

## Physical Therapy Clinical Education Glossary <sup>a</sup>

**Term** **Definition**

### Clinical Education Infrastructure

Clinical education	A formal supervised experiential learning, focused on development and application of patient/client-centered skills and professional behaviors. It is designed so that students gain substantial, relevant clinical experience and skills, engage in contemporary practice, and demonstrate competence before <u>beginning entry level practice</u> . <sup>18,22,23</sup>
Clinical education agreement	A formal and legally binding agreement that is negotiated between academic institutions and clinical education sites or individual providers of clinical education that specifies each party's roles, responsibilities, and liabilities relating to student clinical education. <sup>24</sup>
Clinical education curriculum	The portion of the physical therapist professional/physical therapist assistant education program that includes all part-time and full-time clinical education experiences as well as the supportive preparatory and administrative components. <sup>24</sup>
Clinical education environment	The physical space(s) and/or the structures, policies, procedures, and culture within the clinical education site.
Clinical education experience	Experiences that allow students to apply and attain professional/technical knowledge, skills, and behaviors within a variety of environments. Experiences include those of short and long duration (eg, part-time, full-time), provide a variety of learning opportunities, and include physical therapy services for patients/clients across the lifespan and practice settings. Although the emphasis is on the development of patient/client physical therapy skills, experiences also include intraprofessional/interprofessional experiences and non-patient/client service delivery, such as research, teaching, supervision, and administration. Clinical education experiences are a part of the professional/technical curriculum and include formal student assessment. <sup>17,18,21,25</sup>
First full-time clinical education experience	The first clinical education experience designated to achieve the minimum number of weeks set forth by CAPTE in which a student engages for a minimum of 35 hours per week.
Full-time clinical education experience	A clinical education experience in which a student is engaged for a minimum of 35 hours per week. Full-time clinical education experiences designated to achieve the minimum number of weeks (for PT)/hours (for PTA) set forth by CAPTE are directed by a physical therapist and where applicable by a physical therapist assistant clinical instructor. <sup>17,21,25</sup> An integrated clinical education experience may be a full-time clinical education experience.
Integrated clinical education (ICE)	ICE is a curriculum design model whereby clinical education experiences are purposefully organized within a curriculum. In physical therapist professional/physical therapist assistant education, these experiences are obtained through the exploration of authentic physical therapist/physical therapist assistant roles, responsibilities, and values that occur prior to the terminal full-time clinical education experiences. Integrated experiences are coordinated by the academic program and are driven by learning objectives that are aligned with didactic content delivery across the curricular continuum. These experiences allow students to attain professional/technical behaviors, knowledge, and/or skills within a variety of environments. The supervised experiences also allow for exposure and acquisition across all domains of learning and include student performance assessment. For integrated clinical education experiences to qualify toward the minimum time frame set forth by CAPTE they must be full time and supervised by a physical therapist and where applicable by a physical therapist assistant within a physical therapy workplace environment or practice setting.
Intermediate full-time clinical education experience	A clinical education experience designated to achieve the minimum time frame set forth by CAPTE in which a student engages for a minimum of 35 hours per week and returns to the academic program for further completion of the didactic curriculum.
International clinical education experience	A student education opportunity outside of the country in which the physical therapist professional/physical therapist assistant education program is situated, for which the student obtains clinical education credit. <sup>31</sup> [Note: The abbreviation ICE should not be used to describe an international clinical education experience.]

Part-time clinical education experience	A clinical education experience in which a student engages in clinical education for less than 35 hours per week. Part-time experiences vary in length. A part-time clinical education experience may be considered an integrated clinical education experience depending on the design of the experience and the learning objectives.
Terminal full-time clinical education experience	A single, or set of, full-time clinical education experience(s) designated to achieve the minimum time frame set forth by CAPTE that occurs after the student has completed the didactic curriculum of a physical therapist professional /physical therapist assistant education program. Students may return to the academic program for didactic instruction that does not require additional clinical education experiences. The expected outcome of the final, or terminal, experience is entry-level performance.
Collaborative clinical education model	A clinical education experience in which 2 (or more) physical therapist/physical therapist assistant students are assigned to 1 (or more) preceptor/clinical instructor(s). The students work cooperatively under the preceptor/clinical instructor(s). Examples include 2:1, 2:2, or 3:1 student to preceptor/clinical instructor ratio. Students may be from the same or different programs and may be at the same or different levels of training. <sup>26-29</sup>
Didactic curriculum	The component of the physical therapist professional /physical therapist assistant education program that is comprised of the content, instruction, learning experiences, and assessment directed by the academic faculty. <sup>18,21</sup>
Internship	A terminal full-time clinical education experience that provides recompense to participants in accordance with federal labor laws under the Fair Labor Standards Act. <sup>20</sup>
Learning experience	Any experience that allows or facilitates a change in attitude or behavior. A planned learning experience includes a learner, an objective for the learner, a situation devised to produce a response that contributes to the objective, a response by the student, and reinforcement to encourage the desired response. <sup>18</sup>
Physical therapist / professional physical therapist assistant education program	Education comprised of didactic and clinical education designed to assure that students acquire the professional/technical knowledge, skills, and behaviors required for entry-level physical therapist/physical therapist assistant practice. <sup>18,32</sup>
Physical therapist postprofessional education program	Degree- and nondegree-based professional development for the physical therapist to enhance professional knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond entry level. Examples include, but are not limited to, continuing education courses, postprofessional doctoral education programs, certificate programs, residencies, and fellowships. <sup>33 34</sup> [Note: Examples of physical therapist assistant post entry level opportunities include, but are not limited to, continuing education courses, bachelor education programs, certificate programs, and advanced proficiency pathways.]
Fellowship	A postprofessional planned learning experience comprised of a curriculum encompassing the essential knowledge, skills, and responsibilities of an advanced physical therapist within a defined area of subspecialty practice. A fellowship candidate has either completed a residency program in a related specialty area or is an American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS) board-certified specialist in a related area of specialty. See definition for Defined Area of Practice and Residency and Fellowship Programs. Adopted: June 5, 2018; Revised: February 5, 2019 <a href="http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For_Programs/ABPTRFEProcessesAndProcedures.pdf">http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For_Programs/ABPTRFEProcessesAndProcedures.pdf</a> [Note: This definition will be updated to remain consistent with future revisions to the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education (ABPTRFE) Accreditation Handbook.]
Residency	A postprofessional planned learning experience comprised of a curriculum encompassing the essential knowledge, skills, and responsibilities of an advanced physical therapist within a defined area of practice. When board certification exists through the American Board of Physical Therapist Specialties for that specialty, the residency program prepares the physical therapist with the requisite knowledge and skill set needed to pass the certification examination following graduation. See definition for Defined Area of Practice and Residency and Fellowship Programs. Adopted: June 5, 2018; Revised: February 5, 2019 <a href="http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For_Programs/ABPTRFEProcessesAndProcedures.pdf">http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For_Programs/ABPTRFEProcessesAndProcedures.pdf</a> [Note: This definition will be updated to remain consistent with future revisions to the ABPTRFE Accreditation Handbook.]

## Clinical Education Stakeholders

Academic faculty	Educators and scholars within the academic institution dedicated to preparing students with the skills and aptitudes needed to practice physical therapy.
Academic institution	University or college through which an academic degree is granted. <sup>24</sup>
Clinical education consortia	National and regional groups that include academic and clinical education faculty for the purpose of sharing resources, ideas, and efforts. <sup>27</sup>
Clinical education faculty	The individuals engaged in providing the clinical education components of the curriculum, generally referred to as either site coordinators of clinical education (SCCEs), preceptors, or clinical Instructors. Although the academic institution does not usually employ these individuals, they do agree to certain standards of behavior through contractual arrangements for their services. <sup>25</sup>
Clinical education site	A health service delivery agency or other setting in which clinical education experiences are provided for physical therapist/physical therapist assistant students. The clinical education site may be, but is not limited to, a hospital, agency, clinic, office, school, or home that is affiliated with the education program(s) through a contractual agreement. <sup>18,24</sup>
Clinical instructor (CI)	The physical therapist/physical therapist assistant responsible for the physical therapist/physical therapist assistant student and for directly instructing, guiding, supervising, and formally assessing the student during the clinical education experience. When engaged in full-time clinical education designated to meet the minimum time frame set forth by CAPTE, the clinical instructor must be a licensed physical therapist or, where applicable by a physical therapist assistant with a minimum of one year of full-time (or equivalent) post-licensure clinical experience. <sup>24</sup>
Director of clinical education (DCE)	Academic faculty member who is responsible for planning, directing, and evaluating the clinical education program for the academic institution, including facilitating clinical site and clinical faculty development. <sup>32,34</sup> [Note: the title Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) may still be utilized by some physical therapy education programs. The title Director of Clinical Education (DCE) is the preferred title for academic institutions to utilize when able.]
Physical therapist/physical therapist assistant student	Student enrolled in a CAPTE-accredited or CAPTE-approved developing physical therapist professional /physical therapist assistant education program. Students should not be referred to as “physical therapy/physical therapy assistant students.”
Preceptor	An individual who provides short-term specialized instruction, guidance, and supervision for the physical therapist/physical therapist assistant student during a clinical education experience. This individual may or may not be a physical therapist/physical therapist assistant as permitted by law.
Site coordinator of clinical education (SCCE)	A professional who administers, manages, and coordinates clinical assignments and learning activities for students during their clinical education experience. In addition, this person determines the readiness of people to serve as preceptors and clinical instructors for students, supervises preceptors and clinical instructors in the delivery of clinical education experiences, communicates with the academic program regarding student performance, and provides essential information to academic programs. <sup>24,35</sup>

## Clinical Education Assessment

Clinical performance assessment	Formal and informal processes designed to appraise physical therapist /physical therapist assistant student performance during clinical education experiences. Assessment may be formative or summative in nature and performed for the purposes of providing feedback, improving learning, revising learning experiences, and determining successful attainment of student performance expectations during clinical education experiences. <sup>18,36,37</sup>
Clinical performance evaluation tool	A valid, reliable, and multidimensional clinical performance assessment tool utilized to determine if, and how well, a student meets established objectives during clinical education experiences. <sup>24,38–40</sup>
Entry-level physical therapist/physical therapist assistant	Performance that demonstrates knowledge, skills, and behaviors consistent with effective, efficient, and safe patient/client management to achieve optimal outcomes. <sup>38</sup>

clinical performance	
Supervision	Guidance and direction provided to a physical therapist/physical therapist assistant student by the preceptor or clinical instructor. This varies based on the complexity of the patient/client or environment, jurisdiction and payer rules and regulations, and abilities of the physical therapist/physical therapist assistant student. <sup>27</sup>

a This glossary of terms was developed for Physical Therapist Assistant education programs as a parallel but separate document derived from the Physical Therapist Clinical Education Glossary researched, developed and disseminated by the American Council for Academic Physical Therapy (ACAPT). Erickson M, Birkmeier M, Booth M, et al. Recommendations from the Common Terminology Panel of the American Council of Academic Physical Therapy. *Phys Ther.* 2018;98:754–762.

The PTA Educator's Special Interest Group and the Clinical Education Terminology Task Force would like to acknowledge the time, effort and resources allocated by the Academic Council of Physical Therapy Education to create, validate, and publish the Physical Therapist Clinical Education Glossary. As physical therapist assistant educators, we are sincerely grateful for this work and the opportunity to collaborate with the ACAPT Common Terminology Panel on creating terminology for physical therapist assistant clinical education.

ACAPT Recommendations on Common Terminology  
September 2018 Volume 98 Number 9 Physical Therapy \_ 761  
References

- 1 Worthingham C. The clinical environment for basic physical therapy education 1965–1966. Part I: Facilities. *1968;48:1195–1215.*
- 2 Worthingham C. The clinical environment for basic physical therapy education 1965–1966. Part II: Staff. *1968;48:1353–1382.*
- 3 Barr JS, Gwyer J, Talmor Z. Evaluation of clinical education centers in physical therapy. *Phys Ther.* 1982;62:850–861.
- 4 Domholdt E, Siefert J, Graham C, Ritzline P. Journal of physical therapy education: birth to 16 years. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2003;17:70–79.
- 5 American Physical Therapy Association. Information for Educators. <https://www.apta.org/Educators/>. Accessed April 11, 2018.
- 6 Jette DU, Nelson L, Palaima M, Weterbee E. How do we improve quality in clinical education? Examination of structures, processes, and outcomes. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2014;28:6–12.
- 7 Hakim EW, Moffat M, Becker E, et al. Application of educational theory and evidence in support of an integrated model of clinical education. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2014;28:13–21.
- 8 Rapport MJ, Kelly MK, Hankin TR, Rodriguez JW, Tomlinson SS. Shared vision for clinical education: the yearlong internship. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2014;28:22–29.
- 9 Applebaum D, Portney LG, Kolosky L, et al. Building physical therapist education networks. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2014;28:30–38.
- 10 McCullum CA, Mosher PD, Howman J, Engelhard C, Euype S, Cook CE. Development of regional core networks for the administration of physical therapist clinical education. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2014;28:39–47.
- 11 Recker-Hughes C, Wetherbee E, Buccieri KM, Timmerberg JF, Stolfi AM. Essential characteristics of quality clinical education experiences: standards to facilitate student learning. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2014;28:48–55.

- 12** Deusinger SS, Crowner BE, Burlis TL, Stith JS. Meeting contemporary expectations for physical therapists: imperatives, challenges, and proposed solutions for professional education. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2014;28:56–61.
- 13** American Council of Academic Physical Therapy Clinical Education Summit Report and Recommendations. <http://www.acapt.org/images/publicdocs/Post%20Summit%20Report%20Sept%202015.pdf>. Accessed January 4, 2018.
- 14** American Physical Therapy Association. *A Normative Model of Physical Therapist Professional Education*. Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association; 2004.
- 15** American Physical Therapy Association. *Clinical Education: An Anthology*. Vol 1. Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association; 1992.
- 16** American Physical Therapy Association. *Clinical Education: An Anthology*. Vol 2. Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association; 1996.
- 17** American Council of Academic Physical Therapy. AC-2-13: Terminology for clinical education. ACAPT website. <http://acapt.org/documents/motions>. Accessed April 11, 2018. Rescinded.
- 18** Moore ML, Perry JF. Clinical education in physical therapy: present status/future needs. *Final Report of the Project on Clinical Education in Physical Therapy*. Washington, DC: Section for Education American Physical Therapy Association; 1976;NO1-AH.
- 19** Gwyer J, Odom C, Gandy J. History of clinical education in the United states. *Phys Ther Educ.* 2003;17:34–43.
- 20** U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division. Fact Sheet #71: Internship programs under the Fair Labor Standards Act. <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf>. Accessed April 11, 2018.
- 21** Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. Evaluative criteria for accreditation of education programs for the preparation of physical therapists. CAPTE website. [http://www.capteonline.org/uploadedFiles/CAPTEorg/About\\_CAPTE/Resources/Accreditation\\_Handbook/EvaluativeCriteria\\_PT.pdf](http://www.capteonline.org/uploadedFiles/CAPTEorg/About_CAPTE/Resources/Accreditation_Handbook/EvaluativeCriteria_PT.pdf). Updated August 7, 2014. Accessed April 11, 2018.
- 22** Delany C, Bragge P. A study of physiotherapy students' and clinical educators' perceptions of learning and teaching. *Med Teach.* 2009;31:402–411.
- 23** O'Brien B, Teherani A. Using workplace learning to improve patient care. *Acad Med.* 2011;86:e12.
- 24** American Physical Therapy Association. *The Physical Therapy Clinical Instructor Education and Credentialing Program Manual*. Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association; 2009.
- 25** Pivko SE, Abbruzzese LD, Duttarov P, Hansen RL, Ryans K. Effect of physical therapy students' clinical experiences on clinician productivity. *J Allied Health.* 2016;45:33–40.
- 26** Giberson TR, Black B, Pinkerton E. The impact of student-clinical instructor fit and student- organization fit on physical therapist clinical education experience outcomes. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2008;22:59–64.
- 27** Rindfleisch AB, Dunfee HJ, Cieslak KR, et al. Collaborative model of clinical education in physical and occupational therapy at the Mayo Clinic. *J Allied Health.* 2009;38:132–142.
- 28** Declute J, Ladyshevsky R. Enhancing clinical competence using a collaborative clinical education model. *Phys Ther* 1993;73:683–689.
- 29** Ladyshevsky RK. Peer assisted learning in clinical education: a review of terms and learning principles. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2000;14:15–22.
- 30** American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education (ABPTRFE). Accreditation Handbook 2016 Edition. ABPTRFE website.

[http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For\\_Programs/Apply/ABPTRFE\\_CredentialingHandbook.pdf](http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For_Programs/Apply/ABPTRFE_CredentialingHandbook.pdf) Updated August 9, 2017. Accessed April 11, 2018.

**31** Pechak CM. Survey of international clinical education in physical therapist education. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2012;26:69–77.

**32** American Physical Therapy Association. *Physical Therapist Clinical Performance Instruments: Version 2006.* Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association; 2006.

**33** American Physical Therapy Association. Education for physical therapists: terminology used to describe [HOD P05-07-11-04]. [https://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/About\\_Us/Policies/HOD/Terminology/Education.pdf](https://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/About_Us/Policies/HOD/Terminology/Education.pdf) Updated December 14, 2009. Accessed April 11, 2018.

**34** Halcarz PA, Marzouk DK, Avila E, Bowser MS, Hurm, L. Preparation of entry level students for future roles as clinical instructors. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 1991;5:78–80.

**35** Buccierei KM, Brown R, Malta S. Evaluating the performance of the academic coordinator/director of clinical education: tools to solicit input from program directors, academic faculty, and students. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2011;25:26–35.

**36** Perry JF. A model for designing clinical education. *Phys Ther.* 1981;61:1427–1432.

**37** Philips BU, Mcphail S, Roemer S. Role and functions of the academic coordinator of clinical education in physical therapy education: a survey. *Phys Ther.* 1986;66:981–985.

**38** Kern BP, Mickelson JM. The development and use of an evaluation instrument for clinical education. *Phys Ther.* 1971;51:540–546.

**39** Texas Consortium for Physical Therapy Education and Research Foundation. *Physical Therapist Manual for the Assessment of Clinical Skills.* Austin, Texas; 2004.

**40** Beckel C, Austin T, Kettenbach G, Sargeant D. Computer and internet access for physical therapist clinical education. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2008;22:19–23.