MASSAGE DRAPING PROTOCOL

This protocol sets out Evolve College's requirements for draping. It applies to all Evolve College massage students at all times during their studies, including in classes, all clinics, practice hours and community events.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Evolve College is committed to setting a very high standard for its massage students and for the massage industry as a whole. Evolve College's education supports students to develop a strong professional footing on which to begin practice. A core part of the professionalism and ethics required of massage therapists is the practice of draping. Draping has been central to the massage training delivered by Evolve College's founding owners and directors for around 20 years. Professionalism and draping are core components of what a massage student must learn in order to represent the industry to the standard required.

Privacy

Privacy is a key aspect of draping and of massage therapy. In Evolve College's view, privacy is closely tied to decency and respect, which are fundamental rights of every client visiting a massage practice. Evolve College teaches the absolute importance of privacy, decency and respect as hallmarks of massage practice that must never be compromised. Draping is also important for providing modesty and warmth during treatment.

Professionalism

Evolve College's draping protocol addresses client safety, practitioner professionalism and the avoidance at all times of inappropriate conduct. Evolve College sets and practises an absolute prohibition on any sexual conduct or even overtones. Trainers are trained to identify any sexual or inappropriate conduct and carefully watch students in practice sessions and clinics to ensure this standard is maintained at all times. Evolve College takes a very strict approach to sexual or inappropriate conduct, which it considers a breach of the client's fundamental rights and which may lead to immediate dismissal of a student. Details are given in the *Zero Tolerance Policy on Inappropriate Conduct*.

Strict professional boundaries

Appropriate draping sets a professional boundary between therapist and client. All areas of the body are draped except the specific part of the body receiving treatment. Areas under the draping material are never massaged, touched or accessed by the therapist in any way, and the therapist's hand or any other part of the therapist's body must never lean on or touch any draped area.

The breast/chest region and the groin, genital and perineum area must be draped at all times, and must never be touched or accessed in any way by the therapist, whether under or on top of draping.

The professional boundary set by draping is to be fully and strictly followed at all times, in accordance with the draping protocol as taught in your Evolve College massage course (including the Introductory Massage Course). No exceptions are permitted. See the *Zero Tolerance Policy on Inappropriate Conduct*.

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MINIMUM CLOTHING OF THE CLIENT

Massage therapists must:

- ensure that all clients wear underpants during the massage treatment. Clients who wear a bra are advised to keep it on; prior consent must be sought if the bra is to be undone, and it may only be undone with the client lying prone;
- never, under any circumstances, adjust or move underpants. Adjustment of the waistline may only be done by the client, in accordance with the protocol as taught by Evolve College; and
- follow these rules at all times when tucking draping material into the client's underpants:
  - tuck draping material into the side of the body at the hips using the flip tuck technique to drape along the back, with the client lying prone, as taught by Evolve College;
  - never tuck draping material into the front or front sides of underpants; and
  - never approach or touch the groin area under any circumstances.

CLIENT PREFERENCE

Client preference is to be respected at all times without departing from Evolve College's minimum draping standard, which must be followed whether or not the client asks to be draped, as part of the professionalism of the therapist.

CONSENT

- The therapist must explain the draping procedure and obtain the client's informed consent before the treatment begins, and before any postural observation or technique that requires the client's active participation.
- The client may withdraw consent at any time, for any part of the treatment. If they do, the therapist must stop that part of the treatment immediately.
- Consent must be recorded on the client record, as taught by Evolve College.

CLIENT DRESSING AND UNDRESSING

The therapist must:

- allow the client to dress and undress in private;
- not re-enter the room without knocking and confirming that the client is ready. If a client needs help with dressing or undressing, their privacy and modesty must be maintained at all times and help given with the highest degree of professionalism;
- allow the client to remain fully or partially clothed during treatment if they ask to and, if so, adapt the treatment plan accordingly;
- give the client enough draping material to cover their body before leaving the room for them to undress;
- give clear verbal instructions on how the client should position themselves on the table and how to arrange the draping and supports; and
- ensure the client stays covered if they need help on and off the massage table.

DRAPING PRACTICE

The therapist must:

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- explain draping procedures before the session begins, give the client clear verbal instructions about draping, and obtain consent before starting;
- use draping at all times, even if the client asks for it to be removed, using lightweight draping if the client is too warm;
- ensure the client is fully and properly draped at all times according to the draping techniques taught by Evolve College, using adequate and clean table covering and draping materials for each client;
- keep draping close to the client's body when changing their position on the table;
- ensure draping is comfortable for the client as well as secure and distinct;
- adjust the draping efficiently and respectfully, with prior consent, if the client shows discomfort verbally, by adjusting the draping themselves, or through other body language;
- have a therapeutic rationale for any change of draping and follow draping as taught by Evolve College at all times;
- ensure clients wear suitable clothing (for example, exercise shorts and top) or a gown (over underpants, and a bra if worn) during postural observations and during treatments that require frequent changes in position; and
- maintain the required standard of draping at all times, however often a client receives treatment and however familiar they are to the therapist, without exception.

REPORTING A CONCERN

If you are a client, student or staff member and have a concern about draping or the conduct of a student or therapist, tell the Trainer/Assessor or clinic supervisor straight away, or contact us at evolve@evolvecollege.com or on 1300 880 885. Concerns are handled under the *Zero Tolerance Policy on Inappropriate Conduct* and the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

BREACH

This protocol forms part of the Student Code of Conduct (in the Student Handbook). A breach may lead to dismissal, at Evolve College's discretion, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and the *Zero Tolerance Policy on Inappropriate Conduct*.

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Related documents: Zero Tolerance Policy on Inappropriate Conduct, Student Handbook (Student Code of Conduct), Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure, Infection Control Policy.
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