

Do you want to be able to use your MCEP courses, or Dip. MT, toward a Post Graduate Diploma or Masters degree?

AUT University has the answer for you! Complete the NZMPA MCEO Courses and you will be exempt from having to attend the practical component of the AUT Musculoskeletal Paper. Meet the assessment/examination and clinical education requirements of this paper and you will have the first 40 credits towards a 120 credit PG Diploma in Health Science.

NZMPA Musculoskeletal Continuing Education Programme (MCEP) Courses: Pathway to post graduate qualifications at University level

Background

The NZMPA **Musculoskeletal Continuing Education Programme (MCEP)** courses have now been running for about 10 years. These courses were commenced when the Dip MT programme ceased being taught by the NZMPA. The reason the Dip MT stopped was because the post graduate programmes in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy were developed at a University level, creating the pathway to Masters Degrees and higher level tertiary qualifications. The Dip MT was not deemed to be of the equivalent educational level of the university programmes, or accepted by IFOMT as being of the required standard to meet international recognition. The current programme at AUT does meet the IFOMT standard.

The MCEP courses currently lead to membership of the College of Physiotherapy via route B, and are accredited for this purpose. However, while the pathway exists, to date no students have followed this route and met the College membership requirements. This route is also not a pathway to a formally recognised tertiary qualification. The advantages of the MCEP courses have been the ability to up-skill via a weekend based programme, study near to where students reside and not have to take significant periods of time off work.

While the University programmes have some elements of distance learning, other modules and the practical components of the musculoskeletal programmes have required face to face contact. Currently the AUT programme, in which the Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy paper sits, requires students to attend five one week blocks on campus. This is accessible for students who live near Auckland but more challenging for those living further afield. Feedback from students on the MCEP courses has indicated that if the weekend practical component of the course could link to a tertiary qualification then a number of students would choose this option.

Who is eligible?

Entry requirement to AUT

Any NZ registered Physiotherapist who has a B average or better in their undergraduate degree (AUT University regulations) and has a current Annual Practising Certificate (APC).

Entry requirements from the NZMPA MCEP course

Any student who has enrolled in the MCEP courses and are in the process of completing or have **completed** all the 8 weekends within the required 2-3 year time frame.

What is the cost?

You will still need to pay or have paid for the NZMPA weekends (approx \$300 per weekend).

You will also need to enrol in the Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy paper 588675. Fees for 2009 were \$860 per 20 point paper. Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy is a 40 point paper; therefore the fees are \$1720. There is also an activity fee of \$1,000 to cover additional costs associated with the paper. Total cost = \$2720

Why do I need to pay for both?

The payment to NZMPA covers the costs of providing the weekend courses. This still needs to be funded, otherwise there would not be a mechanism for you to get access to the practical component of the Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy paper at AUT. These courses will still be provided for students who are not going on to a pathway to tertiary study.

The ability to complete the practical components of the AUT paper via the NZMPA weekends means that you do not need to take extensive periods of time off work to undertake the block weeks at AUT. This is a saving to both you and your employer. Five weeks off work plus the clinical costs would equate to more than the \$2,720 required to complete the Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy paper 588675.

The AUT fees cover the costs to AUT in providing:

- Salaries for the academic staff that
 - co-ordinate and teach the paper
 - assist you with assignment preparation
 - mark your assignments and run the final exam (to IFOMT standards)
 - provide clinical supervision on campus
 - provide tutorials and support
- Costs associated with
 - Library access
 - Off site clinical supervision
 - Online access to learning materials including guest lectures
 - Course workbooks and reference articles

What is the clinical component?

To meet the IFOMT international standards 160 hours of supervised clinical practice are required.

This is supervised by a physiotherapist with a post graduate qualification in Musculoskeletal or Manipulative Physiotherapy that has been approved by the paper leaders

Can I do this in the clinic where I work?

Yes, if the relevant post grad qualified staff who work in the clinic are prepared to undertake the supervision in line with the AUT guidelines and requirements. You would be expected to do some of your clinical outside of your own clinic. This can be negotiated on a case by case basis with the paper leaders.

Can I do this in other clinics?

Yes, AUT can organise this. A clinical manual is provided by AUT that outlines the clinical supervision process and requirements.

Can I start other papers at AUT?

Yes, two of the core papers in the PGDipHSc Musculoskeletal program are available online i.e Quantitative Research and one of the two professional practice papers (See Diagram A). You can start these now even if you have not completed the MCEP course weekends. Two of the other papers in the program are on campus i.e., Biomechanics and Pain: Mechanisms and Management. These are run in 1-2 one week blocks.

What is the overall time frame to complete these qualifications?

The PGDipHSc has a three year time limit for part time students. The Masters in Health Practice (MHPrac) needs to be completed within 4 years part time and the Masters in Health Science has a five year time limit.

Who should I contact for more information about study at AUT?

Steve White, Postgraduate Head
School of Rehabilitation and Occupation Studies
AUT
Ph 09 921 9999 ext 7073
Email: steve.white@aut.ac.nz

Diagram A: Pathways

