



**SPORTS MASSAGE**  
**ASSOCIATION**

## **Level 4 Membership Application Pack**

The Sports Massage Association's aim;  
*"To promote knowledgeable, skilful and committed sports  
massage practitioners for the enhancement of the profession, in  
the eyes of both professionals and the general public."*

**Sports Massage Association**

Kalbarri House | 107-113 London Road | London | E13 0DA

Tel: 0845 459 6031 | Fax: 0845 459 6032 |

Website: [www.thesma.org](http://www.thesma.org) | Email: [admin@sportsmassageassociation.org](mailto:admin@sportsmassageassociation.org)

The Sports Massage Association is only independent body in the UK for sports massage practitioners and as such we have the support of leading sports bodies, related healthcare professional associations, the UK education system and major employers in the UK.

The SMA standards and practice are recognised by all major sporting bodies in the UK eg

- British Olympic Association
- British Paralympic Association
- UK Sport
- Home Country Institutes of Sport eg English Institute of Sport
- National Governing Bodies Of Sport e.g; The Football Association

## **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Association are to:

- Establish and maintain the ethical, professional and educational standards for sports massage practitioners
- Establish and maintain minimum standards for sports massage training organisations
- Support and promote our members and their profession
- Ensure the best possible sports massage care is available to sports participants of all levels
- Lead the sports massage profession towards state regulation
- Give confidence to the general and sporting public, the medical profession and government agencies that sports massage practitioners are suitably trained to provide a quality service
- Hold the National Register for Level 3 and Level 4 Sports Massage Practitioners.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Sports Massage Association (SMA) was launched at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002 to be independent body regulating sports massage practitioners in the UK. With support from the leading sports bodies, related professional groups and educators it has grown to represent over 1000 members and is now recognised and the lead body for sports massage by the major employers in the UK.

In order to help employers and the public distinguish between the different levels of sports massage training and qualifications in the UK, the SMA has aligned their membership levels to the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The National Register of Sports Massage Practitioners, held and maintained by the SMA now reflects those trained at different levels. Currently there are 2 membership levels for fully qualified members – Level 3 and Level 4 and the differences are described below.

These requirements were drawn up in the late 1990s/early 2000s by representatives of the sports massage profession, UK education system, related medical professions and sporting bodies to ensure consistency in the provision of sports massage to sportsmen and sportswomen.

Work is currently underway to develop a new set of requirements or National Occupational Standards and these will cover an additional level of expertise (nominally Level 5) a level to which many of our members have already trained for and progressed to, but do not get formal recognition for their extra skills. This project being run by the Sector Skills Council responsible for sport and recreation, health and fitness, "Skills Active" and again involves leading sporting bodies, medical professionals and educators in this area. This project and the new standards will be completed later in 2009. From these updated standards, additional qualifications will be developed to provide a structured career pathway for Sports Massage professionals.

## **FAQ's**

### **1. Which membership level should I join at?**

#### **SMA level 3 membership**

Has passed and proven competence at Level 3 (NQF) awarded by a QCA recognised and regulated awarding body; VTCT, Premier/Active IQ or ITEC qualification.

The following awards are run in a variety of colleges and education establishments throughout the country. Wherever you took your course you will have received one of the following awards:

- VTCT Diploma in Sports Massage Therapy
- Active IQ (formerly premier IQ) Certificate in Sports Massage Therapy
- ITEC Diploma in Sports Massage

#### **SMA level 4 membership**

Has passed and proven competence through an SMA accredited course and/or examination.

The SMA accreditation process stipulates that courses must be to Level 4 standard (NQF) awarded by a QCA recognised and regulated awarding body.

The following providers have met all the requirements to become SMA Accredited at this level:

- Sports Performance Services Ltd (including their affiliated university courses)
- London School of Sports Massage (qualifying before 31 March 2007)
- North London School of Sports Massage
- Pulse Training Solutions
- Sports Therapy UK (Course Enrolment after June 2009)
- Scottish School of Professional Massage  
St Mary's University College, Twickenham (Sport Rehabilitation)

### **2. What is the difference between the ITEC and the BTEC Massage Course qualification?**

The BTEC Diploma is taught and assessed at level 4. (ITEC is level 3). The level 4 standard is equivalent to the level taught during the first year of a degree. It is a more in depth course held over 20 days.

BTEC have an innovative approach to education which means the syllabus is written and kept up to date with modern practices within our industry. Whilst following the GCMT core curriculum and National Occupational Standards BTEC assessments throughout the course count towards your award, you will also have one theory and practical exam at the end of the course. ITEC courses hold their exams at the end of the course (one practical and 3 multiple choice theory exams). BTEC assesses competence and not exam technique. BTEC is very flexible in its approach to accrediting your 'prior learning' if you have studied similar subjects elsewhere.

### **3. What are the membership benefits?**

- National recognition of your skills and qualifications
- Access to the SMA's professional insurance policy
- Your entry on the National Register, used by employers and the public to find qualified practitioners in their area
- Entitlement to use the SMA logo on your marketing material
- Email updates with jobs in sports massage and opportunities to work at major events
- Become part of your regional network, meet other members in your area and attend meetings and events developed for sports massage practitioners

- Professional advice and support and the opportunity to shape the future of the profession through the work of the SMA
- Discounts on books, products, equipment etc through the SMA Shop and our partners
- Annual subscription to Sportex Dynamics magazine and SMA Update bringing clinical and professional support to our members
- Discounted training, workshops and seminars for members
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#### **4. Why do I need to provide a copy of my first aid certificate?**

The SMA requires all members to hold a current First Aid qualification. The minimum requirement for this is a valid emergency aid certificate gained through a minimum of 6 contact hours with an HSE approved provider. For example any HSE approved Appointed Person course.

Your first aid qualification is valid for as long as the course provider states; this may be for two years or three years. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have a valid first aid certificate.

There are many first aid courses on the market and we recommend the following:

- Only look for a provider who is HSE (Health and Safety Executive) registered as this will not only give extra confidence in the quality of the training but is also our recommended insurers stipulation.

- Our minimum requirement is a 1 day/6 hour 'Appointed Person' course

We would always recommend that those working with teams or regularly at events have a more comprehensive first aid qualification of which there are many on the market, including some first aid in sports courses.

St John's Ambulance: [www.sja.org.uk/training/default.asp](http://www.sja.org.uk/training/default.asp) or telephone 08700 10 49 50.

Red Cross: [www.redcrossfirstaidtraining.co.uk](http://www.redcrossfirstaidtraining.co.uk) or telephone 020 7235 5454.

#### **5. Why do I need to provide a copy of my insurance certificate?**

In order to maintain the highest levels of professionalism and duty of care to the general public and sportsmen and women in the UK, the Sports Massage Association stipulates that all members must hold adequate professional liability insurance.

Members of the Sports Massage Association can access our own scheme, established by leading medical insurance broker LFC Graybrook.

This insurance cover provided by the SMA is one of the most comprehensive on the market and we have negotiated additional benefits for members including:

- additional therapies covered at no extra costs
- cover for working overseas
- first aid cover
- £2 million standard cover with the option of upgrading to £5million (recommended for those working with elite or professional athletes)
- 24 hour helpline facility for advice on personal, business legal and tax related matters.

If you do not wish to take out your professional insurance with the Sports Massage Association we require evidence that you are fully insured for the work that you do. Our requirement is that your cover should at least match that provided in the SMA's scheme. Please enclose copies of your certificate with this application.

#### **6. What if my application is not accepted?**

A candidate who has not been accepted for membership has the right to appeal to the Chair of the Registration Panel who will review the evidence of the case and any information in support of the appeal. If the candidate is still unhappy with the ruling of the Registration Panel, the case will be reviewed by the Board of Directors. The decision of the Board of Directors is final.

## APPLICATION FORM AND CHECKLIST

### CONTACT DETAILS

**OFFICE USE ONLY:**

SMA ID:

Expiry Date: | | / | |

Payment Method:

Full Name incl title:	
Certificate Name (if different):	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Alternative Number:	
Email:	
Employment status:	Employed   Self-employed   Both (please indicate)
Nationality:	

### CHECKLIST

Please enclose this form with the following items and return to:

**Sports Massage Association | Kalbarri House | 107-113 London Road | London | E13 0DA**

	Photocopy of your course certificate / evidence of passing your course.
	Photocopy of your first aid and insurance certificates.
	One passport photograph or clear portrait photograph.
	£100 annual membership fee + £30 for administrative fee (applicable for first year only) <input type="checkbox"/> PayPal – Please visit <a href="http://www.thesma.org">http://www.thesma.org</a> to pay online. <input type="checkbox"/> Cheque - Please make cheques payable to 'Sports Massage Association'. <input type="checkbox"/> Standing Order – Complete and return original standing order form (attached).
<i>Please also supply the following evidence to support your application;</i>	
	Evidence of continuous insurance since graduation.
	Evidence of 200 hours practical hands on experience within the past 2 years (pro-rated if qualified for less than 2 years). Evidence may be provided using diary records of appointments.
	Portfolio of evidence of continuing professional development equivalent to 40 hours per year or 80 hours every 2 years since graduation.

### DECLARATION

I hereby agree the following:

1. I have read, understood and agree to abide by the SMA Scope of Practice and Code of Conduct.
2. I have no current or pending criminal convictions.
3. To my knowledge I have no current or pending incident that may give rise to an insurance claim against me.
4. All the information I have stated in this application is true and accurate.
5. SMA data will be retained by the Association for processing requirements under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# STANDING ORDER MANDATE

Please complete the Member Details section below, sign the Authorisation and return to the Sports Massage Association with your application forms. We will then forward this to your bank so please ensure the full address of your branch is completed below including postcode.

## Member Details:

Account Name:	
Bank/Building Society Name:	
Branch Address:	
Sort Code:	
Account Number:	

## Company Details:

Name of Organisation:	Sports Massage Association
Bank and Branch Address:	Barclays Wimbledon, 8 Alexandra Road London SW19 7LA
Sort Code:	20-96-89
Account Number:	70719005

## Payment Details:

Amount of First Payment:	£25
Date of First Payment:	Last day of this month
Normal Payment:	£25
Frequency:	Quarterly thereafter – last day of the month
Continuing until:	Further notice
Reference for all payments:	

## Authorisation:

I authorise the above standing order to be established.	
Member's Signature: _____	Date: _____

Please complete and return to:

The Sports Massage Association | 107-113 London road | London | E13 0DA

## Appendix 1

### SMA Code of Conduct, Ethics and Practice

Members engaged in the accepted practice of Sports Massage, having satisfied the Board of the Sports Massage Association of their competence in sports massage shall adhere to the following Code of Conduct and Ethics and comply with the Sports Massage Association Code of Practice.

Members shall: -

- a) Act honourably towards their clients and fellow practitioners at all times. They must uphold and maintain the high standards of the profession. They must seek good relationships and co-operate with other health care professionals.
- b) Maintain the high standard of professional conduct appropriate to membership of the Sports Massage Association in which the interest and welfare of the client are deemed to be paramount.
- c) Respect the client/practitioner relationship, the confidentiality of the client endeavouring to foster and maintain trust at all times.
- d) Be sensitive to client in regard to modesty and special needs e.g. language difficulties, disability or if they wish a companion to be present.
- e) Respect the views and beliefs of their clients in regard to gender, ethnic origins, culture, sexuality, lifestyle, age and social status.
- f) Maintain good communication at all times thus ensuring the client understands and has consented to all procedures. Where a client is unable to consent, then consent must be obtained from someone who can, on the client's behalf.
- g) Observe the highest degree of integrity and responsibility in regard to the practice of Sports Massage, working within their professional competence.
- h) To respect totally the confidentiality of the relationship of practitioner to patient.
- i) Respect the client's autonomy and allow them a choice and never take advantage of the power that exists in a practitioner/client relationship. This would constitute abuse.
- j) Be prepared and competent to administer emergency procedures as may be required by the client, and to maintain such procedures until relieved.
- k) Seek appropriate advice in any situation in which the practitioner may lack the necessary competence or experience.
- l) Maintain careful records of all clients in regard to a full medical history and presenting complaint, assessment and procedures performed, and then keeping up to date medical records, clinical findings to the level of competence gained, information and advice given and any comments made plus details of any suggested referral. Records are the property of the client. To safeguard themselves and their clients, practitioners should complete records for each client and if in doubt as to the client's health or the suitability of the treatment, the client should be advised to consult a doctor. This advice should be recorded.
- m) When records are kept on a computer, registration with the database authorities is required
- n) Provide information (if requested) to other health & sport professionals with client's written consent only. This may include trainers, coaches and managers involved.
- o) Members must refrain from criticising fellow practitioners and must not attempt to entice clients away from another practitioners providing sports massage.
- p) Report all notifiable disease states according to applicable laws.
- q) Ensure by means of continuous update of information and training, a level of competence consistent with the highest standards of the profession.
- r) Abstain from any claim or statement misrepresenting the benefits of sports massage.
- s) Deal with complaints and criticisms efficiently.
- t) Maintain a continuing professional development portfolio which must contain 40 hours sports massage training per annum or 80 hours over two years.
- u) Any Member of the SMA undertaking research must adhere to the code of ethics and standards laid down by the relevant Ethics Committee.
- v) Insurance  
Members must hold the SMA professional and public liability insurance cover.
- w) Personal  
A practitioner should at all times maintain the modest and correct demeanour expected of the professional person, both in a public and private capacity. Abuse of alcohol, drugs, or good order is deemed to be a serious offence against this code.
- x) Records  
An accurate record of patient details and treatments is required. These confidential records must be kept in a secure place, properly safeguarded and not accessible to third parties. Client notes should be kept for at least seven years and, in the case of children, up to a minimum of 21 years of age.
- y) Referrals  
Practitioners should observe the recognised form of client referral.
- z) Conduct  
A practitioner of sports massage may not: -
  - i) Address or refer to an assistant as "Nurse" unless the person referred to holds a nursing qualification in the country in which the practitioner is operating a clinic.
  - ii) Call himself/herself "Doctor" unless he/she holds a recognised medical qualification or PhD in the country in which the Member is practicing.

- iii) Call himself/herself "Physiotherapist" or unless he/she is a member of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy.
- iv) Call himself/herself "physical therapist" or unless he/she holds a qualification recognised by the SMA to allow the Member to do so.
- v) Undertake any physical examination or treatment of a child under sixteen years except in the presence of the parent or an authorised person, or without parental consent.
- vi) Undertake to attend women in childbirth or treat them 10 days thereafter without permission from the healthcare professional unless they hold an appropriate qualification in midwifery.
- vii) Undertake to treat clients who are mentally unstable addicted to drugs or alcohol, severely depressed, suicidal, or hallucinating unless they have the necessary competence.
- viii) Make any written or unwritten claims in regard to the 'curative' benefits of sports massage.
- ix) Apply sports massage to a person who is receiving medical treatment for the same condition without the respective practitioner's consent.
- x) Treat animals without express permission from a veterinary surgeon.
- aa) Premises
  - i) Treatment areas must be hygienic and equipped to clinical standards and must comply with current health and safety regulations.
  - ii) Staff facilities and public areas (waiting rooms, hallways, stairs, toilet facilities etc.) must comply with current health and safety regulations.
- bb) Security
 

Practitioners must ensure that the client's confidential records are properly safeguarded and not accessible to third parties. Client's belongings should also be kept in a safe place.
- cc) Advertising
 

Advertising and professional leaflets must never make exaggerated claims for cures. Sports Massage practitioners shall be free to advertise their services and practices as they see fit, subject to any advertisements:

  - i) Being legal, decent, honest and truthful and in accordance with the British Code of Advertising Practice or appropriate overseas code.
  - ii) Not being of a character that could reasonably be regarded as likely to bring the profession into disrepute.
  - iii) Not being such as to abuse the trust of existing or potential clients or exploit their lack of knowledge.
- dd) Stationery and Name Plates
  - i) Professional letterheads should be of good quality and print. Name plates on buildings and windows should be of modest size.
  - ii) A full member may use the logo of the Sports Massage Association on business stationery only but otherwise at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- ee) Discipline
 

The Board of the Sports Massage Association may, on investigation, de-register any student or sports massage practitioner contravening the spirit or letter of the Association's Code of Ethics and/or Code of Practice or on the grounds of any other act which they may consider to reflect adversely on the good name and reputation of the Association.

The **Complaint Investigation Panel** will investigate any allegations against a member of the Association, (or Full Member of the SMA Council), of any conduct that falls short of the standard required.

The **Professional Conduct Panel** will consider allegations of professional misconduct, referred to it by the Complaint Investigation Panel.

The **Professional Conduct Panel** will also investigate allegations of serious impairment due to ill health of a Registered Sports Massage practitioner referred to it by the **Complaint Investigation Panel**.
- ff) Complaints Procedure.
 

Complaints should be put in writing in the first instance to the Chair of the Complaint Investigation Panel who will acknowledge receipt within 10 working days.
- gg) Publications
 

Nothing may be published in the name of the Sports Massage Association without the prior agreement of the Board, or sub-committee or Member acting with the full authority of the Board.
- hh) Appeals may be requested with the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Sports Massage Association.

The Children Act and the guidance regulations insists that young children are involved in the consent process if possible. The Children Act gives clear guidance to professionals when abuse of children is discovered.

When evidence of abuse is acquired (physical, sexual or psychological), urgent discussions with a senior colleague with a relevant referral to an appropriate professional such as a doctor, or health visitor or agency such as Social Services are essential. Handling and contact must be carefully explained and clients adequately prepared.