



European Shiatsu Federation

BASELINE CURRICULUM / SYLLABUS

One of the main objectives of the ESF is to promote the ongoing development of professional education and standards of practice.

In order to do this the ESF aims to establish a European Guideline for the study of Shiatsu to create a quality assurance level of practitioner/therapist for the benefit of both those practising the art of shiatsu, and also the public who wish to benefit from skilled practitioners.

It has to be remembered that one of the principles of shiatsu is to be holistic, which means every case should be supported in its individuality, and yet at the same time align itself as much as possible to working together for the good health of all – the common good.

Thus, this is not an attempt to impose the idea that there is only one way to do shiatsu, it is more to establish a core of knowledge, which can support and strengthen all the different styles of shiatsu available and give them a minimal recognisable 'common root'.

A second aim of the Baseline Curriculum is to create a focused structure to help support and promote the establishment and activities of new National Professional Shiatsu Associations throughout Europe.

In certain countries there are legal requirements that go beyond the general requirements of a Shiatsu curriculum and these may mean exceptions have to be made within that particular country. It is also noted that all shiatsu organisations are independent and answerable to their members and therefore will have to take any proposals and pass them in a way appropriate to the National Association.

Therefore, nothing can really be compulsory but hopefully all shiatsu organisations can be guided to accepting the European Baseline Curriculum/Syllabus, at least in principle, as a minimum requirement for developing and assessing a practitioner/ therapist suitable for a public register.

In addition, terminology may differ from country to country, however a trend towards standardisation of terms used will in the long run be helpful.

Again, sometimes definitions may come from outside organisations or government institutions, and they may have to be obeyed for legal reasons in a particular country.

Why try and re-invent the wheel when there have been some detailed curriculums/syllabuses already created. Adjustments for local circumstances around core elements would be much easier and less time consuming, leaving teachers to get on with sharing their knowledge.

For this reason a few suggested guidelines that might help in developing various details of a Curriculum / Syllabus have been included at the end. If an Association would like even greater detailed advice they can contact the ESF and it will do its best to help with curriculum/syllabus development.

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Hours Guideline for ESF Baseline Curriculum / Syllabus

450 contact hours with teachers over a minimum period of 3 years is regarded as the minimum period to cover all aspects to a reasonable level and then after graduation Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is recommended. Over and above these 450 'contact' hours there will be home-study hours, practice treatments, client write-ups and so on. There should be a minimum of 350 contact hours with recognised shiatsu teachers and a minimum of 3 different shiatsu teachers teaching at least 24 hours is recommended.

This is only a guideline for a breakdown of a syllabus/curriculum of 450 hours, which is considered a minimum. Schools and teachers are recommended to look beyond the minimum.

Some students with previous knowledge such as acupuncturists, who will have covered at least 150 hours of the syllabus may be allowed concessions, whilst others may need more time in a field they find challenging. However, acupuncturists would be advised to add Zen Theory to the other aspects of Oriental Medicine Theory they should already know.

MINIMUM CLASS HOURS	FIELD	TOPICS
20	Anatomy	Anatomical terms, bones, muscles with origins and insertions etc.
20	Physiology	Functions of body systems – skin, respiration, circulation, lymphatic, nervous, uro-genital, digestive, endocrine etc
20	Pathology	Diseases with signs and symptoms
140	Oriental Medicine Theory	Two out of three Oriental Medical approaches need to be studied in this time: Zen Shiatsu Theory – 8 Principles and Zang Fu etc – 5 Elements Theory (<i>Much theory is of course re-enforced during the practical sessions</i>)
230	Practical	4 treatment patterns - prone, supine, side and sitting, hands elbows knees etc., meridians and points, qualities of touch, sensitivity, ki connection, self-development posture etc.
20	Various	Client and clinic management, communication skills, examinations, etc.

Compulsory Study Criteria

I SHIATSU THEORY

- 1 Understanding of Qi/Ki
- 2 Oriental cosmology; concept of Yin – Yang and further relationships
- 3 Theory and effects of shiatsu
- 4 Theory of tsubos and touch
- 5 Two out of the following four aspects of Oriental Medicine (OM) Theory
 - a) Five Element Theory with classical meridian systems
 - b) 8 Principles and Zang Fu (Chinese organ system) with classical meridian systems
 - c) Zen Shiatsu
 - d) Namikoshi Shiatsu
- 6 Location of important tsubos and their principle energetic actions (*See Guideline list below*)
- 7 Point contra-indications under certain conditions
- 8 Manifestation of meridian energies; character and functioning of meridians in relation to the two aspects of OM theory studied
- 9 Holistic understanding of health; unity of body-mind spirit.
- 10 Principles of acupressure
- 11 Two case histories to show an understanding at depth of a particular approach of OM theory

II TREATMENT AND TECHNIQUES

- 1 Treatment positions: prone, supine, side, sitting
- 2 Shiatsu pressure, leaning with palm, thumb, fingers, elbows, knees
- 3 Other techniques eg holding, rotating, vibrating, rubbing
- 4 Movement from and awareness of Hara
- 5 Energy flow from Hara to hands
- 6 Working from Hara / working with the whole body
- 7 Alignment and release of spine and joints
- 8 Mother-child hand principle
- 9 Joint rotations
- 10 Meridian stretching and stretching of limbs
- 11 Working with meridian flow according to the two shiatsu theory models studied
- 12 Tonification and sedation techniques

III SELF-DEVELOPMENT, SELF-EXPLORATION

- 1 Exercises for enhancement of perception and harmonisation e.g. Do In, Qi Gong, Yoga, Pranayama
- 2 Meridian exercises
- 3 Ethical principles – code of professional conduct and ethics
- 4 Writing up treatment reports
- 5 Experience of shiatsu ie. treatments from professional practitioners
- 6 A mode of checking and registering development and changes

IV CLIENT OBSERVATION AND ENERGETIC EVALUATION

- 1 Principles of evaluation: Asking, Looking, Hearing & Smelling, Touching
- 2 Evaluation from meridians, hara and back zones etc used in the theory modes studied
- 3 Back Shu/Yu and Front Mu/Bo point
- 4 Evaluation during treatment e.g. through stretching, rotation or on meridians and points
- 5 Evaluation strategy
- 6 Clinical Practice (as near as possible to a real clinic situation in order to develop professional confidence)

V WESTERN MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

- 1 General Anatomy of bones, muscles and joints
- 2 Physiology: body systems from a Western viewpoint
- 3 Pathology: symptoms of illness and syndromes
- 4 Contraindications for shiatsu 'prohibited points'

VI OTHER ESSENTIAL ASPECTS

- 1 Empathy development
- 2 Self-reflection
- 3 Perception
- 4 Personality development in the terms of the shiatsu-meeting
- 5 Listening and communication skills
- 6 Possibilities, limits and contra-indications of shiatsu
- 7 Principles of touch in general e.g. first contact etc
- 8 Ethics fundamentals
- 9 Incident awareness and handling difficult situations

Recommended Additional Study Criteria

I SHIATSU THEORY

- 1 Additional case histories – at least one for each OM theory mode studied

II TREATMENT TECHNIQUES

- 1 Holistic and symptomatic shiatsu
- 2 Working with mental images e.g. imagining flow
- 3 Perceptual development e.g. tsubos: appropriate depth and length of time
- 4 Moxa
- 5 Acupressure
- 6 Basic dietetics
- 7 Ampuku

III SELF-DEVELOPMENT, SELF-EXPLORATION

- 1 Meditation
- 2 Body alignment, movement and awareness training
- 3 Training in small groups, tutorials or similar format
- 4 Treatments done under supervision or in class
- 5 Treatments done on teachers
- 6 Treating in presence of class members
- 7 Self development essay, including an analysis of one's own energetic patterns from an OM perspective
- 8 Counselling communication
- 9 Breathing practice / training
- 10 Case analysis in groups or alone

IV CLIENT EVALUATION AND DIAGNOSTICS

- 1 Facial diagnostics
- 2 Case histories analysis of data gathered according to modes studied
- 3 Tongue diagnostics
- 4 Typology
- 5 Pulse diagnostics
- 6 Clinic Practice should be at least 50 hours, including time for analysis and discussions

V WESTERN MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

- 1 Comparison of western and oriental physiology and psychology
- 2 Hygiene

First Aid

Optional Extra Study Areas

I SUPPLEMENTARY METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

- 1 Chakra work
- 2 Jin Shin Do
- 3 Tansu and Watsu
- 4 Shin-Tai
- 5 Fascia work
- 6 Postural integration – Rolfing
- 7 Deep Shiatsu (Tiefes Shiatsu)
- 8 Antique points according to 5 Elements
- 9 Dietetics according to Macrobiotics
- 10 Dietetics according to 5 Elements
- 11 Cranio Sacral Therapy
- 12 Counselling communication ‘management’
- 13 Reiki
- 14 Seiki

II OTHER ASPECTS TO CONSIDER

- 1 The legal situation regarding shiatsu in your own country
- 2 Differences according to legal situations in other countries
- 3 Insurance and complaints procedures
- 4 Continuing Professional Development
- 5 Assessment

ASSESSMENT FOR ESF BASELINE CURRICULUM

This is divided into 3 general areas; Compulsory, Recommended and Optional. The difference between Recommended and Optional is that the aim is for Recommended to become Compulsory in the future.

Compulsory Aspects of Assessments for ESF Baseline Curriculum

1. Written and/or Oral Theory Examination of Oriental Medicine (OM) – minimum of 3 hours over three years testing all aspects of OM covered on the syllabus. The examination should be a combination of multiple choice and short answer format – not just multiple choice, or an interview/viva. The pass mark to be at least 65%. Suitable evidence of previous Oriental Medicine studies may be acceptable at the discretion of the ESF member.
2. Written and/or Oral Theory Examination of Western Medicine, Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology – minimum 2½ hours over three years testing all aspects of WM covered on the syllabus with a minimum of ¾ an hour per section (Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology). The examination should be a combination of multiple choice and short answer format – not only multiple choice, or an interview/viva. The pass mark to be at least 65%. Suitable evidence of previous Western Medicine studies may be acceptable at the discretion of the ESF member.
3. Practical Examination – minimum 40 minutes on unknown person(s) in the presence of experienced assessors / teachers. (The 40 minutes may be divided into two periods of 20 minutes on two different people)
4. Criteria for practical examination to include assessment of : skill, fluency and continuity, techniques and knowledge of a minimum of 3 of the 4 patterns and also meridians,

professionalism, presentation, empathy, sensitivity, appropriateness of treatment, diagnostic ability, use of hara, grounding, centredness, breath and connection to Ki.

5. Practical points location of a random selection of 10 points found reasonably quickly (*verbal description of location optional*) with a pass mark of 7 out of 10.
6. Presentation of at least 100 professional treatment records from the year immediately prior to registration.
7. Presentation of two case histories – of between 1,200 and 1,800 words - showing the ability to present a client's information over a period of a minimum of 6 treatments, assess their individual pattern of disharmony in depth and also supply suitable recommendations for the client to improve his/her own health.
8. Present evidence of receiving a minimum total of 3 treatments from qualified practitioners (not all from the same practitioner).

Compulsory Criteria required in order to apply to be entered on a National Register of Practitioners

- Present evidence of suitable indemnity insurance, if legally possible in the country
- 450 hours of study
- letters of recommendation from two teachers
- An Interview
- Compliance with any statutory requirements additional to this programme

Recommended Aspects of Assessment for ESF Baseline Curriculum

1. Written Theory Examination of Western Medicine, Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology to be at least 3 hours;
2. Practical Examination – minimum 40 minutes on experienced assessors / teachers rather than somebody unknown to the candidate;
3. The assessor / teacher should be from a school not connected with the examinee's school;
4. The assessment should include a 20-minute viva interview to discuss case histories, graduate's shiatsu development and ethics;
5. An additional 100 professional treatment records. These should come in the year after graduation to show continued professional involvement with the advancement of shiatsu and not just be treatments from training records;

6. Additional case histories are highly recommended and one of them could be in the form of a self-development style essay that includes a self-analysis in OM energetic terms;
7. Self-development essay / diary where a student has studied the changes in him/herself over the period of the shiatsu course and can give an analysis of his/her own energetic patterns from an OM perspective;
8. Evidence of regular consistent movement /Ki development work in addition to the shiatsu studies where awareness of health is part of the programme rather than just keeping fit;
9. Present evidence of receiving a course of a minimum of 6 treatments from one qualified practitioner and further treatments from at least two other practitioners, to a total of 10 treatments;
10. A minimum of 500 contact hours of study.

Optional Aspects of Assessment

1. The percentage of attendance of a course depends on individual schools and over a period of 3 years there will almost always be some absenteeism but a minimum of 80% should be encouraged. However, the students would need to have done the minimum required (450 hours) for the local national society before being permitted to present him/herself for registration.
2. Movement or Ki awareness assessments (not to see who is the greatest athlete etc but to look at how energy is being used, how the practitioner uses and connects to his/her own body and so on).
3. Regular practical evaluation throughout training to include 10 treatments on teachers over the three years.

Some Guidelines that might help in developing various details of a Curriculum / Syllabus

The following is a list of major points to consider when studying either 8 Principles or 5 Elements and even Zen theory.

It is by no means a complete list, nor is every point compulsory.

However, the beginnings and ends of meridians and also perhaps where they change direction, the front Mu/Bo points, back Shu/Yu points, as well as points with strong actions need to be considered and also those contra-indicated in certain conditions eg. pregnancy.

In addition to location, the principle actions of some of the very important points should also be studied.

Those printed in **bold** and **underlined** may be regarded as perhaps more important but this is a subjective point of view and the list is a guide only.

Lu: 1, 5, 7, 9, 11

L.I.: 1, **4, 10**, 11, 15, 16, 20

St: 1, **3**, 9, 25, 30, **36**, 40, 44, 45

Sp: 1, **3, 6, 9, 10**, 15, 20, 21

He: 1, 3, **7, 9**

S.I.: 1, 3, 9, 10, 11, 19

Bl: 1, **2**, 10, 11, **13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28**, 36 (50), **40 (54)**, 43 (38), 52 (47), 57, **60**, 67

Kid: 1, **3, 6, 7**, 10, **27**

Per / HC: 1, 3, **6**, 7, **8**, 9

TH/TW: 1, 4, **5, 6**, 10, 14, 23

GB: **1**, 12, **14, 20, 21, 24, 25, 30, 34**, 40, 44

Liv: 1, **3**, 4, 5, 8, **13, 14**

CV: 1, **3, 4, 5, 6**, 8, **12, 14, 17**, 24

GV: 1, 2, **4, 14, 16, 20**, 28

Extra Point: **Yin Tang**

Anatomy Physiology and Pathology

Below are some areas to consider including in a syllabus/curriculum

ANATOMY SYLLABUS

- a) Skeletal system: names, types and functions of bones
- b) Joints: types, functions and structures
- c) Connective tissue e.g. ligaments, tendons, fascia, cartilage, bone.
- d) Muscular system: types, location, origins and insertions, qualities and functions
- e) Landmarks used in point location

PHYSIOLOGY SYLLABUS

- a) Brief description of cells - Homeostasis and adaptation to the environment.
- b) Cardiovascular system
- c) Lymphatic system
- d) Respiratory system
- e) Digestive system
- f) Urinary system
- g) Nervous system
- h) Endocrine system
- i) Reproductive system
- j) Sensory organs

PATHOLOGY SYLLABUS

For pathological conditions, a short definition of each should be known, with knowledge of the main organ and / or systems involved and the main symptoms that arise.

For example:

Hypothyroidism: is a subnormal activity of the thyroid gland. Adult onset symptoms are physical and mental slowing, undue sensitivity to cold, slowing of the pulse, weight gain and coarsening of the skin.

Ringworm: is a highly contagious fungal infection of the surface of the skin. The infection is ring-like and causes intense itching.

- a) Integumentary System
- b) Skeletal System
- c) Muscular System
- d) Blood disorders
- e) Cardiovascular System
- f) Respiratory System
- g) Gastrointestinal System
- h) Renal System
- i) Endocrine System
- j) Nervous System
- k) Ear and eye and nose
- l) Female Reproductive System
- m) Male Reproductive System
- n) Lymphatic and Immune System
- o) Miscellaneous

Also INDICATIONS and WARNINGS of serious problems that require urgent medical care.

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