

www.fht.org.uk – The Federation of Holistic Therapists is the largest leading professional association for therapists in the UK and Ireland. Content includes specialist therapy articles and the latest industry news.

www.society-of-sports-therapists.org – The Society of Sports Therapists (SST) website gives easily accessible information about educational opportunities, careers, standards of care and regulatory guidance.

www.thesma.org – The Sports Massage Association (SMA) website contains information about the management of soft tissues to guard against, or recover from, a soft-tissue injury. It also gives guidance on finding a qualified practitioner.

Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling learners to access them through the school/college intranet.