AAMT
Approved Providers Programme

Guidelines

For the development of ongoing education for the Massage Profession

Effective: March 2013
Table of Contents
Abbreviations ................................................................. 3
Glossary of Terms ............................................................ 3
1. Background and Rationale ........................................ 5
2. Purpose of the Approved Provider Programme ........... 5
3. Benefits of Becoming an Approved Provider .............. 6
4. Administration of the Approval Process ...................... 6
   AAMT National Education Committee (NEC) ................. 6
   Response time for Approval Process ......................... 6
   Approval Process .................................................... 6
   How to Apply .......................................................... 7
   Applicants Packet (what you should submit) .................. 7
   Actions of the NEC .................................................. 7
   Criteria used for approval of Providers of CPE ............... 7
   Criteria used for the rejection of provider applicants ...... 8
5. Renewal Applications and Removal of Providers ........ 8
6. Maintaining Provider Standards ................................. 8
   Determining Credit Points ......................................... 9
   Appeals .................................................................. 9
   Promotion .............................................................. 9
7. Criteria .................................................................. 10
   Further Publications and websites that may assist you: ... 14
Abbreviations

AAMT  Australian Association of Massage Therapists Ltd
AQF  Australian Qualifications Framework
CPE  Continuing Professional Education
CSHISC  Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council
RTO  Recognised Training Organisation
SOP  Scope of Practice
SPMP  Scope of Practice for the Massage Profession

Glossary of Terms

For the purpose of this document the following terms are interpreted to have the following meaning:

Body of Knowledge
A body of written work of what an individual must know and/or accomplish in their particular field of practice.

Manipulation
Manipulation in this document means the touching, palpation and release of the soft tissue including, skin, muscle, tendon, fascia, ligaments. This is unlike thrust manipulation that involves rapidly moving the joint beyond its physiologic or normal operating range of motion and below its anatomical or maximum limit of motion.

Massage
The range of bodywork techniques that, regardless of their commercial or generic title, are provided to a client. This encompasses, massage, Swedish, remedial, myotherapy and soft tissue therapy as an example.

Massage Therapy
Is the practice of massage by accredited professionals to achieve positive health and well-being (physical, functional, and psychological outcomes) in clients.

Mobilisation
Joint "mobilisation" is a subtype of joint manipulative therapy in which the therapist moves the joints in specific directions and depths with, or without, the patient's assistance, with the aim to stretch and return the joint and its surrounding tissues to normal tension.

Post Graduate Education
Any study that is undertaken post graduation from an AQF course preparing the therapist for initial practice.

Remedial Massage
Remedial Massage is the objective assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of the signs, symptoms and causes of biomechanical dysfunction or injury, using specific mobilisation techniques, in order to restore normal health and function.

1. Myotherapy involves the assessment and physical treatment of myofascial pain, injury and dysfunction affecting movement and mobility. Myotherapy is applied in the preventative, corrective and rehabilitative phases of therapy to restore and maintain the normal integrity of the soft tissue structure (muscles, tendons, ligaments and fascia) of the human body.
2. Deep Tissue Massage focuses on the deeper layers of soft tissue in order to reach the deep sections of thick muscles and individual muscle fibres. Using deep muscle compression and friction manoeuvres either along the muscle fibres or across the grain of the muscle to free congestion of the fibres of the muscles, release toxins, deep tensions, and improve blood flow and oxygen delivery.

3. Sports Therapy Massage is an application of massage, not a particular massage technique. The type of massage technique or treatment applied is dependent on the nature of the stage of training or competition, sports injury or condition and the assessment by the remedial Massage Therapist. Sports therapy massage involves the objective assessment and treatment of the athlete. The focus being on prevention and treatment of sports related conditions. It includes preparation prior to competition both physically and psychologically and subsequent recovery from training and competition of amateur and elite level athletes. Remedial Massage Therapy is recognised by the Australian Olympic Committee as a legitimate therapy.

4. Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD) is a gentle massage technique that is recognised as a key component of manual decongestive therapy. MLD aims to encourage fluid away from congested areas by increasing the activity of normal lymphatics and bypassing ineffective or obliterated lymph vessels in order to reduce swelling and encourage lymph flow. It is highly recommended in the International Consensus – Best Practice for The Management of Lymphoedema.

Remedial massage includes the full scope of practice of Certificate IV (Therapeutic) massage

Scope of Practice
A Scope of Practice cannot be defined as a list of tasks or procedures. It is a framework of levels of expected outcomes from a range of treatments provided by competent practitioner. AAMT has the expectation that professional therapists will practice or teach within their scope and level of education.

Therapeutic Massage
Is the treatment of the whole body to relieve the symptoms of chronic complaints including physical and psychological conditions using specific muscle/soft tissue manipulation and relaxation techniques to relieve discomfort, and improve function and well-being. It includes the Swedish massage range of techniques:

Swedish massage consists of passive and active movements of bending and stretching, and five broad massage strokes. Each of these strokes has a specific role to play in contributing to the overall massage sequence as follows:

   a) Effleurage: gliding strokes with the palms, thumbs and/or fingertips and forearms.
   b) Petrissage: kneading movements with the hands, thumbs and/or fingertips and forearms
   c) Friction: circular, rectilinear and transverse-pressures with the palms of hands, thumbs and/or fingertips
   d) Vibration: oscillatory movements that shake or vibrate the body
   e) Percussion or Tapotement: brisk rhythmical percussion techniques

Wholistic
The term wholistic refers to an approach, assessment or treatment that involves examining all aspects of the clients condition (the whole) as opposed to the holistic concept of philosophy, religion or belief system. Wholistic may also be the all encompassing practice of consultation of a group of practitioners to address the health issues of one client. For example, massage therapist, counsellor, general practitioner, oncologist or naturopath. The collaborative role is about working with the best interests of the client in mind to return to optimum health.
1. **Background and Rationale**

To continue to be an active member of AAMT, members are required to complete a level of ongoing education each year. AAMT members agree to this requirement, outlined in the AAMT Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, when joining the association initially. This requirement commences after the completion of the practitioner’s training. This is termed as Continued Professional Education (CPE). Associate Members are not required to participate in CPE activities, or meet an annual CPE benchmark.

The purpose of this continuing education requirement is to encourage continued lifelong learning, professional growth and safe practice for the benefit of the practitioner, the client, and the wider public. Of prime importance is the strong evolution of the massage profession in Australia and in gaining legitimate recognition and respect for the therapeutic knowledge and abilities of AAMT practitioners.

Post Graduate Educational programmes, courses, seminars, webinars and workshops help fulfill CPE requirements and are recognised by AAMT as having an essential role to play in helping to meet AAMT educational and lifelong professional learning objectives.

CPE courses must meet the following general description: "an organised educational experience directly related to massage therapy, which is offered under responsible leadership, planned delivery and qualified instruction." These instructional sessions may be experiential, that is, hands on, theoretical or research orientated in nature.

2. **Purpose of the Approved Provider Programme**

In order to offer AAMT members quality educational programmes / activities for the purpose of CPE, the Association has developed criteria for course approval.

CPE activities should promote professional goals related to the massage therapy industry in order to increase competency and excellence in the AAMT membership. The CPE approved provider courses should be programmes that revise, enhance and build on education derived from entry level massage therapy courses. They could also be characterized by programme designs that offer newly emerging concepts, principles, theories and research in massage therapy, bodywork or health care.

This can be defined into four categories:

1. Therapeutic Massage appropriate education (AQF 4: Certificate IV level)
2. Remedial Massage appropriate education (AQF 5: Diploma level)
3. Advanced education (AQF 6 or AQF 7: Advanced Diploma level or Higher Education Degree level)
4. Special interest (appropriate across all levels, for example ethics, business, marketing)
3. Benefits of Becoming an Approved Provider

The AAMT Approved Providers have several advantages in helping to meet the educational needs of massage therapists. In becoming approved, providers:

- Attest to their commitment to quality education programmes
- Gain approval for their courses throughout Australia
- Promotion of their Approved Course on the AAMT website
- Use of the AAMT Logo on advertising material for the Approved Course(s)

4. Administration of the Approval Process

AAMT National Education Committee (NEC)

The NEC is a Committee with delegated authority from the AAMT Board. The role of the NEC in the Approved Provider process is to read, review and assess your application for compliance to the criteria. Requests for any additional information will come from the assessors on this Committee.

Response time for Approval Process

Correctly completing the appropriate forms, providing all supporting documentation and payment will expedite the approval process. If your application is straight-forward and fulfills all the criteria, the AAMT aims to process the application with final approval within eight (8) weeks of lodgment of a finalized and complete application.

If your application is unclear, or further information is required by the Chief Executive Officer this may delay the process. Therefore, AAMT encourages you to ensure your application is thorough and complete prior to forwarding.

NB: All applications must be typed - not handwritten.
Please include payment with your application (refer to payment schedule).

It is expected that most applications will be processed within eight (8) weeks of receipt.

Approval Process

A Provider may be approved as an individual or organisational Provider. An 'individual' is one principal instructor with one assistant. If there are more than two instructors then the application must be submitted as an 'organisation'. A company, RTO, or other educational facility must apply as an organisation. Note that AAMT’s programme approves individual courses, and not particular providers. Endorsement of one course does not apply to any other courses offered by the provider, unless they, too, are considered and endorsed.
How to Apply

Any Provider applying for approval should be 'operational-ready', that is, able to deliver the course/workshop at time of application.

1. Study the application criteria carefully. The Association has attempted to make the criteria simple and straightforward with close reference to the professional standards and goals expected by the AAMT
2. Review and strengthen any possible weaknesses you may discover following review of the criteria
3. Submit a completed application

Applicants Packet (what you should submit)

Provider applicants must submit one completed Provider Application Pack (AAMT Application form and Payment Schedule should be completed). Supporting evidence should accompany your forms, addressing the criteria. Include notes, handouts, registration details and any advertising that you may have already used to promote your educational event. (This is outlined for you in the Criteria Description). Your original application packet will be kept securely at the AAMT office and is not returned. Any material supplied by you will be on the basis that it is "commercial-in-confidence", and will only be supplied to the course assessors. Each Provider applicant should make a complete copy of their application and keep it as record to refer to.

Actions of the NEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Approved status granted for two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval Pending</td>
<td>Provider applicant needs to supply further information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or Deferred</td>
<td>or clarification for successful approval. (Applicant has 60 days to respond before application lapses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied</td>
<td>Reasons for denial are given and the Applicant may appeal the NEC's decision. (see Appeals)</td>
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</tbody>
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Criteria used for approval of Providers of CPE

It should be noted that the AAMT encourages educational programmes that expand and enhance the knowledge base of all our members. This does not in any way limit the scope or variety of massage or bodywork modalities.

In order for the massage practitioner to fulfill their needs for on-going quality education, the AAMT assists in the following ways:

*We are committed to continue the essential characteristics of “the art of massage” and the associated” therapeutic goals” for each member. This is offered through choices of continuing education that suits the variety of interests for the therapist, including, but not limited to, the manipulation of soft tissue, energetic field therapies, self-stretching and client/therapist body awareness, business practices and ethics.*
Criteria used for the rejection of provider applicants

Courses that include the following elements will not be authorized:

- Teaching participants how to diagnose clinical conditions;
- Preparing participants to supply, suggest or administer pharmaceuticals, whether topically applied or ingested. Use of non-scheduled substances for cryotherapy and heat therapy is exempted from this stricture.
- Preparing participants to perform or undertake allopathic medical/surgical procedures other than measuring functional outcomes.
- Incorporation of any form of spinal high or low velocity thrusting manipulations.
- Use health care modalities that do not reflect or build on the core body of knowledge possessed by the scope of the participant's practice and training.
- Use terminology that does not reflect the massage therapist scope of practice and training, i.e. heal, cure, and thrust manipulation.
- Any training that contradicts the AAMT Code of Ethics or Standards of Practice.
- Inadequate course quality or structure as decided by the NEC based on the AQF standards accepted nationally.

5. Renewal Applications and Removal of Providers

Approval status is granted for two years. Two months before the expiry of the providers’ approval period, the AAMT will send out an application for renewal. If no, or only minor changes have been made to the course, an application for renewal will generally be processed administratively. Where more major changes have been made to the course, the provider may be requested to provide a new application for approval.

To renew, providers are requested to submit to the NEC for review:
1. current first aid certificate
2. current Professional Indemnity, Malpractice and venue insurances
3. a declaration of changes/amendments made to course content
4. the renewal fee

AAMT holds the right to not offer renewal to any provider if the NEC believes the currency of the information is no longer relevant to industry CPE needs.

AAMT holds the right to withdraw approval of an Approved Provider if they are found to be in breach of the AAMT Code of Ethics, or any other Australian legislation.

6. Maintaining Provider Standards

AAMT has the responsibility of maintaining the integrity of the Approved Providers and therefore reserve the right to monitor Providers Educational programmes and delivery, to detect or prevent:

- Any component of the programme that does not reflect the spirit and basic content of the information outlined in the original Provider Application.
- Violation of the AAMT Code of Ethics or Standards of Practice.
- Ethical or sexual misconduct within the context of the Educational programme.
- Fraud and Misrepresentation.

AAMT holds the right to cancel any Approved Provider status under these afore mentioned conditions or circumstance.
Determining Credit Points

While there must be some flexibility in the awarding of CPE points for vocational training which is underpinned by competencies rather than hours of instruction, the normal basis for awarding CPE points is by 1 point for 1 hour of instruction.

However, points and hours systems are often inconsistent. Therefore, workshops points will be made consistent with the CPE allocation as determined by the NEC from time to time.

AAMT will determine the CPE allocation taking into consideration the time, content and complexity of the programme. Note: Lunch and breaks are not counted.

In most cases, the maximum CPE points awarded for a single course is 20, which represents 50% of a therapist’s obligation for a one-year period. Where a provider believes that due to the scope, complexity and practical outcomes generated by their course, that a larger allocation should be considered, the provider may apply to the Committee. The maximum allocation possible will be 30 points. When making application, the provider must clearly state the reasons for their case including scope, complexity and practical outcomes, and provide justifications by relating their course to others. Courses which result in certificates of attendance rather than certificates of competency will not receive increased applications. The Committee’s determination in this matter will be final, and not open to further appeal.

Appeals

Each Application will be considered by the NEC and their decision will be final and not open to appeal unless the Approved Provider application is revised to fulfil AAMT criteria.

Applications that are rejected by the Committee will receive full reimbursement of their fees, less an AUD$55 non-refundable processing fee.

Promotion

As an Approved Provider, AAMT provides complimentary mention of Approved Programmes in the e- newsletter and how to access them from the AAMT website. This is delivered to members monthly and a listing on the AAMT website under CPE Events.

All advertising in Massage Therapists, the national journal, is at standard advertising rates.
Use these criteria guidelines below in conjunction with your application form

7. Criteria

Criteria 1. Administrative Requirements:

1. Provider must apply as an organisation (partnership, incorporated body or company) or as an individual (sole trader) and declare other organisation endorsement(s)

1.1 Educational philosophy, objectives, outcomes and content

1.2 Course list and type of certificate awarded (certificate of attendance or certificate of competency)
Name the course(s) that you wish to provide and the type of certification that will be awarded. Providers must issue either: a Certificate of Attendance (this does not require the provider to assess the competency of each student individually); OR a Certificate of Attendance and Competency (which does require the provider to assess the competency of each student individually). You must attach a copy of a sample of the certificate you intend to issue to this form.

Each certificate must include:
   i. the name of the provider
   ii. the provider’s contact address
   iii. the date of the course
   iv. the course title
   v. a brief description of the learning outcomes
   vi. the hours issued
   vii. the participant’s name
   viii. and an indication of authenticity (stamp, seal, or distinctive paper)

1.3 Assessment of competency (i.e. does attendance mean that they are able to apply or have comprehended the course content?)

1.4 Maintenance of transcripts
Submit a policy statement regarding the maintenance of course transcripts and/or Educational records that demonstrate how the privacy and security of the participant’s records, including financial statement and/or credit card details are maintained.

1.5 Provide evidence currency of Public and Professional Indemnity insurance that covers educational activity performed in Australia

1.6 Australian Business Number

1.7 Disclaimer for participants, which indicates the outcome of the course

1.8 Classification of activity

Criteria 2. Resources:

2.1 Physical facility for delivery of the Educational activity
Describe how the required resources are determined and made available to ensure learning outcomes can be achieved. The resources you require must relate directly to the type and style of course you intend delivering. You should provide an adult learning environment that has
acceptable accommodation and environmental comfort (convenient parking, access to food services and toilet facilities.)

Criteria 3. Information available to Participants:

3.1 Policies of the organisation or individual related to the publicity of the Educational offering.

3.2 Marketing and promotional materials
Providers must publish and submit advertising that include clear statements regarding course pre-requisites, learning outcomes, learning activities, qualifications of instructors, deadlines, fees, refunds and approval status.

Please note that if your application is successful you will be able to use the AAMT logo. Restrictions and requirements apply to AAMT Logo use and these will be outlined to you when you are approved.

3.3 Proprietary interests' disclosure

Criteria 4. Curriculum Content:

4.1 Level of education knowledge delivered by your programme
Providers indicating that a course is suitable for students should be aware of the particular learning needs of students, and that the inclusion of students in courses may result in uneven educational preparation of participants.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) provides a comprehensive, nationally consistent framework for all qualifications in post-compulsory education and training in Australia. AAMT members hold one of the following qualifications in Massage. Certificate IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma as defined in the AQF. A brief description follows. (For a full explanation of the AQF refer to the Australian Qualifications Framework, 2nd edition, January 2013. You can download it from the Australian Qualifications Framework website (www.aqf.edu.au)).

AQF4: Certificate IV in Massage Therapy Practice (HLT40307 or HLT40312, or equivalent)

This qualification covers workers who work as basic level massage therapists. It provides skills in therapeutic relaxation massage including basic health assessment and treatment.

Characteristics of Learning Outcomes
Breadth, depth and complexity of knowledge and competencies would cover a broad range of varied activities or application in a wider variety of contexts most of which are complex and non-routine. Leadership and guidance are involved when organising activities of self and others as well as contributing to technical solutions of a non-routine or contingency nature.

Performance of a broad range of skilled applications including the requirement to evaluate and analyse current practices, develop new criteria and procedures for performing current practices and provision of some leadership and guidance to others in the application and planning of the skills.

Distinguishing Features of Learning Outcomes
Do the competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:
• demonstrate understanding of a broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts;
• apply solutions to a defined range of unpredictable problems;
• identify and apply skill and knowledge areas to a wide variety of contexts, with depth in some areas;
• identify, analyse and evaluate information from a variety of sources;
• take responsibility for own outputs in relation to specified quality standards; and
• take limited responsibility for the quantity and quality of the output of others.
AQF5: Diploma of Remedial Massage (HLT50307, or equivalent)

This qualification provides the skills required for competence in remedial massage practice and practitioners at this level may be self-employed as independent practitioners or may work within a larger health service. It covers the provision of remedial massage treatment to clients with specific needs such as injury management, rehabilitation, palliative care, aged care, women and children. Practitioners at this level may supervise other massage therapists.

Characteristics of Learning Outcomes

Breadth, depth and complexity covering planning and initiation of alternative approaches to skills or knowledge applications across a broad range of technical and/or management requirements, evaluation and coordination. The self-directed application of knowledge and skills, with substantial depth in some areas where judgement is required in planning and selecting appropriate equipment, services and techniques for self and others. Applications involve participation in development of strategic initiatives as well as personal responsibility and autonomy in performing complex technical operations or organising others. It may include participation in teams including teams concerned with planning and evaluation functions. Group or team coordination may be involved.

Distinguishing Features of Learning Outcomes

Do the competencies or learning outcomes enable an individual with this qualification to?

- demonstrate understanding of a broad knowledge base incorporating theoretical concepts, with substantial depth in some areas;
- analyse and plan approaches to technical problems or management requirements;
- transfer and apply theoretical concepts and/or technical or creative skills to a range of situations;
- evaluate information, using it to forecast for planning or research purposes;
- take responsibility for own outputs in relation to broad quantity and quality parameters; and
take some responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes.

NB: Diploma level graduates also hold the competencies listed above, under Certificate IV

AQF6 or AQF7: Advanced Diploma or undergraduate degree

Characteristics of Learning Outcomes

Breadth, depth and complexity involving analysis, design, planning, execution and evaluation across a range of technical and/or management functions including development of new criteria or applications or knowledge or procedures. The application of a significant range of fundamental principles and complex techniques across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts in relation to either varied or highly specific functions. Contribution to the development of a broad plan, budget or strategy is involved and accountability and responsibility for self and others in achieving the outcomes is involved. Applications involve significant judgement in planning, design, technical or leadership/guidance functions related to products, services, operations or procedures.

Distinguishing Features of Learning Outcomes

Do the competencies or learning outcomes enable an individual with this qualification to?

- demonstrate understanding of specialised knowledge with depth in some areas;
- analyse, diagnose, design and execute judgements across a broad range of technical or management functions;
- generate ideas through the analysis of information and concepts at an abstract level;
- demonstrate a command of wide-ranging, highly specialised technical, creative or conceptual skills;
- demonstrate accountability for personal outputs within broad parameters; and
- demonstrate accountability for personal and group outcomes within broad parameters.

NB: Graduates at this level also hold the competencies listed above, under Certificate IV and Diploma

4.2 Identified need

4.3 Underpinning knowledge

4.4 Incorporation of relevant research and theories into programme
4.5 Design learning activities that reflect and support adult education learning principles
Because of their life experience, adults approach learning differently. Generally, adults…

- support themselves hence are generally self directed
- have their own ideas about what’s important to learn
- tend to be concerned about effective use of learning time
- have life experiences to which they can relate new learning
- tend to learn when they need to in order to solve a problem or fulfil a need
- are more likely to reject or explain away information that contradicts their own experiences or beliefs

When planning and delivering learning for adults there are some principles that, when applied, can assure a more rewarding and effective experience. Those principles are summarised as follows.

Adult learners:
- expect to find learning rewarding
- use all of their senses to learn
- learn more effectively when they can relate new information to their existing knowledge
- need opportunities to practice their new skills and apply their new knowledge
- remember best the first and last things in a learning session
- need feedback on their progress
- need to be actively involved in the learning process
- need more time to make sense of and value new information

4.6 Self - paced, Home-based Study programmes and Distance learning
If your Educational offering is delivered by self-paced or Home Study learning you will need to supply evidence that your course:

- Has a sound rationale for using the self-paced or distance learning process
- Measurable expected learner outcomes
- Has sequenced content material
- Has appropriate testing processes that reflect both the programme content and educationally sound delivery and methodology
- Has Educationally appropriate Evaluation forms
- Outlines the time needed to complete the programme
- Describes the process for periodic programme review

Criteria 5. Instructor Qualifications and Assurance:

5.1 General
Applicants for Approved provider status are required to give assurance that qualified individuals are involved in the design, planning, implementation, delivery of each course taught. Presenters must outline the individual qualifications of all course instructors involved in delivering the Programme. Educational qualification may be based on professional achievement, experience and credentials, work experience, honours, awards or professional publications.

5.2 Instructor Assurance
All instructors employed by the Course conveyor must be aware and agree to their remuneration for teaching services for the duration their employment. If this is applicable to your Educational course please give evidence of compliance. For example, a sample employment agreement.

5.3 Instructor Qualifications
All instructors should hold as a minimum a TAA 40110 Certificate IV in Workplace Training & Assessment (or equivalent) or where multiple instructors are present, that at least one instructor holds this qualification as a minimum.
Alternatively, a qualification in teaching or demonstrated significant knowledge in the content being presented must be provided. This can be validated by references from previous clients, evaluations or testimonials. Presenters can also provide references and may be requested to do so by the evaluating committee or assessor.

Criteria 6. Assessment/Evaluation:

6.1 Properly designed and utilized evaluation tools that evaluate the achievements of course objectives, the expertise of the instructors and the satisfaction of course participants are essential components of sound educational offerings. The evaluation process must be conducted in a systematic and timely manner and should be linked to a quality improvement system that ensures continuous positive course development.

Providers must solicit feedback of both the Educational course and the instructor's performance. These evaluations must be retained for a period of 2 years following the approved course completion and made available to the AAMT National Education Committee on request. The AAMT will supply guidelines for the evaluation process for those applicants who require this service. Provider applicants must indicate how they comply with this requirement.

Further Publications and websites that may assist you:

AAMT Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice  www.aamt.com.au

Instructional multimedia: An investigation of student and instructor attitudes and student study behavior http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6920/11/38


Training.gov.au  http://training.gov.au