

RECRUITMENT AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

1. Recruitment

1.1 Application

- 1.1.1 Information about the Open Awards Level 4 Diploma in Equine Sports Massage may be found at either:
www.equinemassageassociation.co.uk/training; or
www.helentompkins.co.uk/new/trainingcourses
- 1.1.2 Students seeking enrolment are typically involved already in the equestrian sphere and are aware of the Equine Sports Massage Association. ATSL is the source of the professional equine massage qualification leading to qualification for ESMA membership.
- 1.1.3 The L4 Dip ESM is also accredited by the Animal Health Professions Register (AHPR) as meeting Day One Competency standards, thus graduates are entitled to direct entry on to the register under the Soft Tissue and Massage Subgroup
- 1.1.3 Applications for enrolment on the course may be made to Animal Therapy Solutions Limited (ATSL) via Helen Tompkins
- 1.1.4 Upon request, ATSL will provide an information pack by post or email which details the following:
Course summary, entry requirements, syllabus outline, fee structure, assessment strategy, background reading and Application Form.

1.2 Suitability

- 1.2.1 Students seeking enrolment are required to meet specific pre-requisite conditions. These conditions are outlined explicitly in the Information Pack and are set by ATSL to mirror the prerequisite qualifications and standards required for membership of ESMA and AHPR
- 1.2.2 Persons not meeting the criteria for application whose prior academic or work experience is considered within the discretion of ATSL to be of equivalent merit to the prerequisite standards MAY be invited to apply on completion of specific alternative tasks; typically case study reports or an essay of specified length to demonstrate understanding of a given relevant subject.

1.3 Application Process and payment of fees

- 1.3.1 Application forms should be returned with supporting documentation/proof of qualifications to ATSL. Receipt will be acknowledged as soon as possible.
- 1.3.2 ATSL will assess the quality of the application received and confirm in writing (electronically if necessary) whether a place has been awarded to the student or whether further submission is required (para 1.2.2 refers)
- 1.3.3 Upon receiving confirmation of a place a non refundable deposit is required to secure the place as detailed in the Information Pack.
- 1.3.4 Except by *specific* other arrangement which option shall be entirely at the discretion of ATSL, remaining course fees are payable in full to ATSL as cleared funds by 1st June in the year in which the student is due to start
- 1.3.5 All fees must be paid in advance of the first teaching weekend
- 1.3.6. In the event that the student has paid all fees, but wishes to withdraw from the course and the place cannot be re-filled before course commencement, the full fee will be non-refundable where notification was given after 15th August. The student will be offered the opportunity to defer attendance for a year but no fees will be repaid.
- 1.3.7 In the event that students drop out from the course after commencement, no refund of fees will be given. Students wishing to claim extenuating circumstances should contact Helen Tompkins and *may* (subject to discretion) be entitled to defer study for one year.

1.4 Quality management and consultation with ESMA/AHPR

- 1.4.1 ATSL will retain dialogue with ESMA/AHPR as to the standard of applicants and also the standard of students successfully passing the course so that any necessary adjustments can be made to prerequisite standards to retain an excellent level of day-one practitioner competence.
- 1.4.2 ATSL will obtain confirmation from ESMA that any student admitted to the course under the provisions in 1.2.2 above is likely to satisfy ESMA's membership requirements on satisfactory completion of any set additional tasks to ensure that ESMA membership will remain available on conclusion of the course if required.
- 1.4.3 Students enrolled upon the course will be required to join ESMA as student members to ensure the ESMA regulatory code of practice operates in addition to the ATSL Code of Ethics and Conduct during training.
- 1.4.4 AHPR undertake external quality audits of all accredited courses and ATSL will submit External Quality Assurance audits and reports to AHPR on request
- 1.4.5 AHPR accreditation of the L4 Dip ESM allows direct entry for graduates of the course

2. Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

- 2.1 Students successfully completing the Level 4 course will be entitled to apply for direct entry to the Animal Health Professions Register and for membership of the Equine Sports Massage Association
- 2.2 Having regard to paragraph 11.1 above, the Equine Sports Massage Association has various other prerequisite requirements for membership. These requirements are embedded within the entry requirements for the career course:
- Age 21 at time of application
 - Minimum 3 years experience working in a professional equine yard supported by references
 - 5 GCSEs grade A-C including English (or equivalent qualification standards)
 - Human Massage, Anatomy and Physiology qualification (preferably Level 3)
- 2.3 ATSL recognises that some students wishing to apply for inclusion on the Equine Massage Career Course may not exactly meet the pre-requisite criteria but may be able to demonstrate very similar or equal experience. Experience which may be acceptable would be:
- 2.3.1 Veterinary Physiotherapy or other Higher Education Equine Therapy based degree training
- 2.3.2 Lifelong involvement in own equine related business or significant personal equine involvement. For the avoidance of doubt, simply owning a horse will not suffice.
- 2.4 ESMA require a qualification in Human Massage including Anatomy and Physiology preferably at Level 3. ATSL work with students to ensure a suitable qualification has been attained prior to the commencement of the course.
- 2.5 The course involves significant written and theoretical content and successful graduates will be expected to communicate easily, successfully and clearly with clients, vets, insurance companies etc. both verbally and in writing. With the exception of students needing Learning Support for an identified need, failure to meet the required academic qualifications will preclude admission.

2.6 Where a student does not meet the criteria of a massage qualification at Level 3 (but does hold a human massage certificate) **AND/OR** cannot demonstrate 3 years experience working in an equine yard, students may instead submit the following which will be considered by ATSL at their discretion and referred to ESMA if necessary:

2.6.2 Re: Massage qualification: Level 2 qualification in Human Massage which has been pre-approved by ATSL

2.6.3 Re: Equine experience: Submission of two 2000-word (max) case studies demonstrating the student's investigation of two separate professional equine yards (eg competition, breeding, starting/training) which should clearly demonstrate that the student has spent time at each yard, and understands their operation and the reality of the equine industry and can competently discuss the same.