UBT97M
Swedish massage therapy

Unit reference number: F/507/5543
Level: 3
Guided Learning (GL) hours: 70

Overview
This unit will enable learners to develop the underpinning theory knowledge and understanding associated with the history, the origins, the philosophy and the role of massage therapies and other massage traditions. Learners will develop the knowledge and skills required to prepare for and provide a professional Swedish massage treatment to clients, whilst following salon requirements. Learners will also develop an understanding of classical massage movements, the possible contra-indications to treatment, appropriate aftercare advice and the effects and indications of Swedish massage therapy

Learning outcomes
On completion of this unit learners will:

LO1 Know the salon requirements for Swedish massage therapy
LO2 Know the history, origins and philosophy of massage therapies
LO3 Understand the effects and indications of Swedish massage therapy
LO4 Be able to prepare the client, self and the work area for Swedish massage therapy
LO5 Be able to provide Swedish massage therapy
Assessment requirements

Learners must complete all four assessment requirements related to this unit:

1. Treatment portfolio
2. Graded practical assessment
3. External examination
4. Graded synoptic assessment

1. Treatment portfolio

Learners must produce a treatment portfolio that includes evidence of practical treatments carried out with proficiency.

At a minimum the treatment portfolio for this unit must include client consultation and treatment records covering all of the following:

- Carried out a minimum of
  - 4 Swedish massage treatments
- Treated all areas
  - Face
  - Neck
  - Chest
  - Shoulders
  - Abdomen
  - Arms
  - Hands
  - Legs
  - Feet
  - Back
- Used all massage mediums
  - Oil
  - Cream
  - Gel
  - Pre-blended aromatherapy oils
  - Talc
- Used all massage movements
  - Effleurage
  - Petrissage
  - Tapotement
  - Vibration
  - Frictions
- Used all methods of massage adaptation
  - Forearm
  - Heel of hand
  - Elbow
- Covered all common postural faults
  - Kyphosis
  - Lordosis
  - Scoliosis
  - Winged scapula
- Covered all treatment needs/objectives
  - Relaxation
  - Stimulation
  - Easing of muscular tension and stiffness
- Given all types of advice
  - Aftercare
  - Possible contra-actions
  - Improvements to posture, diet, lifestyle
  - Post-treatment restrictions
  - Additional products and services

Evidence from the graded practical assessment must also be presented in the treatment portfolio.

The treatment portfolio must be completed prior to learners undertaking the graded practical skills test. Whilst service portfolios will not be graded, they may be sampled by the VTCT External Quality Assurer (EQA).

2. Graded practical assessment

Learners must carry out a complete treatment which will be observed, marked and graded by centre assessors. The grade achieved in the graded practical assessment will be the grade awarded for the unit.

The graded practical assessment must take place in a real or realistic working environment on a real client. At a minimum the graded practical assessment for this unit must cover:
- Treatment – one full body massage covering all treatment areas of the face and body (recommended service time 90 minutes)
- All massage movements – effleurage, petrissage, tapotement, vibration, frictions

Recorded professional discussion can also be used as an assessment method attached to the graded practical assessment and is particularly useful for gathering evidence for criteria related to evaluation and reflection. Professional discussions should be planned and recorded.

3. External examination

Whilst the theory content of LO1, LO2 and LO3 may be naturally assessed in the graded practical assessment, they will be tested by external examinations at the end of the period of learning.

External examinations will test knowledge and understanding from across the whole vocational area (mandatory units). Learners should use the unit content section of this unit to aid revision since exam questions will test the full breadth of this section.

External examinations will be set and marked by VTCT and will contribute to the overall qualification grade.
Learners must complete the assessment requirements related to this unit:
4. Graded synoptic assessment

In the last term or final third of their qualification learners will be required to undertake a graded synoptic assessment. This will require learners to carry out a range of treatments from across the whole vocational area (mandatory units). Assessment coverage will vary year on year, although all treatments will be covered over time.

VTCT will set a brief for centres which will detail the treatments to be covered in the graded synoptic assessment. Grading descriptors for the synoptic assessment will also be provided by VTCT.

The graded synoptic assessment will be marked and graded by centre staff and externally quality assured by VTCT.

The graded synoptic assessment will contribute to the overall qualification grade.
Unit content

LO1 Know the salon requirements for Swedish massage therapy

Learners must know how to set up the work area:
- Prepare the work area to allow for
  - Ease of access and free movement around the couch
  - Hygienic set up of couch and trolley
  - Warm relaxing atmosphere with dimmed lighting and soft music
  - Client support by preparation of props
- Ensure a safe working environment
  - Clean and hygienic work area
  - Sufficient ventilation
  - Effective positioning of couch to allow ergonomic and safe practice

Learners must know how professional therapists present themselves:
Clean professional uniforms create a positive impression of a therapist and the salon.
Uniforms should be made from a comfortable fabric to facilitate the stretching involved in the
treatment.
- Therapists should wear closed-in footwear, no jewellery, no piercings, hair neatly tied
  back and any fringe secured
- Personal hygiene and cleanliness including showering, covering cuts and abrasions,
  wearing deodorant or antiperspirant, oral hygiene (including clean teeth, fresh breath),
  are all important elements of professional presentation

Learners must know the salon requirements for record keeping:
- Accurate appointment systems, stationery, loyalty, rewards, acknowledgement of
  occasions
- Consultation record keeping, contra-indications, signatures, refer to existing records,
  information clear, accurate and in logical order (name, address, contact numbers, age
  range, reason for treatment, occupation, sport/hobbies, medical history, allergies/hypersensitivity, contact lenses, contra-actions)
- Skin sensitivity tests, adaptations and modifications, recommendations
- Treatment plan, update record at the end of the treatment, update at each visit,
  maintained electronically, paper records

Learners must know the insurance and licensing requirements for Swedish massage:
- Requirements for licensing are applied at local council level. Each council will have
  slightly different requirements but as a general rule both the therapist and the premises
  will need to be licensed. The most current information on licensing is available on local
  authority websites and from professional membership association groups.
- As a minimum a salon should hold, where applicable, employer’s liability insurance as
  well as public liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance.

Learners must know the legal requirements for providing treatments to minors:
- The age at which an individual is classed as a minor and how this differs nationally
LO2 Know the history, origins and philosophy of massage therapies

Learners must know the definition of massage therapies:
- The word "massage" is derived from either
  - The Arabic word "mass" meaning to press softly
  - The Greek word "massien" to knead
  - The French word “masser” meaning friction or kneading
  - The Portuguese word “amassar” to knead
- Massage is the term used to describe certain manipulations of the soft tissues of the body. There are more than 250 variations of massage and bodywork therapies. Despite the differences between each modality, all of them involve touch and manipulation techniques to move muscles and body tissue. The aim of the massage therapy is to relieve stress, tension, pain and a whole host of other ailments.

Learners must know the history of massage therapies:
- The earliest known reference to massage dates back to 2700 BC. A Chinese medical text details its use for therapeutic purposes.
- The West was introduced to massage therapy during the Greek empire. Hippocrates wrote about the therapy, referring to it as ‘rubbing’ which loosened and softened muscles. Greek women regarded massage as an important part of their beauty regimen. Exercise and massage combined were also believed to address the “whole” of the person, not just one area.
- Galen, one of the greatest Roman medical physicians, used the therapy to treat diseases and physical injuries. He contributed to the development of the knowledge of anatomy and physiology.
- Between 1450 and 1600, massage therapy reached Europe and medical schools. Ambroise Pare, a French doctor and founder of modern surgery, started using massage to treat stiff and injured joints.
- During the nineteenth century Swedish massage was developed from techniques used in Swedish gymnastics by Per Henrik Ling. Ling has often been mistakenly credited for having inventing Swedish Massage.
- During the 1840s Dr Matthias Roth, a former student of Ling, brought massage therapy to Britain and in 1856 the two Taylor brothers introduced massage therapy to the U.S.
- In 1878 a Dutch massage practitioner named Johan Georg Mezger introduced the phrase Swedish massage and applied French terms to name the five classical massage techniques.

Learners must know the origins of massage therapies:
Today’s massage therapists practice a multitude of techniques originating from ancient methods. From those roots massage therapists remain inspired by a goal cultivated centuries ago, to help others heal their physical and emotional well-being and experience a higher quality of life.
- Massage from India is believed to be passed down through generations; Ayurveda is the traditional holistic medical system in India. Ancient seers and natural scientists developed this system based on centuries of studies, experiments and meditations. Texts detailing Ayurvedic principles and practices were written sometime between 1500 and 500 BC. Ayurveda was widely adopted throughout India and Southeast Asia. Ayurveda views that individuals incur illnesses and diseases when they live out of harmony with their environment. To treat conditions individuals must restore natural mental and physical balance by re-establishing harmony between themselves and the world around them. At that point they can begin to heal naturally. Based on the patient’s health imbalances, constitution and the time of year Ayurveda recommends how to use the five senses to interact with the environment in order to create balance. Treatments in
Ayurveda include diet and herbalism, aromatherapy, colour therapy, sound therapy and touch therapy

- **Massage Culture in Egypt and China.** The earliest written records of massage therapy were discovered in Egypt and China between 3000 and 2500 BC. Tomb paintings in Egypt depict individuals being kneaded by others. Furthermore, Egyptians are credited with creating reflexology in approximately 2500 BC.

- **In China,** texts documenting the medical benefits of massage therapy date back to approximately 2700 BC. The Chinese tradition of massage therapy was developed from the combined expertise and methods of doctors in traditional Chinese medicine, practitioners of martial arts, Buddhists and Taoists who viewed touch as essential to their spiritual yoga training and laymen who offered massages for relaxation. Chinese massage methods originated from the principle that diseases and illnesses arise due to a deficiency or imbalance in the energy in specific pathways or meridians that represent physiological systems. Through massage and other specific bodywork techniques, energy will flow more harmoniously through these pathways, allowing the body to heal itself naturally. Techniques include acupuncture and acupressure.

- **Massage Therapy in Japan** started in approximately 1000 BC. Japanese monks studying Buddhism in China observed the healing methods of traditional Chinese medicine, including massage therapy. Japan soon began to import and customise Chinese massage techniques giving rise to traditional Japanese massage or anma, which grew into Shiatsu.

**Learners must know the philosophy and role of different massage therapies:**

There are many types of massage therapy. They are as varied as the cultures where they originate. From Swedish massage to Shiatsu massage the goal with each type of massage therapy is improvement to health.

- **Amatsu massage therapy** addresses the build-up of emotional and physical tensions in the body that are the result of past incidents. Amatsu therapists will use a range of massage techniques to re-balance the body. The aim is to help the client cope better with any difficulties they face in life both emotionally and physically.

- **Acupressure** is an ancient healing art using the fingers to gradually press key healing points which stimulate the body’s natural self-curative abilities. Acupressure releases tension, increases circulation, reduces pain, and develops spirituality and vibrant health.

- **Bowen Technique** is a remedial, hands-on therapy that is applied using very gentle pressure. Thumbs and fingers are placed on precise points of the body to perform Bowen’s unique sets of rolling-type moves which stimulate the muscles and soft tissue of the body. There is no manipulation or adjustment of hard tissue and no force is used. The experience of a treatment is gentle, subtle and relaxing. It is believed that the Bowen Technique prompts the body to reset, repair and balance itself and the client report the experience of pain relief, improvement of function and recovery of energy.

- **Chinese massage** derives from a range of massage techniques, but it is most closely linked to acupuncture. Chinese massage therapists are guided by the meridian system. The primary aim of Chinese massage is to stimulate and re-balance the body's energy.

- **Deep tissue massage** aims to realign deeper layers of connective tissue and muscles in order to relieve pain and restore natural movement. It is commonly used to treat chronic aches, pains and tension in the neck, back and shoulders. A deep tissue massage can help to break down these adhesions via the application of slow, pressurised movements, with deep strokes and finger pressure. This is to ensure all the sub-layer of muscles and the fascia is stimulated.

- **Deep lymphatic therapy** is used to release areas of built-up fluid in the body. The aim is to treat various ailments that are associated with the lymphatic system. Deep lymphatic therapy enables the body to re-balance and return to its normal state.
- Hot stone massage involves the use of hot stones placed on the body to treat a range of health concerns. It is also highly rejuvenating, and is thought to encourage the release of pent-up emotions.

- Infant massage refers to the application of gentle strokes and rhythmic hand movements to a baby's body. The technique is an ancient practice that was introduced to Western society over 30 years ago. It has become more popular in recent years. Infant massage can also promote better sleep, relieve discomfort such as wind, and ease emotional stress.

- Indian head massage is an Ayurvedic form of healing and relaxation. Thousands of years ago the treatment was applied only to the head and hair area as a remedy for dry scalp conditions. Today it is a much broader therapy, incorporating the upper back, shoulders, upper arms and face. It can help provide relief from certain physical ailments whilst promoting relaxation, concentration and energy.

- Lomi Lomi massage, otherwise known as 'the loving touch' is thought to originate in Hawaii. It refers to a form of full body treatment that promotes relaxation whilst treating muscle pain and tension. A Lomi Lomi therapist will use long flowing strokes across the whole body.

- Postnatal massage is designed to help the mind and body adjust to motherhood and recover from the birthing process. The benefits of postnatal massage include reduced stress, better sleep and re-balanced hormones. It can also help to improve swelling, aches and pains.

- Prenatal massage is a gentle therapy designed to ease stress, and any aches and pains associated with pregnancy. This is to help expectant mothers to feel more relaxed and prepared for childbirth. Pillows and a cut-out massage table are used to position a woman's pregnant body comfortably.

- Reflexology is a holistic treatment based on the principle that there are areas and points on the feet, hands and ears that map, via the nervous system, to corresponding parts of the body. When pressure is applied to these areas and points it stimulates the movement of energy along the nerve channels, and helps to restore homeostasis in the whole body.

- Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes healing. It is administered by "laying on hands" and is based on the idea that an unseen "life force energy" flows through us and is what causes us to be alive. If one's "life force energy" is low, then we are more likely to get sick or feel stress, and if it is high, we are more capable of being happy and healthy.

- Remedial massage is effective for preventing and treating muscle injuries and pain. It involves using deep tissue techniques to remove blockages and damaged cells. This helps to reduce recovery time and encourage healing. Remedial massage can also be used to remove scar tissue from old injuries, which reduces the chances of a repeat injury.

- Shiatsu originated in Japan from traditional Chinese medicine, it uses comfortable pressure and manipulative techniques to adjust the body’s physical structure and balance its energy flow. It is a deeply relaxing experience and regular treatments can alleviate stress and illness and maintain health and well-being. It works on the whole person, not just with the physical body, but also with the psychological, emotional and spiritual aspects of being.

- Swedish massage is considered to be one of the first types of massage to be developed. The entire process is very relaxing and is championed for its ability to reduce both emotional and physical stress.

- Sports massage is designed to help prevent and treat injuries that can occur as a result of overexertion or poor training exercises. Sports massage therapists will use a range of deep and intense techniques to restore mobility to an injured muscle tissue. Stretching, compression, toning and trigger point response techniques similar to acupressure may be used.
LO3 Understand the effects and indications of Swedish massage therapy

Learners must recognise the contra-indications that may either, require GP referral, restrict or prevent Swedish massage therapies:

- Example of contra-indications that may prevent treatment from going ahead: Contagious diseases and disorders, first trimester of pregnancy, fever, cancer if client is undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy, disorders to the nervous system, undiagnosed lumps and swelling, osteoporosis, recent major operations, rheumatoid arthritis in acute phase, migraines, client is under the influence of alcohol, deep vein thrombosis (DVT) 3-6 months after diagnosis, severe haemophilia, acute hepatitis, recent scar tissue

- Examples of contra-indications that may restrict treatment resulting in GP referral: Cardiovascular disorders, epilepsy, diabetes, Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis, myalgic encephalitis (ME), high blood pressure if not controlled by medication, mild haemophilia, low blood pressure and history of thrombosis or embolism

- Examples of contra-indications that may restrict treatment resulting in the local area of the client’s body not being massaged: Skin disorders and uncontrolled diseases, open psoriasis or weeping eczema, cuts, abrasions, bruising, metal plates and pins, loss of tactile sensation to an area, varicose veins, recent fracture to local area, piercings

Learners must know how to refer the client to another health practitioner and why:

- If a client presents with symptoms that are not identifiable the learner must not diagnose but refer the client to a health care practitioner for appropriate care and diagnosis

- A referral letter should be written, which not only enhances client care, but is an important legal and ethical principle for Swedish massage therapists

- Therapists can refer the client directly to
  - General practitioners
  - Sports medicine practitioners
  - Chiropractors
  - Osteopaths
  - Physiotherapists

- Common symptoms warranting referral
  - Not responding to treatment/no progress
  - Excessive fatigue
  - Persistent/chronic headaches
  - Sudden or unexpected changes in health
  - Sudden loss of appetite/unexplained weight loss

Learners must know the benefits of massage both physiologically and psychologically:

The possible physiological effects of massage on the body systems

- Effects on the skin
  - Increased production of sweat from the sweat glands helping to excrete urea and waste products through the skin
  - Increased sebum production helping to improve the skin’s suppleness and resistance to infection
  - Improved skin colour and elasticity of the skin
  - Improved circulation to the skin, increased nutrition and cell regeneration

- Effects on the skeletal system
  - Improved muscle tone and balance, reducing the physical stress placed on bones and joints
  - Increased joint mobility, breaking down scar tissue and adhesions
• Effects on the muscular system
  - Increased flexibility in the muscles, relieving muscular tightness, stiffness, and spasms
  - Reduction in muscle fatigue and soreness by increased blood circulation

• Effects on the cardiovascular system
  - Improved circulation and enhanced blood flow
  - Delivery of fresh oxygen and nutrients to the tissues improving the removal of waste products, toxins and carbon dioxide
  - Temporarily decreased blood pressure, due to dilation of capillaries
  - Decreased heart rate due to relaxation

• Effects on the lymphatic system
  - Reduced oedema
  - Strengthened immune system due to increase in white blood cells

• Effects on the respiratory system
  - Decreased rate of respiration due to the reduced stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system
  - Improved lung capacity by relaxing any tightness in the respiratory muscles

• Effects on the digestive system
  - Increased peristalsis in the large intestine helping to relieve constipation, colic and gas

• Effects on the urinary system
  - Increased urinary output due to the increased circulation and lymph drainage from the tissues

• Effects on the nervous system
  - Stimulated or soothed nerves depending on the techniques used
  - Stimulated parasympathetic nervous system helping promote relaxation and the reduction of stress, reducing pain by the release of endorphins

• The possible psychological effects of massage
  - Reduction in both stress and anxiety by relaxing both mind and body and easing emotional trauma
  - Creates a feeling of well-being and enhanced self-esteem
  - Promotes positive body awareness and an improved body image through relaxation

Learners must understand the common causes of postural deviations and faults:
• Lordosis is characterised by a significant inward curve at the lumbar vertebrae
• Kyphosis is characterised by an abnormally rounded upper back due to an outward curve of the thoracic vertebrae
• Scoliosis is characterised by the vertebrae having a sideways curve. The curve can be in the lower part of the vertebrae (a lumbar curve), in the upper part of the vertebrae (a thoracic curve), or from the upper to lower part of the vertebrae (a thoracolumbar curve) like an S-shape curve
• Winged scapula can be a symptom of another condition, rather than an injury itself. It is where the shoulder blade protrudes from the back, rather than lying flat against the back of the chest wall
Learners must know the benefits and effects of the classical massage techniques:

- **Effleurage** is usually repeated several times over the same area on the body and is a basic massage movement. It is often used as a linking movement transferring from one movement or area of the body to the next.
  - The benefits and effects of effleurage
    - Stimulates sensory nerve endings bringing about a reflex response in the skin's circulatory network
    - Increases the venous and lymphatic flow
    - Relaxes contracted tense muscle fibres
    - Relaxation is accomplished
    - Introduces the therapist’s hands by applying the massage medium

- **Petrissage** is a compression movement performed using intermittent pressure with one hand, both hands or parts of the hands. It consists of grasping or compressing a muscle group, a muscle or part of a muscle and applying pressure then releasing the pressure, progressing to an adjacent area and repeating the process.
  - The benefits and effects of petrissage
    - Compresses and relaxes the muscle tissue increasing circulation and the removal of waste products
    - Increases the deep muscular circulation removing lactic acid and helps to eliminate fatigue
    - Prevents the formation of fibrosis (tension nodules) in the tissue by relaxing contracted muscles

- **Tapotements** are movements which may be referred to as percussion manipulations. They consist of a series of brief, rapidly applied contacts of the hand or hands in alternating movements. The hands must be kept loose and mobile so that all the movements produced are springy and stimulating.
  - The benefits and effects of tapotement
    - Can cause nerve pathways to become clearer and the muscles tone to improve
    - Causes a local rise in skin temperature and erythema is produced
    - Produces a stimulating effect on the circulatory and muscular systems
    - Aids in the mild break-down of adipose tissue

- **Frictions** are concentrated movements exerting deep controlled pressure on a small area of the surface tissues, moving them over the underlying structures. The movements are applied in a circular manner, using the pad of the thumb, fingers or pad of the palm. Friction movements may also be applied along a muscle and are then referred to as transverse frictions. A steady, even pressure is maintained across the muscle fibres and its purpose is to produce a stretching, releasing effect on the tissues.
  - The benefits and effects of frictions are
    - Breaks down adhesions freeing stiff joints
    - Can help prevent the formation of fibrosis in muscular tissue if regularly applied
    - Loosens and stretches scar tissue
    - Produces a localised erythema

- **Vibrations** are shaking or fine trembling movements performed with one or both hands. The tips of the index fingers, the first two fingers or the distal phalanx of the thumb may be used. The muscles of the forearm are contracted and relaxed rapidly so a fine, rapid trembling is produced.
  - The benefits and effects of vibrations are
    - Stimulates the nerves and clears nerve paths
    - Relieves pain as they have a sedative effect
    - Can be used to help to loosen old scar tissue and to stretch adhesions
LO4 Be able to prepare the client, self and the work area for Swedish massage therapy

Prepare and check the client, work area, equipment and products prior to the Swedish massage therapy:

- Prepare treatment area according to salon requirements. Ensure the couch is at the correct working height, sturdy and with an adjustable back-rest. The couch needs to be wide enough for client comfort and the base should be covered with towels and disposable couch roll for hygiene
- Set up the treatment trolley with the necessary products, tools and equipment
- Provide a modesty gown for the client
- Check the client by completing a consultation
- Ensure all equipment and products are to hand and are working efficiently

Agree the treatment and check for contra-indications:

- Verbal communication – speaking manner and tone, sensitive to client, open questioning related to treatment
- Ensure visual and manual checks are carried out to identify any contra-indications. Tactfully ask relevant questions, document and record the client’s feedback
- Non-verbal communication – eye contact, body language, listening
- Record keeping – contra-indication check, signatures, name, address, contact numbers, age range, reason for treatment, occupation, sport/hobbies, medical history, allergies/hypersensitivity, contra-actions from any previous treatments, if using pre-blended aromatherapy oils skin sensitivity tests recorded
- Outline benefits of treatment and client expectations
- Establish the correct medium to use on the client
  - Massage oil is traditionally plant oils. These are used to promote ‘slip and glide’ for extended periods of time, allowing the therapist to use smooth controlled movements without pinching or pulling the skin. The best varieties of massage oils do not absorb into the skin quickly. The most commonly found varieties of oil used for Swedish massage are sweet almond oil, grapeseed oil, jojoba oil and sunflower oil
  - Massage cream is suitable for the client who needs deeper tissue work and require a heavier medium. This medium provides longer-lasting ‘slip’. It is also good for the client who is oil-phobic or do not like the feel of oil on their skin. It can be easier to wash off than oil and leaves a non-greasy feel
  - Massage gel works well on those with a lot of natural oil in their skin. It moisturises while offering ‘slip and glide’, it is meant to be left on the skin because it is worked in during the massage so no rinsing or towelling off is necessary after the treatment
  - Pre-blended aromatherapy massage oil is a blend of essential oils which have already been mixed with carrier oil by the manufacturer. Aromatherapy essential oils consist of tiny aromatic molecules that are readily absorbed via the skin. They have therapeutic constituents that enter the bloodstream and are carried around the body to where they can deliver the beneficial healing powers. When essential oils are pre-blended they do not meet a client's personal and specific need. The oils have been mixed to perform a specific objective, for example to invigorate, relax or to detoxify
  - The most common type of powder used during massage is talcum powder or corn powder. Powder mediums are particularly effective on hairy clients as it still provides ‘slide’ but does not make hair knot whilst massaging. It gives more ‘grip’ and provides a deeper massage
Explain the treatment procedure to the client:
- Explain how the client should position themselves for treatment, how long the treatment will take and the treatment areas for Swedish massage. Discuss the client's expectations from the treatment and how this may influence the Swedish massage treatment.

Instruct the client on clothing removal and positioning for Swedish massage:
- Removal of appropriate clothing and jewellery, positioning throughout the treatment, use of modesty wear, communicating comfortable depth of pressure and any areas of discomfort.
LO5 Be able to provide Swedish massage therapy

Prepare the client’s skin for Swedish massage therapy:
- If time allows and facilities are available offer a pre-treatment shower
- Ensure the feet are cleansed and dry

Perform a Swedish massage therapy treatment using all classical massage techniques safely and effectively:
- Choose appropriate massage medium to suit the client’s skin type and decant appropriately into a clean bowl
- Ensure client is well supported, accessible, warm and comfortable. All areas of the body which are not being treated should be kept covered with towels and blankets, if necessary, to ensure warmth. Pillows/supports may be used to support the limbs or for client comfort
- Carry out Swedish massage therapy to all areas of the face and body working in a systematic order. Suggested massage sequence
  - Ensure props are placed under the client’s ankles, apply massage medium using effleurage movements and begin with massage to the back of left leg
  - Back of right leg
  - The back
  - Remove props from under ankles and ensure towel management, ask the client to turn over to a supine position, place props under knees
  - Continue with massage to the left foot and leg
  - Right foot and leg
  - Abdomen
  - Right hand and arm
  - Left hand and arm, continue to flow with the massage onto the chest, neck, face and scalp
- Adapt the massage treatment where necessary – omitting areas if required and incorporating forearm massage, heel of hand or elbows where necessary
- Carry out the classical massage movements (effleurage, petrissage, vibrations, frictions and tapotement), ensuring the movements are suitable for the areas being treated (e.g. do not use tapotement over bony areas or muscles that are contracted) and in the correct sequence (e.g. always start massage with effleurage and ensure muscles are warmed before moving onto deeper movement such as petrissage, after tapotement movements always soothe the muscle with effleurage movements)
- Ensure correct posture and stance whilst massaging is maintained to allow good rhythm, freedom of movement and a fluent massage
- Ensure the depth of pressure is suitable for areas being treated and client comfort (e.g. increase depth of pressure if suitable for the client on areas of tension nodules)
- Ensure the rate of movement, rhythm and flow of movement is even and continuous
- Avoid losing client contact where possible throughout the massage treatment
- Reassure the client and communicate your positioning instructions where necessary, ensuring towel management is maintained whilst rolling the client from prone to supine position
- Recommended treatment timings
  - Back massage 30mins
  - Full body massage 60mins
  - Full body massage including head and face 90mins
Complete the treatment to the client’s satisfaction and in a commercially acceptable time:

- Ensure the client’s treatment needs have been met and the client is satisfied with the treatment
- Record any improvements which could be made for future treatments to meet the needs of the client

Provide suitable aftercare advice to the client:

- Increased water intake to flush out toxins, this will prevent a headache after treatment
- Rest after the treatment to optimise the treatment benefits
- Recommended healthy eating and advice on fluid intake ensure the client’s skin is at the optimum health and receptive to future treatment
- Improvements to lifestyle activities individual to the client such as smoking, stress management
- Advice and guidance on a suitable skin care regime and homecare treatments to suit the client’s skin type and conditions
- Provide postural exercises to prevent muscles strain and fatigue
- Advice on retail products to continue the beneficial effects of treatment
- Recommendations for rebooking future treatments
- Advise on the possible contra-actions that may occur such as a skin reaction, oedema, headache, bruising, stiffness in muscles, a change in sleeping pattern, increased urination

Maintain accurate client records:

- Record the outcomes of the treatment ensuring records are up to date with the medium that was used, areas of the body massaged, any reactions for the treatment, aftercare given and feedback from the client

Prepare the area for the next treatment:

- Dispose of all waste in bin, place used towels in laundry, tidy all consumables away following salon requirements. Clean work area with sanitiser, reset the couch with fresh towels and couch roll ready for the next treatment. Ensure the treatment area is left clean and prepared for the next treatment
Employability skills to be demonstrated throughout the graded practical assessment and synoptic assessment

Communication:
- Adapt and tailor approach for different clients, e.g. new and existing clients, male and female clients
- Allow sufficient time for the consultation and communicate clearly and concisely to explain the concept of the treatment/service, encouraging clients to ask questions; offer reassurance
- Use positive verbal communication, e.g. speaking manner and tone of voice, being supportive, respectful, sensitive to client, using open questioning to obtain information
- Use positive non-verbal communication, e.g. eye contact, body language, actively listening
- Promote goodwill and trust by using good communication

Customer service:
- Have an awareness of the principles of customer service, e.g. quality, keeping promises, managing customer expectations, customer satisfaction, speed of services and treatments, offering reassurance
- Show good practice in customer service, e.g. meeting and exceeding customer needs and expectations, demonstrating a willingness to please the customer, treating the customer as an individual
- Invest time in explaining the concept of the treatment/service clearly but concisely to the client, encouraging them to ask questions
- Deal quickly and effectively with any complaints or issues, e.g. know whom to refer to if needed
- Know the importance of customer service to a business, e.g. professional image, reputation, customer retention, customer satisfaction, customer relationships
- Know the impact of poor customer service, e.g. dissatisfied customers will seek out competitors, loss of reputation, loss of profit, frequent complaints
- Manage client expectations and identify requirements

Commercial and environmental awareness:
- Adopt eco-friendly and cost-efficient use of resources, minimising waste, e.g. all products measured correctly; efficient use and correct disposal of consumables; recycling where possible
- Be aware of others and protect their ‘space’ when using products, specifically aerosols, e.g. sprays used in nail treatments or hair services
- All used products will be disposed of in accordance with the salon rules and legislative guidelines
- Ensure all electrical equipment is turned off when not in use
- Identify opportunities to promote and sell additional products and treatments, e.g. during consultation or when providing aftercare advice
- Talk and actively listen to gain knowledge of client preferences and routines so that the retail selling approach is personalised
- Be aware of competitors for commercial success, e.g. local salon offers and promotions, new treatments/services
- Know the unique selling points of treatments/services to offer the most appropriate advice
- Know business goals and sales targets to encourage focus on the vision of the business and its long term goals, e.g. seasonal promotional offers
- Know how to advertise and display special offers, promotions, e.g. local newspaper stories, awards, photographs, thank you letters/cards
- Promote to repeat/new clients any loyalty schemes or special offers and the benefits of other products and services, e.g. buy one get one free, introductory offers
- Offer new/additional products and services to existing or new clients to promote self/salon experiences
- Ensure the cost reflects the time taken to provide the treatment/service, reflecting commercial times allocated, e.g. tailor cost to client characteristics
Skin cancer awareness

Please note this information will not be assessed for the achievement of this unit. Public awareness of skin cancer has never been higher, and yet skin cancer remains the fastest growing cancer in the UK, especially amongst young people. The chances of a positive outcome can be dramatically increased with early identification and diagnosis.

Professionals in hair, beauty, sports massage and health and wellbeing industries work closely with clients and in many cases have sight of areas of skin which may not be easily visible to the client. An informed awareness of the signs, symptoms and changes of appearance to be aware of when checking for early signs of cancer is a crucial tool for the conscientious practitioner in order to provide the most thorough service and in some cases, possibly lifesaving information signposting.

Signs to look for when checking moles include utilising the ABCDE guide:

A - Asymmetry – the two halves of the area/mole may differ in their shape and not match.
B - Border – the edges of the mole area may be irregular or blurred and sometimes show notches or look ‘ragged’.
C - Colour – this may be uneven and patchy. Different shades of black, brown and pink may be seen.
D - Diameter – most but not all melanomas are at least 6mm in diameter. If any mole gets bigger or changes see your doctor.
E - Elevation/evolving – elevation means the mole is raised above the surface and has an uneven surface. Looks different from the rest or changing in size, shape or colour. Anyone can get a suspicious mole or patch of skin checked out for free by the NHS by visiting their doctor, who may then refer to a dermatologist (an expert in diagnosing skin cancer).

If you require any additional NHS information please refer to https://www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer/symptoms/skin-cancer

If your learners are interested in learning more about skin cancer awareness alongside this qualification, VTCT runs the following qualification: VTCT Level 2 Award in Skin Cancer Awareness for Non-Healthcare Professionals.

This qualification has been specifically designed for those working in the sports massage, health and wellbeing, beauty, hairdressing and barbering sectors. It will enable learners to identify any changes to their client’s skin and to highlight those changes to the client using appropriate language and communication skills. It will enable the learner to raise awareness of skin cancer and signpost their clients to public information about skin cancer.

This qualification will enable hair, beauty and wellbeing professionals to gain the appropriate knowledge and communication skills required to provide non-diagnostic, professional advice and information to clients in a discrete, empathetic and confidential manner.

For more information please refer to the Record of Assessment book: https://qualifications.vtct.org.uk/finder/qualfinder/1Record%20of%20Assessment%20Book/AG20529.pdf
Assessment criteria will be applied to the graded practical assessment. In order to pass this unit, learners must at a minimum achieve all Pass criteria. The pass criteria relates to the proficient demonstration of skills and knowledge. All criteria within a given grade must be achieved to be awarded that grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcome</th>
<th>Pass learners can:</th>
<th>Merit learners can:</th>
<th>Distinction learners can:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LO4 Be able to prepare the client, self and the work area for Swedish massage therapy</td>
<td>P1 Prepare and check the client, work area, equipment and products prior to the Swedish massage therapy</td>
<td>M1 Adapt and tailor interpersonal communication to the client</td>
<td>D1 Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the treatment provided and recommendations for future Swedish massage therapy treatments</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P2 Agree the treatment with the client and check for contra-indications</td>
<td>M2 Ensure optimum client comfort and protection of the client’s modesty throughout the treatment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P3 Explain the treatment procedure to the client</td>
<td>M3 Use effective strategies to promote and sell products and additional services</td>
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<td></td>
<td>P4 Instruct the client on clothing removal and positioning for Swedish massage therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>LO5 Be able to provide Swedish massage therapy</td>
<td>P5 Prepare the client’s skin for Swedish massage therapy</td>
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<td>P6 Perform a Swedish massage therapy treatment using all classical massage techniques safely and effectively</td>
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<td></td>
<td>P7 Complete the treatment to the client’s satisfaction and in a commercially acceptable time</td>
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<td></td>
<td>P8 Provide suitable aftercare advice to the client</td>
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<td></td>
<td>P9 Maintain accurate client records</td>
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<td></td>
<td>P10 Prepare the area for the next treatment</td>
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</table>
### Assessment guidance

Assessors must use the amplified assessment guidance in this section to judge whether practical assessment criteria have been achieved in the graded practical assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P1 Prepare and check the client, work area, equipment and products prior to the Swedish massage therapy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate that they have set up the treatment area in line with the treatment requirements and have met the health and safety requirements (e.g. the work area is free from clutter to prevent tripping hazards, the couch is at the correct working height). Learners must use suitable lighting, ventilation and soft music. All the required products for the treatment are to hand and are fully stocked in advance.</td>
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<tr>
<th>P2 Agree the treatment with the client and check for contra-indications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate that they have consulted with the client using appropriate questioning techniques, as well as conducting visual and manual checks for contra-indications and postural faults. Learners must explain the treatment in full to the client and ascertain the client’s treatment expectations, establishing if adaptations to the treatment are required. Learners must correctly identify the client’s skin type during the consultation to ensure the correct massage medium is used.</td>
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<tr>
<th>P3 Explain the treatment procedure to the client</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners must explain the treatment step by step to the client. At a minimum the explanation should include the areas of the body which will be massaged and the sequence, the benefits of the treatment and what is the expected outcome of the treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<th>P4 Instruct the client on clothing removal and positioning for Swedish massage therapy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate that they have instructed the client on what clothing needs to be removed and where to store the clothing. The client’s jewellery must be removed and stored safely. Modesty covering should be arranged for the client and guidance given to the client on positioning themselves onto the couch safely and comfortably, with assistance if required.</td>
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<tr>
<th>P5 Prepare the client’s skin for the Swedish massage therapy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate that they have sanitised their hands and sanitised the client’s feet before commencement of the massage treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>P6 Perform a Swedish massage therapy treatment using all classical massage techniques safely and effectively</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate that they can perform Swedish massage movements correctly and on the appropriate areas of the body. Movements should flow without too much repetition and learners must avoid breaking contact with the client. Learners must apply pressure appropriate to the client’s needs and the pressure must be checked at regular intervals with the client. Learner’s posture must be maintained throughout the treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<th>P7 Complete the treatment to the client’s satisfaction and in a commercially acceptable time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners must complete the treatment in a commercially acceptable time (recommended 90 minutes for a full body massage including face). Learners must ensure the client’s treatment needs have been met by asking for feedback on the treatment, ensuring the client is satisfied with the treatment and recording any improvement for future treatments.</td>
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<tr>
<th>P8 Provide suitable aftercare advice to the client</th>
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<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate that they can provide feedback and aftercare to the client. At a minimum the learner must describe any finding from the massage treatment, provide information on further treatment options, explain the importance of a healthy diet, explain the modifications to lifestyle to enhance treatment results and how to eliminate stress, demonstrate postural exercise, provide advice on retail products to enhance treatment benefits and describe possible contra-actions that may occur.</td>
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<tr>
<th>P9 Maintain accurate client records</th>
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<tr>
<td>Learners must fully complete the treatment records to meet the salon requirements and show an understanding of the legal requirements for record keeping. The information which is kept on a client's record card must be kept confidential. Under the Data Protection Act the salon or therapist could face prosecution if the confidentiality of a client's record card is broken. All client records must be kept up to date, accurate, relevant and kept securely.</td>
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<tr>
<th>P10 Prepare the area for the next treatment</th>
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<td>Learners must demonstrate they have prepared the area for the next treatment by disposing of all waste in bin, placing used towels in the laundry, wiping down the couch and trolley with sanitiser. Ensuring the couch is reset with fresh towels and couch roll, removing all products and consumables. The treatment area must be tidy ready for the next treatment and therapist.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M1 Adapt and tailor interpersonal communication to the client</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate that they have tailored their style of communication to suit and respond to the client. For example, if the client indicates that he/she would like to chat and engage in conversation the learner should engage in unobtrusive friendly conversation with the client. However the learner must try to promote relaxation and avoid asking the client questions and promote a relaxing atmosphere. Learners must demonstrate throughout the treatment that all communication with the client is ethical, respectful, unobtrusive, inoffensive and of the appropriate content.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>M2 Ensure optimum client comfort and protection of the client’s modesty throughout the treatment</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate that they have checked with the client at regular intervals throughout the treatment to ensure the client’s comfort. Learners must demonstrate that they have taken action to protect the client’s modesty during the treatment, ensuring the client is covered with a towel at all times and ensuring the client has privacy to undress before the treatment and dress after the treatment. Learners must also demonstrate that they have responded to the client’s comfort needs throughout, for example, ensuring client warmth, adjusting pressure of massage, adjusting treatment requirements to meet client needs.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>M3 Use effective strategies to promote and sell products and additional services</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Learners must provide advice on body/skin care products to the client to promote the effectiveness of the treatment. Learners could recommend further follow-on, alternative or additional beauty treatments (e.g. if through conversation the client expressed concern about having cellulite, recommendations could be made on a course of galvanic body treatments or body brushing and body wraps). The learner must offer to re-book the client for the next appointment.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>D1 Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the treatment provided and recommendations for future Swedish massage therapy treatments</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate clear reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of the treatment (e.g. did the massage meet all of the client’s treatment needs and how? What improvements could have been made to meet the client’s treatment needs?). Learners must demonstrate they are able to record both the client’s psychological and physiological reactions from the Swedish massage therapy and the longer term needs of the client.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Resources

The special resources for this unit are access to a real or realistic working environment which supports the provision of Swedish massage therapy treatment. Learners must have access to health and safety standards, manufacturer’s instructions and Swedish massage products.

Delivery guidance

Teachers are encouraged to use innovative, practical and engaging delivery methods to enhance the learning experience. Learners may benefit from:

- Meaningful employer engagement so they relate what is being learned to the real world of work and understand commercial competence and the use of products, tools and equipment for Swedish massage therapy
- Work experience within a commercial beauty salon or spa so they can practise to hone their skills in a real environment
- Using interactive information and technology systems and hardware so they can learn about concepts and theories; research current trends; research product knowledge and produce visual aids for Swedish massage therapy.

Links with other units

This unit is closely linked with the following units:

UCO28M Health and safety in the salon
The Health and safety unit will provide knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities for health and safety as defined by any specific legislation covering the role of the professional therapist. This unit greatly underpins all practical unit delivery. Learners will be required to apply their knowledge and understanding of health and safety when preparing for and providing Swedish massage treatments in real or realistic working environments.

UBT90M Client care and consultation
Client consultation before all massage treatments is actually a legal requirement and failure to consult properly with clients prior to treatment could invalidate a massage therapist’s insurance. It is essential that massage therapists elicit information from their clients about their medical history, including any allergies, as well as checking for contra-indications. The client consultation unit underpins all technical units within this qualification and should be delivered prior to the delivery of any technical massage therapy units.

UBT95M Anatomy and physiology for the face and body systems
Knowledge of the structure and function of the systems of the body, as well the diseases and disorders, most significantly underpins the knowledge and practical skills gained in this unit. Other elements of anatomy and physiology are also relevant to this unit in terms of understanding contra-indications to treatment as well as possible contra-actions.

UBT99M/UBT99X Mechanical massage
This unit enables learners to develop the knowledge and skills required to prepare for and provide a professional mechanical massage or infrared treatment to a client whilst following salon requirements. Learners also develop an understanding of the possible contra-indications to treatment, appropriate aftercare advice and the effects and indications of mechanical massage or infrared treatments.
Graded synoptic assessment

At the end of the qualification of which this unit forms part, there will be a graded synoptic assessment which will assess the learner’s ability to identify and use effectively, in an integrated way, an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories, and knowledge from a number of units from within the qualification. It is therefore necessary and important that units are delivered and assessed together and synoptically to prepare learners suitably for their final graded assessment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Details of amendments</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v8</td>
<td>Skin cancer awareness page added</td>
<td>13/06/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v9</td>
<td>Typographical amendment on page 21</td>
<td>08/01/2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>