



# Level 5 Diploma in Clinical Canine Massage Therapy

(610/6519/5)

STUDENTS HANDBOOK

Modules & Practical Sessions

2026-27



# Contents

Welcome to the Level 5 Clinical Canine Massage Therapy Diploma	3
Contract Breakers	4
On-line Companion School	6
Special Consideration and Additional Support	8
Termination of Contract	8
Home Study Modules	9
Module submission deadlines	11
Written Module Presentation	12
Plagiarism	13
The Harvard Referencing System	14
Learner Ethics and Code of conduct	14
Learner Diary	16
Practical Days	17
Practical Session Location	18
What to bring to Practical Days	19
How are you assessed?	21
Who are our instructors	23
The Rules/Health and Safety	24
Externship	25
A Round Up	28
Your Reading List	32

## Welcome to the Level 5 Clinical Canine Massage Therapy Diploma!

It's a very exciting time as you move forward with your studies and closer to your dreams of a new career working in the rewarding field of Clinical Canine Massage Therapy!

Please find in this document a thorough breakdown of involvements and expectations of the course.

The course is designed for dedicated people wanting a career change working with dogs or to add to their skill set as a Canine Professional. Remember, nothing worth having comes easy so you can expect the course to challenge you; that's a good thing! As the course is professional level training, we expect you to have a level of commitment that prepares you for your practical weekends which this document makes clear.

We put our hearts and souls into training you to be exceptional, but we can't do it by ourselves. Your level of commitment, practice, and dedication is paramount to your success and completion of the course. As an adult learner, we ask that you take your commitment to the course seriously and of course your modules, they are there to prepare you ready to meet and help all the wonderful dogs that you will be working with both in, and outside, the classroom.

Myself, and my team look forward to facilitating your journey in this rewarding field.

Best Wishes,

Natalie

Natalie Lenton

Director

Canine Massage Therapy Centre Ltd.

## Contract Breakers

Unfortunately, each year we lose learners off the course who have not completed their written modules in time for the practical sessions as discussed in the pre-interview video.

We want to ensure that it is as clear as possible that you must have completed a level of written theory before you enter the classroom to ensure you have the correct level of recognition of prior learning that is necessary before you get hands on. **As you will be working with live dogs right from the first morning of your practical's we need to ensure that you have a level of competency before you enter the classroom. We take our responsibility to the dogs we work with very seriously, so gaining the pre-requisite knowledge before you come into the classroom is of paramount importance for both your success and most importantly the safety of the dogs.**

**Important: Contract Breakers & Malpractice Procedures – When you will be disallowed to continue the course.**

### Note 1: Module Completion

**Please note that unless you are up to a Module 9 you will be unable to attend practical sessions as per your enrolment contract and as very clearly stated in the pre-interview video.**

Each module is sent to an instructor for assessment. If the module does not meet expectations, the questions found to fall short will be referred to the Learner for further work with pertinent feedback. The number of referrals will affect the final assessment for progression to the second year if sufficient progress towards competence has not been met. We acknowledge that not only are the first two modules lengthy, but it's also your first step on the road and therefore we will allow 3 referrals before the final assessment is penalised. However, the subsequent 7 modules will allow only 2 referrals.

Persistent referral may result in you being unable to continue in the Programme. This is most often caused from the Learner not taking on board the Tutors guidance or advice, particularly when it comes to referencing.

We take academic progression very seriously in the first year as it indicates a level of competence towards a Learners ability to progress to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. We will not accept work that is clearly not the Learners own work. We urge you to ensure that you are familiar with guidelines on Plagiarism and to ensure that correct referencing is used, and where you require a scribe to assist you, you must declare that the modules are your own words.

Previous learners from our course have been discouraged from helping you by providing copies of their modules, please do not ask them and put them in the difficult position of refusal.

Academic misconduct and cheating undermine the standards of Canine Massage Therapy Centre and the Diploma, as well as those learners who have attempted to complete the course fairly and honestly and are taken very seriously by Canine Massage Therapy Centre and the Awarding body Gatehouse Awards.

## **Note 2: 2nd year Competence Procedures**

This section refers to practical sessions within the classroom and the Externship. Your practical work is assessed as you progress throughout the course, and you will be trained in a variety of techniques over 4 Disciplines of massage as well as the Lenton Method®. A level of manual dexterity and physical fitness is required during training and for the actual job as well as verbal and written skills. Your competency levels are continually assessed for safety and proficiency as well as your achievement against a strict set of pre-determined assessment criteria.

Occasionally a learner may start the course but be unable to competently perform the technique correctly. If by Weekend 3 your competency levels have not met the required standard, you will be unable to begin your case studies and may only then complete the course for self-interest purposes only. You will not be taught the Direct Myofascial Release Techniques which are part of the Lenton Method, and you will be unable to attend the final 2 practical assessment days or the written exam. These techniques are not innocuous and so to prevent a learner from doing harm to an animal these measures are in place to respect the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and National Occupational Standards.

### Note 3: On-line Module Companion School



Whilst you are studying your modules our comprehensive online companion school has been developed to help bring the home study element of the course to life so you and your dog can practice at home. Importantly there is a chapter to accompany each module so you can see the pertinence of the theoretical study to practical application. Just some of the content included:

- An online video library of some preparation techniques to assist you to establish a strong foundation ready for the in-person practicals where we continue building on this to develop your skills with advanced massage, the Lenton Method and myofascial release
- Exercises
- Quiz's
- Resources
- Gross Anatomy videos with Natalie & Lyra
- Specially recorded videos for our students to keep you motivated and share some of the magic at home before moving into the classroom!
- We've created a dedicated community forum for support as part of the companion school and importantly away from distracting social media. The forum is used to share ideas, thoughts, ask questions and you'll see that students also organise their group revision and practice sessions too as part of the supportive community.

## **What else is included to assist you in your studies?**

We've thought of everything to help you progress smoothly through your studies. We also understand how important accountability is, so we provide the following alongside the classroom and the companion school. You can look forward to:

**Regular online support sessions in Year 1** – every 4-6 weeks we have Zoom sessions with our students to check in with your progress, answer your questions and work with the tutor team to improve your success and understanding of the module content

### **Online physiology lectures with Natalie & the tutor team**

**Regular online tutorials via zoom throughout the 2nd year practicals** in-between the all-important in-person practical sessions in the classroom, giving you chance to assimilate and absorb the material

### **An on-demand library of videos and recorded lectures**

**Separate community area** to build group coherence away from the usual social media platforms!

All of this plus all the in-person practical days, real clinic days with visiting clients and hands on coaching to make you the best therapist possible and achieve results in 1-3 sessions with this profound therapy.

### **Note 4: Workshop attendance before practicals.**

Many of you will already have been on a workshop which is great and may be considered the ultimate tip of the iceberg; if you have not been on a Canine Massage Therapy Centre workshop then please ensure you do before your practical's otherwise, they can come as quite a shock! Why? We are going to go in several levels up from a workshop and we will be using Latin terminology on your very first day so please be prepared as much as possible. We recommend that you only attend a canine massage workshop with a member of the Canine Massage Guild who is also one CMTC's Licensed Workshop Instructors. You can find a list of them on our website.

The practical days are nothing like a workshop for the public so please be prepared!

## Note 5: Special Consideration and Additional Support

Should you require additional support to enable you to complete the Clinical Canine Massage Therapy Diploma we will endeavour to provide support for you to meet the objectives. However, should you require a scribe or additional IT to enable you to complete the work due to a disability, or an interpreter as English is not your first language, costs are to be met by the learner and all work submitted must be your own work. You may also require additional time or additional referrals to meet module deadlines which, with any other requirements, will be considered on an individual basis.

Measures to ensure that the learner is not disadvantaged are at the discretion of the centre based on the information relayed to the director at the time of your enrolment and shall not affect the integrity of the course content or outcomes. Gatehouse Awards will be kept fully advised of the additional resources and support made available to you.

For additional information please refer to your Contract signed on enrolment. Failure to discuss additional needs at the time of your enrolment may result in CMTC being unable to properly advise you on whether this course is for you and address your expectations as a career on completion.

## Terminating Your Contract

As per your contract **you are asked to have completed up to Module 9 before your 1<sup>st</sup> Practical Session**; this is primarily for your own safety and the safety of the dogs you will be working with on the course. If you choose not to regularly submit modules, you will struggle significantly and we have seen in past years Learners drop out of the course because they cannot keep up with the workload; please don't let this happen to you.

If we terminate your contract because of maladministration or malpractice, you may appeal the decision to the director and ultimately to Gatehouse Awards as the Awarding body.

Remember that the course is not roll on off and therefore your fees are only valid for the allocated year of your practical's and may not be altered to another year. If you opted to pay for one year at a time, the second year must be the subsequent year.

## Home Study Modules

The modules need to be taken in order and the recommendation is to assume an average 50 hours each for the written modules. Most modules will need around 2000/3000 words (more for Modules 1 & 2 which come in at around 8000-10000 words).

<b>Module 1</b>	<b>The Skeletal System</b>
<b>Module 2</b>	<b>The Muscular System</b>
<b>Module 3</b>	<b>The Lymphatic System</b>
<b>Module 4</b>	<b>Massage Theory &amp; The Law</b>
<b>Module 5</b>	<b>The Skin</b>
<b>Module 6</b>	<b>The Nervous System</b>
<b>Module 7</b>	<b>The Blood Vascular System</b>
<b>Module 8</b>	<b>Gait Analysis</b>
<b>Module 9</b>	<b>Understanding Clinical Conditions &amp; Pathologies</b>
<b>Module 10</b>	<b>Clinician Skills and Health &amp; Safety</b>
<b>Module 11</b>	<b>Business Planning</b>
<b>Final Assignment</b>	<b>Cross Bridge Theory</b>

## Module Feedback

When you have completed your module, it is submitted to your allocated tutor.

You will receive a feedback sheet from the tutor via email. A pass will be indicated with “Yes” a referral will be indicated with “No”, this is not a fail, but you will be asked to add additional material to your module, as guided in your feedback; so you can achieve the Learning Criteria as Externally Assessed by Gatehouse Awards. You have a maximum of 3 attempts at a module 1 and 2, and a maximum of 2 attempts with modules 3 to 11. This is to ensure that you can implement feedback and learn from instruction.

The work should be your own work and should be referenced when using external sources such as books or the internet. In the past, we have had learners plagiarise work or have a private Instructor do their work. If this is found to be the case, this will be treated as a serious Malpractice and will result in immediate dismissal from the course.

### **Use of AI**

You are expected to include a disclosure statement at the end of your module describing which AI tool you used and how you used it. For example, "ChatGPT was used to draft about 50 percent of this paper and to provide revision assistance. AI-produced content was edited for accuracy and style."

You must then continue to provide the relevant referencing in accordance with our suggested reading list and/or other material used in reaching your answer.

You will receive feedback on modules 1-9 via email within 6 weeks of submission. Modules 10 & 11 are issued during the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and are marked at the end of the course.

### **Ready for your next module?**

You may ask for the next module to be sent to you when you submit a module to the instructor, don't wait for your feedback; just continue cracking on with study mode! However, no further modules will be sent if there are referred questions to be returned from an earlier module.

Your written modules will be returned to you at practical weekends, so you begin building your portfolio of evidence.



## Module Submission Deadlines 2026/27

Please keep up with your studies. For learners starting their modules in January we recommend the following submissions. If you start later simply adjust accordingly. We do not provide absolute guidelines as firstly our students start at different times and secondly, we respect that as an adult learner you are committed to completion of the course.

### Module submission guidelines

Module 1 – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026

Module 2 – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026

Module 3 – June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Module 4 – August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026

Module 5 – September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026

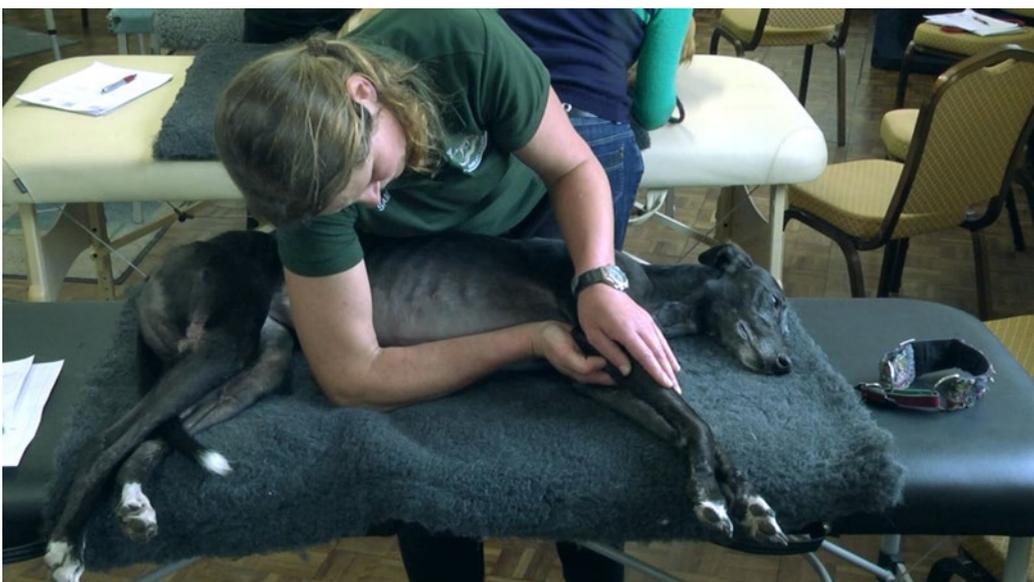
Module 6 – October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026

Module 7 – November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Module 8 – January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2027

Module 9 – Feb 28<sup>th</sup>, 2027

After you have completed Module 9 you may request your revision pack which is a thorough guide that helps you prepare you ready for practical sessions. We recommend a minimum of 4-6 weeks revision.



## Written Module Presentation – Please read thoroughly and adhere to the guidelines below

Assignments should be:

- ✓ Typed in: **Comic Sans**, Font Size 12 with 1.5 spacing (this font is chosen to reduce eye strain on the tutors, feel free to type in whatever you like and convert at the end!)
- ✓ Include a front cover with a submission date and your name and group
- ✓ Page numbered
- ✓ Include a Bibliography
- ✓ **Polite warning:** Please include references using the Harvard Referencing System – modules that do not include referencing will be fully referred.

**NB: Your work will be instantly referred to you if the above criteria is not met.**

Should we feel that a question on a module requires more information it will be referred to you along with feedback and guidance from your personal Tutor as to what it is you need to include to reach criteria. You have a maximum of 3 submissions for Module 1 and 2. If the 4<sup>th</sup> submission does not meet the criteria, then it means that you may not continue with the course as is standard practice. Multiple referrals may result in you being withdrawn from the Programme.

When you have completed a module, it should be posted **DIRECTLY TO YOUR ALLOCATED INSTRUCTOR**. You should photocopy any drawings/the module before sending them to your tutor.

## Plagiarism

The Canine Massage Therapy Centre is committed to ensuring the credibility of the courses we deliver, along with upholding our responsibilities to Learners and our awarding body, (Gatehouse Awards). Plagiarism amounts to falsification of work, and cheating will not be tolerated.

Plagiarism occurs when an author attempts to present as original existing or unacknowledged materials or ideas from another person, source or (in the case of self-plagiarism) their own work (PlagiarismAdvice.org). It is acknowledged that plagiarism isn't always intentional as it may be because of learner misunderstanding rather than direct intention.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- Acquiring or buying a paper from an internet source and submitting it as your own
- getting someone else to do the work for you
- giving false information about the source of information used in work
- copying sections of work from a friend
- copying/ pasting information from textbooks/ the internet without citing the source
- omitting quotation marks from quotations
- incorrect referencing

Learners

- should not let others see their coursework as this can amount to collusion
- should ensure coursework is written in their own words unless quoting a reference
- understand that when they sign coursework to authenticate it, they are confirming that this is their own work

Learners needing to use a scribe to enable them to complete the written elements of the course will be required to take an additional verbal assessment to confirm their understanding of their written modules.



# The Harvard Referencing System

For advice on how to use the Harvard Referencing System please see the lesson on this on the online companion school.

You are required to use the Harvard Referencing System during your modules. Accurate referencing shows your ability to research and acknowledge sources, books, papers and authors.

Plagiarism is stealing. If you are found to have plagiarised work, you will receive an official written warning and Gatehouse Awards also have to be notified under their conditions. Please be aware that ultimately plagiarism will result in expulsion from the course and will not be tolerated.

## Learner Ethics and Code of Conduct

### Can I massage other people's dogs while I'm studying?

**No, you cannot.** While studying you may only practice ON YOUR OWN DOG. The Veterinary Act 1966 & Exemptions Order 2015 states that you may not give another person's animal any form of complimentary therapy without

1. The correct level of training
2. Specific insurance
3. Written veterinary consent

This includes you as a learner.

**Please, please do not massage anyone else's dog other than your own in your first year.**

- A) As a learner you may begin case studies AFTER weekend 3 / weekday block 3 on your practical sessions after being assessed for your safety and competency as well as of understanding of theory.
- B) Learners outside of the UK may require additional insurance to allow them to work on case studies in their own country.
- C) There is a high bite risk working with dogs that we train you in to keep you safe. There are several contraindications, neurological defects and orthopaedic conditions that you have not yet been taught how to assess for and could potentially worsen. Nor have you been taught how to assess for muscular and fascial issues.

D) As a learner of the Canine Massage Therapy Centre , you do not do anything that brings the Clinical Diploma into disrepute or harms the reputation of the Canine Massage Therapy Centre.

Any learner found to be massaging other people's dogs which are not case studies or are outside the classroom will be instantly dismissed from the course. Fees are non-refundable.

E) As part of the course, you are held under the insurance of the Canine Massage Therapy Centre which covers you to massage:

- Any dog that visits in the classroom
- Dogs that we see as part of guided study days

Students are required to take out Student insurance to cover their 12 case studies and 3 massages on each. Further information will be issued before Case Studies commence and you will be required to take out student insurance with Balens Insurance. We will guide you through this process. The cost is approximately £30.

### **Can I shadow someone who has trained with you before or a canine massage guild member?**

We cannot provide this service as therapists are self-employed and do not work directly for Canine Massage Therapy Centre. The therapist is not insured to have a learner with them. Please don't put therapists in an uncomfortable position by asking.

You are going to be learning customised techniques that are the intellectual property of Natalie Lenton that require a massive amount of Instructor supervision before you are allowed to perform them. They also require a vast amount of theory to be able to understand the technique. This will not be like learning Swedish massage from a book or DVD.

Importantly, we work very quietly with the dog to engage the parasympathetic nervous system, so the therapy requires a calm and predictable environment. This is something that you will be learning directly for yourself once the Externship begins.

**Learner Diary – Please Begin This NOW! Your portfolio may not be submitted at the end of the course without it.**

As part of the course, it is stipulated that you must complete a Learner Diary, sometimes called a Reflective Log. This will be your recording of how you feel, how you are getting on, what you have struggled with, what you have progressed with. Things you did well, things you could have done better and things you'd like to change. It provides an opportunity to chart your progress throughout the course and will be of great help to you as you progress. Please ensure that your first Learner Diary Entry is made BEFORE your first Practical Weekend. Think of it as a 'Dear Diary' or Blog! Most learners start their diary when they receive their first module. You don't have to write it in every day but keep up regular entries.

I recommend setting up a simple word document immediately so you can start, you may want to begin with how you feel about your modules, how you are feeling about the modules, your first practical weekend, what you are looking forward to, any fears you hold etc... Be Honest. This will eventually go in your portfolio and no one else sees it's apart from you, me and the awarding body. You could start with 1 entry a month during modules unless you feel it pertinent to do further entries. You will find that the learner diary develops throughout the build-up to practicals, their duration and the externship.

## Practical Days

**You must attend all practical sessions.** If you are ill (or in extenuating circumstances) and cannot attend, you will be asked to attend the same session of another group's practical dates where possible.

During the practical weekends, you will be working with your own dog, other students' dogs, tutors dogs and real visiting clients.

On practical days you will be learning Live Applied Anatomy on Live Dogs, reiterating theory, learning 4 disciplines of Massage, Advanced Palpation Skills and the Lenton Method and working on visiting dogs who are **real clients** of your instructors. The practical weekends are **very** physical, and you will be expected to lift dogs safely as will be demonstrated. If you are unable to lift then please inform an instructor, your safety is paramount to us.



You will be shown manual handling skills in line with Health & Safety, and we will also discuss and sometimes use muzzles, when necessary, in line with National Occupational Standards 61 & 62. We fit a lot in during our time together, so please come prepared with the list below:



## Practical Session Location, Accommodation & Travel

### The Practical Weekends are held at:

Bournheath Village Hall

Claypit Lane

Bromsgrove

Worcestershire

B61 9LA

*(CMTC reserves the right to amend the venue should the need arise subject to giving adequate notice to all parties)*



### Times

All practical sessions run 9-5pm (unless previously notified)

## Practical Dates & Groups

Practical Dates & Groups will be released at the end of April 2026 via email and the online student community.

## End of Course

The Course ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January following your final practical block and by which time your completed portfolios must be submitted to Canine Massage Therapy Centre.

## What You Need to Bring to All Practical Days

- Please bring your own lunch. Tea/Coffee/Biscuits provided. There is a small Sainsbury's about 10 minutes drive away from the hall too as well as a Co-Op.
- Your personalised student polo shirt. Details of this will be given to you before your practicals to be purchased from the recommended supplier.
- Wobble Cushion – This is platform for you to sit on to stabilise your pelvis while being able to move comfortably. We never ever use them for dogs. Wobble cushions are available from many places nowadays from professional suppliers such as physiosupplies.com right through to Lidl! Please ensure you DO NOT blow it all the way up so it looks like a UFO! It should have plenty of give and be used as a comfortable wedge.
- Full set of muzzles (soft muzzles, not baskervilles – however in practice there is a place for these as well which we discuss in handling tutorials)
- Guide To the Dissection of the Dog Evans & Delahunta
- Veterinary Anatomy Book, Goody et al
- The table of Origins and Insertions you created for Module 2
- A large piece of vet bed for dogs to lie on
- Please bring a Massage Couch with you to all weekends. These are human massage couches and can be purchased off the web. Visit [www.massagewarehouse.co.uk](http://www.massagewarehouse.co.uk) to see a good range or keep an eye on ebay/amazon to find a couch that suits you. REMEMBER this is a couch to suit you so get one your think is suitable.



- There is no such thing as a dog massage couch! We simply use human ones. I would recommend you get the widest couch available, do not get the very slim human couches, compare widths.
- Canine Muscle and Canine Skeletal charts are a useful aid to learning. **You do not need to bring these to weekends but are one of the MOST useful muscle and bone revision guides you can get.**
- 2 Ice/Hot bags – We do not accept hot water bottles or wheat bags as these can superheat. <http://www.66fit.co.uk/hot-cold-therapy/hot-cold-ice-bags/ice-hot-bag-23cm-dark-blue.html> to be used for thermotherapy and vascular flush
- A big folder with poly-pockets and dividers and pens and a notebook, you'll be taking LOTS of notes!
- BRINGING YOUR OWN DOG – You may bring your own dog to the first 2 sets of practicals. We ask that you only bring socialised dogs who are fine with other dogs; we politely remind you this is a Massage Class, not a Behaviour or training Class; we recognise our scope of our practice. We advise that you don't bring a dog who you know is uncooperative as you will find it stressful and be unable to take in the lesson, this is why it's good to start practising with your own dog now and to go and see a practising Guild therapist.

Your dog is your responsibility when in class. It's also a great opportunity to be able to bring your dog as you will be directly supervised with them in class which means you get to understand more about your dog from this perspective than you ever have before. We also say 'the tutors train you, the dogs teach you' and we love seeing how that happens each and every year. You will see exactly what we mean in class, so there is lots to look forward to.



## How are you assessed on the course?

You are assessed continually throughout the course by means of Ongoing, Formative and Summative Assessments.

Your final 2 Days/weekday block consist of assessments including:

- The Consult, Massage and Feedback to Owner
- The 7 protocols of the Lenton Method
- Verbal Viva from Instructor on Applied Anatomy
- Anatomical Locations in Latin
- Clinical Reasoning
- Written Exam on Anatomy & Physiology
- Origins and Insertions Exam



You are also assessed throughout your practical sessions by the following means;

- Knowledge of Anatomy & Physiology
- Muscular Isolation and Identification
- Massage Technique & Application
- Client Communication
- Group Participation & Communication
- Full Body Treatments
- Advanced Palpation
- Gait & Posture Analysis
- Record Keeping



Any mistakes are corrected on the spot, remember we are there to tutor and mentor you, not to catch you out.

## Evidence of Learning to be provided to the Awarding Body, Gatehouse Awards

Evidence of learning will be provided via:

- Your full Module Portfolio
- Your Mini Externship Portfolio
- Observation Sheets by Instructor
- Photographs
- Videos
- Learner Diary
- Instructor Testimony
- Home Study Modules
- Written feedback from visiting owners



### Internal and External Verification (GATEHOUSE AWARDS)

Your portfolio of evidence will go through both internal and external verification.

As the awarding organisation, Gatehouse Awards provide an external verifier to ensure a fair and transparent procedure.

Final submission dates for portfolios will be 31st January the year following your final practical and theory session.

During internal and external verification, should it be found that your work has not reached the required level you will be contacted initially by Canine Massage Therapy Centre Ltd who will guide you through the process of any resubmissions or retakes required.



## Who are your Instructors?



Lead Instructor:  
Natalie Lenton from  
Canine Massage Therapy Centre



Instructor:  
Catherine Ryan from  
Dogs Body Canine Massage



Instructor:  
Samantha Courtnell from  
Thinking & Feeling Canine Massage

The Clinical Canine Massage Therapy Diploma has an unprecedented level of support

All of our Instructors have industry experience and have been trained by the Canine Massage Therapy Centre.

We pride ourselves on the level of attention we give to our Learners which is essential for learning the advanced bodywork you will be learning. You can expect to see the following friendly team members:



Instructor:  
Rachel Harries RVN  
From: RHK9 Massage

# The Rules!

Working with dogs and a live body means having a lot of consideration for the dog you are working with, therefore please observe the following rules which should be maintained throughout all of your practical sessions and into your career after you finish.

**X** NO long nails, nails should be below fingertips. This is because they are painful to the dog. I carry nail clippers and files with me, and you will be asked to cut them further in they are unsuitable

**X** NO nail varnish

**X** We ask that inappropriate or offensive tattoos should be covered up. We request if you have excessive forearm tattoos that they are covered for client visiting days. This is inline with human massage school guidelines.

**X** Piercings. Facial piercings including nose piercings should be removed in the classroom and for case studies.

**X** No Jewellery (apart from wedding band/watch)

**X** Long hair should be tied back from the face

**X NO JEANS** – Note this is in bold. DO NOT turn up to ANY practical session or case study session wearing Jeans. **If you are in jeans you will be asked to go back to your hotel and change.** We advise you to wear soft trousers/leggings/jogging bottoms that allow you to move freely as you are going to be working on the floor a lot

**X NO HEAVY PERFUME/AFTERSHAVE** (deodorant fine but strong floral notes can irritate your client who has a much stronger nose than you)

**v ALWAYS wear your Canine Massage Therapy Centre Student T-shirt** in the classroom and when on case studies (You will be advised how to order these towards the end of your first year of study!



## Homework

You will be set homework after EVERY weekend/weekday (group depending). It is imperative that you keep up with your studies. Remember, this is not a self-interest course; it is a course which trains you to do a job professionally. We are behind you all the way and want to see you succeed, and success takes dedication so it's important to keep on top of your written work at all times.

## The Externship

You may begin your Externship after Block 2, on which you will also receive lots of further help and guidance as we discuss this on practical weekends as part of the Externship Tutorial to help you prepare.



The Externship part of the Training Course will consist of the Completion of 12 Case Studies, with 3 treatments on each dog in a mini portfolio to include:

- Learner Diary/Reflective Log
- Title page and introduction and summary of client and issue
- Veterinary Consent Form
- Photographic Evidence of Learner performing massage
- Consultation Form to include full Gait Analysis
- Self-Assessment – how the learner thinks the session went, how did the dog react, what techniques were used, what aftercare advice was given, what the learner feels they could have done better on, areas that need more work development from the Instructor
- Follow up treatment's summary page and post treatment reassessment
- Post Treatment Report; findings and observations to submit to client's vet
- Summary of each case study

**Any additional sessions with your case studies over and above the 3 sessions must be approved by Natalie Lenton first**

You may **NOT** use your own dog or family dog for your case studies.

Your STUDENT T-SHIRT should be always worn in the class room and for your case studies.

## Lets start! Here's a few tips to help get you going and ensure you keep up your progress

- 1) **Keep up with your modules!** Get yourself into a study routine. Everyone is different so be realistic about what you can achieve, stick to it and importantly ENJOY IT! As guidance you should be looking at a minimum of 8-10 hours per week.
- 2) **Attend a workshop** with Canine Massage Therapy Centre or one of our Licensed Workshop Instructors. At the very least most learners will have attended a 1 workshop in person before their first practical online session. Whilst we cannot insist that you attend a workshop before the first practical's, we would like to be honest with you and say that you will struggle on the first practical weekend if you have not attended anything before. Your first weekend will be learning Latin Terminology and Applied Live Anatomy; having some of the basics under your belt is a must.
- 3) At the VERY least watch the DVD 'Canine Massage in 3 Easy Steps with Natalie Lenton'. Please note that I will NOT be spending 20 minutes going through Effleurage with you on the practical's as I do the workshops. Again, as an adult learner we respectfully remind you that you need to take ownership of your study.



- 4) Treat yourself to some **Canine Muscle and Skeletal Charts!** It will significantly assist in you learning and remembering the muscles. Put them up somewhere you see them every day. This will help you to revise the muscles and bones and importantly the muscle chart also has on the directional lay of fibres which will be important when we get into Scar Tissue Remodelling.
- 5) Search for videos on **YouTube**, they really bring the subject of Anatomy & Physiology to life!

6) One of the main things that holds people back on the practical's is having a lack of bodywork experience themselves. **You MUST go for massages with DIFFERENT practitioners** over different disciplines. I cannot recommend human practitioners in your area; it is your responsibility to find your own. You should have tried SWEDISH/SPORTS/MYOFASCIAL RELEASE/DEEP TISSUE.

PLEASE NOTE: Some of the techniques you will be learning cause 'Therapeutic Discomfort', you should have experienced the discomfort yourself so you can empathise with your client.

You can go to your local college for cheaper treatments on Swedish and Sports.

**We want the best for all our learners on the Clinical Canine Massage Therapy Diploma so I say it respectfully when I state this; Please do not waste your time or mine by turning up on practical weekends without having experienced several forms of massage.**

Chiropractic/Acupuncture/Bowen/Physio DO NOT count. Being able to empathise with your client, who cannot speak, for you to understand the sensations, and importantly feel the benefits of massage is undoubtedly THE most important thing that makes an adept bodyworker so make it happen for yourself and enjoy the experience! The world of bodywork is wonderful, exciting and can be life changing to the client who has been in pain. Experience It.



Appreciate It. Understand It on Your Own Physical Level. **For this is what truly makes an adept Clinical Canine Massage Therapist as we learn to work with, rather than on, the dog.**

7) **Take your dog to a Canine Massage Guild Therapist.** Every student is encouraged to get their own dog treated by a Guild member. Guild members are used to this as at one time they were a student themselves! This is the perfect way to help you progress and see the run of a consult through to therapy to results and should be a part of your learning experience. Its also a great way to meet potential colleagues in the industry.

The very best of luck with your modules and with the study, and I look forward to seeing you all at the Practical Weekends, please don't hesitate to contact me should you need any help or advice, that's why I'm here.

My very best of wishes, your Instructor & Mentor

Natalie

Director, Canine Massage Therapy Centre Ltd.

## A Round Up....

- 1) Most importantly, **read the work pack first**. Many learners just carry on regardless of omitting important information. Read the work pack it gives further direction for study and research. You are doing yourself a disservice if you think the work pack is beneath you.
- 2) Try to **answer the questions in order**. Many learners will dart about from question to question in their research. The questions are structured to give you previous knowledge. Please ensure that your module is in order e.g.: Q1/Q2 etc.. If you submit your module and the questions are not in order e.g.: you have jumped from Q1 to Q5 to Q2. Your module will be referred back to you with immediate effect
- 3) **Referencing & Bibliography** – Use the Harvard Referencing System and be sure to correctly quote and reference your work in line with the reading list and any other sources e.g.: Internet.

All sources should be referenced in a bibliography at the end of each and every module. The easiest way to reference is as follow:

DIRECT QUOTE in speech marks, e.g.: **“your quote goes here...”** followed by **(Author, Year of Publication: Page Number)** e.g.: Evans and Delahunta et al, 2009:68)

PARAPHRASING: Paraphrasing – this is when you take another author’s ideas and put them into your own words. You are still copying someone else’s work, so you must reference it. You do not need to use inverted commas when you paraphrase, but you must clearly show the reader the original source of your information. Use of AI must also be referenced and checked for accuracy

I recommend spending just 5 minutes looking at this page which explains and gives examples of how to reference. It will in the long term make things much, much easier for you.

You will also see on the online school that there is a separate lesson dedicated to Harvard Referencing. Please note that incorrectly referenced work will be referred to you in its entirety.

- 4) **Formatting:** Please ensure you put in appropriate paragraph spaces. Long reams and pages of text that are not broken up are difficult for Instructors to process but importantly it tells us that you haven't re-read your work before submitting it and more than likely don't understand the content. Long paragraphs become nonsensical. Please make them mean something.



- 5) **Module Length.** Please note the guidelines within each individual module in the work pack
- 6) Could you, if you were asked, explain the question in terms of **simple function**? E.g.: A sprain is an injury or tear to ligament. If not, it means you haven't understood it yourself. Take a step back and think "if someone were to ask me the simple function of X could I explain it?". Simple function is a 1 to 3 sentence.
- 7) **RE READ and PROOF YOUR WORK.** If you have, for example, labelled the hip as the humerus it's obvious that you have not re-read your own work. Silly mistakes like this can cost you a full referral as we will request that the whole diagram is done again along with associated questions. Also, keep in mind that the modules are for your knowledge, you want to be sure you have understood what you have written not only in terms of submission but also in terms of you using the module for revision at a later date. Be kind to yourself and give yourself space to review your work before submission.

- 8) Please include a front cover with the following information: Your Name, Your Group (remember you won't get this until end of April 2026 though so just leave it out until then, and an area at the bottom with room for your signature. Please write 'I declare that this is my own work' and sign and print your name and date it. This ties in with referencing and anti-plagiarism.



- 9) Module 1 and 2 will be expected to come in between 8000-10000 words. It is advisable to include relevant diagrams as you will be using these modules to revise for written exams and revision material before practicals. For other module word counts please see the individual module work pack.

10) Importantly, **THESE MODULES ARE FOR YOUR KNOWLEDGE and to ensure you acquire Recognition of Prior Learning necessary for practical's.** The modules ensure that everyone is at the same competence level needed to ensure safety and understanding in the classroom.

11) The job that professional canine therapists do is a hard one. It can involve sending dogs back to the vets for deformities, orthopedic and neurological conditions as well as life threatening illnesses like cancer for the vet to diagnose.

Rehabilitation from injury can be a long and tough road which involves not just doing manual skills but importantly communicating with the owner to help them understand in accessible terms, and also being able to communicate with vets and other



paraprofessionals at a higher level using correct terminology. You will be coached in how to write vet reports but please use your reading and writing skills to improve your language and level of writing now, it will make everything easier in the long run. It's not a walk in the park.

Our job carries with it the great weight of responsibility for **speaking for those dogs who have no voice.**

12) The course is **externally accredited** with Gatehouse Awards which includes learning outcomes and assessment methods. You must cover certain criteria to pass the module. This is not up to the individual Instructor, or how they feel that day. The criteria is set to ensure fairness and transparency so that all learners are covering the same information to the same level. It is not personal when you get modules/questions referred, we just need you to be up to required level. It will be worth it when you get to practicals.

13) **Have a study plan!** Are you setting aside some time each week for your modules? It is your responsibility to yourself as an adult learner to do this. The teaching team cannot do it for you. Remember you must have up to Module 9 submitted by your first practical session. Our Malpractice Procedure for Working with Live Animals means that you are a danger to yourself and the animal you are working with if the underpinning knowledge is not in place, and we cannot admit you to your practical's. This means that rather than leaving everything until the last minute, or, conversely, rushing and getting everything the out way can leave you under prepared for the practicals.

14) **You may not work on anyone else's dogs** whilst studying apart from the Externship dogs that will be approved by a tutor before working with them. We will also require evidence of your signed vet consent forms and student insurance. We have now had to write it directly into our policy that any learner found to be 'working' that means massaging, any dog that does not belong to them, other than approved externship dogs, will result in IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL from the course. Students are required to adhere to and respect the Veterinary Act 1966 and Exemptions Order 2015.

15) Start small with baby steps, write out your notes first before committing them to the computer. Commit to paper why you are doing the course and place it above your desk. It can be easy to lose track of why you started in the first place. Try and make it positive rather than negative eg: instead of "I hate my job" try "to change career so I can have a better quality of life and give back by helping dogs" or "so I can become spiritually and financially rewarded."

16) **Go for bodywork yourself.** The learners who fail or struggle with the course are those who don't receive massage themselves. If you can't empathize and don't know how it feels you will be reacting mechanically and usually with panic.

17) **Additional Support** whilst we will do everything we can to help your journey, we cannot remove the need for you to complete the modules and attend the Practical Elements of this course. You must be entirely honest with yourself as to whether you can achieve the outcomes described.

18) You've got this. Enjoy the journey.



## READING LIST

Your reading list for the course is below, guidance on which are referenced in your modules and throughout the course, are noted below.

- **INTRODUCTION TO VETERINARY ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY TEXTBOOK [PAPERBACK]**

Victoria Aspinall (editor), Melanie Cappello (editor)  
Publisher: Butterworth-Heinemann; Second edition Paperback (28 April 2009)  
ISBN-10: 0702029386  
*Use in modules 1,2,3,5,6 & 7*

- **GUIDE TO THE DISSECTION OF THE DOG**

Hardcover – 13 May 2016 by Howard E. Evans PhD (Author), Alexander de Lahunta DVM PhD (Author) Publisher: Saunders; 8 edition (31 Mar. 2016) ISBN-10: 0323391656 (we do not recommend going below the 7th edition)  
*Use in modules 1 & 2 and bring to practical sessions*

- **DOGS IN MOTION**

Hardcover – 24 Feb 2016 by Fischer (Author)  
The Pet Book Publishing Company Ltd  
ISBN-10: 3981433904  
*Use in modules 1,2 & 8*

- **ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY THERAPY BASICS**

(3rd edition onwards), Helen McGuinness  
Publisher: Hodder Education; 4 edition (28 May 2010)  
ISBN-10: 9781444109238  
*Use in modules 3, 4, 5 & 7 (note: this is a human book, and we ask you not to use it in modules 1 and 2 as the gross anatomy differs from human to canine, however for other modules it is invaluable as apart from the skin, the functions at this level of learning are the same. Can be used in conjunction with Aspinall & Capello)*

- **CANINE MASSAGE – A COMPLETE REFERENCE MANUAL**

Paperback – 1 Aug 2005 by Jean-Pierre Hourdebaigt  
ISBN-10: 1929242085  
*Use in modules 1,2,3,4,6 & 8*

- **DOG STEPS; A NEW LOOK**

Rachel Page Elliot (Author)  
Publisher: Companion House Books; Reissue edition (4 Dec. 2014)  
ISBN-10: 1621871010  
*Use in module 8*

- **COLOUR ATLAS OF VETERINARY ANATOMY volume 3 The Dog and Cat**

Goody et al: Stanley H. Done (Author), Peter C. Goody (Author), Susan A. Evans (Author), Neil C. Stickland (Author), Elizabeth A Baines  
Publisher: Mosby; Second edition (28 April 2009)

(we recommend Volume 3; it's more comprehensive)

ISBN-10: 0723434158

*A pictorial dissection book, absolutely essential for bringing gross anatomy to life. Expensive but worth it, you will need to bring this to practical sessions and have it ready for online classes. Please note that we only recommend getting Volume 3 as the earlier editions are not as comprehensive and do not have page numbers which can lead to confusion (!) Can be useful in Module 1 and 2 especially if you are a visual learner but is not needed for them.*

### **Colouring books – select 1 (more if you like but you only need 1!)**

- **Dog Anatomy: A Coloring Atlas Spiral-bound – 26 Sept. 2002**  
by Robert Kainer (Author), Thomas O. McCracken (Author)  
*Use in modules 1 and 2. Also suitable for other modules and bring to practical sessions.*

*Kainer and Mckracken is my personal favourite, it is clear and we use some of the diagrams in class. It used to be the only one on the reading list however sometimes it goes out of print so you may wish to consider one of the options below by Goody or Gardiner if this is the case. (note: it should cost approx. £38 we do not recommend spending £100 on this if it is out of print as you will sometimes see on Amazon!! It is spiral bound and as good as it is, it is not worth £100)*

Other options:

- **DOG ANATOMY; A PICTORIAL APPROACH TO CANINE STRUCTURE**  
Paperback – 16 Sep 1999 onwards by Peter C. Goody (Author)  
ISBN-10: 0851316360
- **THE DOG ANATOMY WORKBOOK; A Guide to the Canine Body**  
by Andrew Gardiner (Editor), Maggie Raynor (Illustrator)  
Publisher: J. A. Allen Paperback – Illustrated, 28 Feb 2014  
ISBN-10: 978-0851319834

### **FAQ's**

- **Can I use other books?**  
Yes
- **Can I use internet references?**  
Yes, please reference the website accordingly.
- **Can I use papers written by friends and family?**  
No, as these cannot be reference checked unless they are published online.
- **Can I reference other coursework that I have done?**  
No, as this cannot be reference checked however you may still use the same references in line with Harvard referencing