

ASSOCIATION DES ART-THÉRAPEUTES DU QUÉBEC INC.

**TRAINING STANDARDS**

August 1996

**1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

*Certain portions of these Training Standards are adapted from the American Art Therapy Association, Inc. Education Standards (April 30, 1994) with their permission.*

*The left column contains the articles of the Training Standards. The right column provides explanations, examples or rationales.*

**STANDARDS:**

- 1.1 The AATQ requires its professional members to have master's level training in art therapy or equivalent. Equivalencies are described in the ***Educational Equivalencies Regulations*** of the AATQ.
- 1.2 These ***Training Standards*** are applicable to art therapy training in university master's programmes, in clinical training programmes, and in institute training programmes.
- 1.3 Programme directors seeking AATQ approval will be required to demonstrate their programme's adherence to these standards.
- 1.4 Students in programmes which have been approved by the AATQ are eligible for student membership in the AATQ.
- 1.5 Graduates of programmes which have been approved by the AATQ are eligible for professional membership in the AATQ.
- 1.6 A ***qualified professional art therapist*** as referred to in this document is an art therapist who has at least one thousand (1000) hours of supervised clinical experience in art therapy and whose training corresponds to the standards of the AATQ.
- 1.7 In this document, ***one (1) credit*** equals fifteen (15) hours of class time.

**COMMENTS:**

- 1.7 *The credit base takes into account the total activity of a student in the form of lectures, seminars, conferences, laboratories, studio or practice periods and practical research, including where appropriate the hours of personal work required, as estimated by the university. Specifically, a credit is considered to represent a minimum of forty-five (45) hours devoted by the student to an educational activity as described above. This follows the system recommended by the Quebec Council of Universities for implementation in all the universities in Quebec (defined in the Rapport du Conseil des Universités sur les Diplômes Universitaires).*  
  
*Thus, each hour of class time implies two (2) additional hours of educational activity outside class time. For example, a three (3)- credit course equals forty-five (45) hours in class or a total of one hundred and thirty-five (135) hours of educational activity by the student, including both class time and work outside of class.*

## 2. ADMISSION

### STANDARDS:

- 2.1 Each student admitted to the programme must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in Canada or the United States, or equivalent academic preparation from an institution outside of North America.
- 2.2 Students entering a programme that does not award a graduate degree must already hold a Master's degree or equivalent.
- 2.3 Prior to admission or in the course of training, each student must either:
- (a) submit a portfolio of original artwork, which is evaluated by the faculty as demonstrating competence with art materials, and have completed at least 15 credits in studio art outside the context of the art therapy programme or
- (b) have completed 30 credits in studio art outside the context of the art therapy programme.
- 2.4 Prior to admission or in the course of training, each student must have completed at least 30 credits in psychology outside the context of the art therapy programme. A maximum of 15 credits of this requirement may consist of courses from related disciplines or equivalent clinical training or experience.

### COMMENTS:

- 2.1 *A bachelor's degree is generally considered a prerequisite for admission to a graduate or professional school. Inadequate preparation jeopardizes the student's and the programme's success and lowers the quality of training as compared to other professions.*
- 2.2 *Example of equivalent: Be a member of another related professional association and have at least 1000 hours of supervised clinical practice. The intent of this provision is to permit entry into our profession for otherwise qualified, experienced psychotherapists who are already working in the mental health field and who are unable to undertake a master's programme for reasons relating to career, family, geography or language. This provision also reflects the fact that there are no art therapy master's programmes in French, at present, in North America.*
- 2.3 *The purpose of the portfolio and studio art requirements is to confirm an applicant's potential ability to intervene with clients using art as a therapeutic modality. Applicants shall be informed of this requirement and the criteria for assessing portfolios shall be consistently adhered to.*
- 2.4 *The psychology requirements are the minimum considered necessary; many programmes require more. Clinical experience or courses from related disciplines such as counselling, social work, and the applied social sciences may substitute for up to half of the 30 credits required.*

### 3. FACULTY

- 3.1 The director of the programme must be a qualified professional art therapist (see Article 1.6).
- 3.2 The director of the programme is responsible for the continuity of the programme, for its stability and its continual evolution. He or she is also responsible for the administration and coordination of the teaching and the practicums. The director shall have sufficient time and authority to fulfill these responsibilities.
- 3.3 In the case of a Master's programme, the director of the programme must be a full-time professor at the institution which offers the programme.
- 3.4 The number of faculty members shall be adequate to carry out the teaching, advisory activities, and supervision of students enrolled in the art therapy programme. A minimum of three (3) faculty members is required.
- 3.5 The art therapy core curriculum courses shall, insofar as possible, be taught by qualified professional art therapists (see Article 1.6).
- 3.6 At least half of the members of the faculty who teach art therapy courses must:
  - (a) have practiced art therapy within the past five (5) years; and
  - (b) be qualified professional art therapists (see Article 1.6).
- 3.7 The other faculty members must possess the qualifications required in their respective disciplines, and these qualifications shall correspond to the content of the courses they teach.

- 3.1 *The qualifications of the programme's director have a direct impact on the credibility of the programme and the commitment of the institution to provide quality professional training.*
- 3.2 *The director shall possess the competencies and the availability necessary to effectively provide orientation and direction for the programme. The director is responsible for assuring a professional training of high calibre for the students. He or she has the authority to assure the management of the programme at every level. The director's responsibilities require him or her to have adequate time and availability to carry them out.*
- 3.3 *If the position of director is not a tenured position or leading to tenure, it is important that the institution clarify the director's situation with regard to the position and assure the highest degree of stability possible.*
- 3.4 *The faculty shall include a sufficient number of members to carry out the diverse responsibilities related to training: teaching, advising, supervision, research, administration, etc. It is important that students are exposed to different approaches and a variety of expertise during their training.*
- 3.5 *To assure that the programme is framed by the sense of responsibility which is implicit in professional training, it is of primary importance that the art therapy courses be taught by experienced art therapists.*
- 3.6 *The teaching of professional practice is based upon an integration of theory and practice. Faculty members shall be at the cutting edge of knowledge in these two sectors. They shall also meet the basic competency criteria of the profession.*
- 3.7 *The commitment of the programme to provide students with quality teaching is expressed in the competence and professionalism of the entire faculty.*

## 4. CURRICULUM

- 4.1 A minimum of twenty-one (21) graduate credits or three hundred fifteen (315) class hours in art therapy is required. This constitutes the core curriculum.
- 4.2 The length of time needed to complete the programme shall be no less than two (2) years or four (4) full-time semesters of study or equivalent.
- 4.3 The programme as a whole must follow a progression leading from introductory to advanced levels and must include study of the following subjects:
- (a) history of art therapy;
  - (b) theory of art therapy;
  - (c) techniques of practice in art therapy;
  - (d) application of art therapy in different treatment settings;
  - (e) psychopathology, including an understanding of diagnostic categories;

4.1 *Per Article 1.7, the art therapy core curriculum of twenty-one (21) credits equals seven (7) courses of three (3) credits or forty-five (45) hours of class time, each. This minimum requirement for the art therapy core curriculum is exceeded by most art therapy programmes. The **core curriculum** refers to a programme of required art therapy courses leading from introductory to advanced levels of study.*

*Not part of the twenty-one (21) credit art therapy core curriculum are: (a) the specializations offered per Article 4.5; (b) thesis; (c) more than three (3) credits of practicum; or (d) course work in related disciplines such as art education, marriage and family therapy, psychology, counselling, or art.*

4.2 *At least four (4) semesters or equivalent of full-time study are necessary in order for a programme to offer a sequential, coherent curriculum which permits students to acquire a certain depth of knowledge and basic clinical competence.*

4.3 (a) *This constitutes at least a survey of the profession's roots in related disciplines and the field's subsequent evolution, including current models of theory and practice.*

(b) *The theory of art therapy includes general principles, approaches, goals, and benefits. A given programme may emphasize some approaches more than others, depending on the orientation of the programme.*

(c) *Techniques of practice include appropriate choice of activity and interventions, the preparation of a therapeutic environment, and the development of a sensitive therapeutic relationship.*

(d) *Applications in different settings may be surveyed early in the programme, or may be a focus for later specialization.*

(e) *An understanding of mental illness includes familiarity with DSM-IV diagnostic categories as well as aetiologies of psychopathologies.*

<p>(f) art therapy assessment procedures;</p> <p>(g) standards of practice, ethics, and legal issues in art therapy; and</p> <p>(h) matters of cultural diversity bearing on the practice of art therapy.</p> <p>4.4 The art therapy programme shall include a thesis or equivalent.</p> <p>4.5 In addition to the core courses, over and above the twenty-one (21) credits listed above, the programme must provide opportunities for specialization in a sub-area of art therapy. These areas may include but are not limited to: (a) children, adolescents, adults, or elderly persons; or (b) the individual, group or family.</p>	<p><i>(f) Assessment procedures may be the focus of a particular course or may be addressed as special topics within other courses or in supervision.</i></p> <p><i>(g) Ethics, legal issues, and standards of practice may be taught in the context of a specific course, may constitute special topics within other courses, or may be studied in the framework of supervision.</i></p> <p><i>(h) Matters of cultural diversity are addressed by developing greater self-awareness, sensitivity, and empathy as well as by learning about cultures in special topics, class assignments, or a particular course.</i></p> <p><i>4.4 The thesis requirement or equivalent is a standard for ascertaining that a student has achieved mastery of basic research skills appropriate to a graduate level clinical programme.</i></p> <p><i>4.5 A specialization allows a student to develop expertise in a particular area of interest, beyond the basics included in the core curriculum courses. A focus on a particular topic, approach, or type of clientele may be achieved, for example, by selecting related elective courses, by choice of practicum settings, or by special projects, thesis, or research.</i></p>
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## 5. SUPERVISED PRACTICUM

- 5.1 At least six hundred and thirty (630) hours of supervised art therapy practicum are required.
- 5.2 At least three hundred (300) hours of the supervised practicum shall be direct client contact in art therapy.
- 5.3 The client contact hours shall be allocated so as to permit art therapy practice with individuals as well as with groups and/or families.
- 5.4 Three hundred and thirty (330) practicum hours or fewer are designated for various practicum-related activities or tasks. These include but are not limited to supervision meetings, observation in the setting, case studies, formulation of treatment goals and plans, writing chart notes or reports, and participating in team meetings or in committee work.
- 5.5 The practicum shall provide varied experience with at least two (2) types of clientele. As much as possible, the practicum shall be carried out in the context of diverse settings, such as, for example, the health and social services milieu, schools, community centres, or others.

- 5.1 *The establishment of a single criterion, for both university and institute programmes, for the required number of hours of supervised practicum avoids a double standard. The requirement of six hundred and thirty (630) hours represents the minimum deemed necessary for a valuable experience of supervised art therapy practice.*
- 5.2 *This criterion is essential in order to respect the objectives of art therapy practical training. The number of direct client contact hours, in the context of the practicum, must be sufficient to permit the acquisition of competencies and abilities essential to professional apprenticeship. Group art therapy hours are counted as equivalent to individual art therapy hours.*
- 5.3 *The goal of this criterion is to provide a diversified clinical experience so that the professional training is as complete as possible.*
- 5.4 *Supervision is included in this portion of the practicum hours (the proportion of supervision hours is defined in Section 6). The practicum-related activities and tasks permit students to familiarize themselves with the various facets of clinical work in art therapy. A sufficient number of hours should be allocated to these activities. The list of activities provided in this article is not exhaustive.*
- 5.5 *This requirement that the supervised practicum provides experience with at least two different types of clientele serves to widen students' field of practical knowledge in art therapy.*

## 6. SUPERVISION

- 6.1 Supervision shall be carried out by a qualified professional art therapist (see Article 1.6).
- 6.2 In the absence of an art therapist, other professionals having at least a master's degree, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, occupational therapists, or special educators, may provide supervision up to a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the total supervision hours.
- 6.3 Supervision can take place on site or off the practicum setting.
- 6.4 For every twenty (20) hours of practicum, two (2) hours of supervision are required. For every ten (10) hours of direct client contact in art therapy, one (1) hour of supervision is required.
- 6.5 Supervision may take place either individually or in small group. Regardless of the modality, whether in group or individually, one (1) hour of contact with a supervisor is counted as one (1) hour of supervision.
- 6.6 If the supervision is in the form of a small group, the ration of seven (7) students per supervisor must not be exceeded.
- 6.7 At least thirty (30) hours of supervision must be in the form of individual sessions.

*Good supervision, in general, contributes to a quality programme, to student achievement and learning, to effective therapy for the students' clients, and to fewer malpractice suits.*

- 6.1 *Beyond imparting clinical knowledge, the supervisor is a role model for the developing professional. It is of primary importance that the supervisor of choice for art therapists in training be a qualified, experienced art therapist.*
- 6.2 *It often happens that there is no art therapist working in the practicum setting and a clinician fills the role of on-site supervisor. Good supervision from an allied professional can be used as an opportunity for exploring a specialization and for creating links with other professions.*
- 6.3 *While the policies and structure of supervision reflect the philosophy of the programme, most programmes include both on-site and academic supervision for students.*
- 6.4 *The supervision sessions shall be both proportionate and timely in relation to the practicum and client contact hours in order to assure effective practical learning.*
- 6.5 *Learning from peers in a group situation can be a valuable attribute of small group supervision. A combination of individual and group supervision is viewed as optimal.*
- 6.6 *Groups larger than seven (7) students per supervisor limit the individual's opportunity to actively participate as well as the supervisor's attention to individual concerns or cases. This ratio is the maximum; a ratio of three (3) or four (4) students per supervisor is viewed as optimal for group supervision.*
- 6.7 *This is the minimum.*

## 7. EVALUATION

### **Student Evaluation:**

- 7.1 Each student must be evaluated regularly on achievement and progress in course work and clinical competencies.
- 7.2 The programme must maintain a record of the evaluation of each student in each course and in supervised practice.

### **Programme Evaluation:**

- 7.3 The programme must maintain and follow a regular procedure by which the courses, practical training, instructors, supervisors and administrators are evaluated by students, graduates, faculty and supervisors.
- 7.4 The evaluations of the programme must be used to modify the programme so as to promote its improvement. Recommendations shall be implemented as appropriate.

### **Student Evaluation**

*(Articles 7.1 & 7.2): The need for regular evaluation is based on the principle that the learning process must be supported by appropriate feedback to the student. Each programme will involve its students in a process appropriate to the programme's learning goals and styles. Evaluations shall help students understand their strengths, weaknesses, and progress. Regular evaluation of student outcomes assures that both the student and the programme become aware of problems or achievements.*

*Student evaluations take many forms, including grades and feedback on papers, class assignments, or supervisory evaluations for fieldwork or practicum. A formal, general evaluation may take place after the first academic year or before beginning a practicum or advanced course work. Evaluation tools are used by faculty, supervisors, and as deemed appropriate, by students for self-evaluation.*

### **Programme Evaluation**

*(Articles 7.3 & 7.4): An internal, continuing review process provides important data for the programme's development and improvement. Toward these ends, it is expected that constructive recommendations will be implemented.*

## **8. FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT**

8.1 The programme faculty must have regular access to the following facilities:

- (a) Classrooms for academic courses;
- (b) Studio space for working with art media; and
- (c) Offices and conference rooms for faculty study and for supervising or advising students.

8.2 The programme faculty must have regular access to the following equipment:

- (a) Audio-visual equipment for classroom instruction;
- (b) Studio art equipment and supplies; and
- (c) Office supplies for documents needed in instruction and record-keeping.

8.3 Both students and members of the art therapy faculty must have access to a collection of art therapy literature including texts, books, and journals.

8.1 *A safe, well-lit and ventilated environment is conducive to learning. Faculty and students shall have adequate and appropriate space available for their various educational activities. Privacy and the assurance of confidentiality are particularly important for client-related, advisory, or supervisory activities.*

8.2 *Quality in artwork, therapeutic work, learning, and teaching are supported by the use of adequate and appropriate equipment and materials. These basic elements help promote professional and effective performance by students and staff.*

8.3 *Graduate education requires access to the art therapy literature, including both historical and contemporary sources, as well as related literature. Library resources are broadly defined to include computer data bases, networking, and the Internet as well as print media.*

## **9. STAFF SUPPORT**

9.1 Secretarial, clerical and other administrative support must be available to the director and faculty of the art therapy programme.

9.1 *Timely and efficient clerical, secretarial and administrative aid can support quality in teaching and administration.*

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