



Sutherland-Chan School of Massage Therapy

15 Gervais Drive, Suite 308 North York ON M3C 1Y8

416-924-1107 • sutherland-chan.com

Non-Academic Standards and Policies

Updated June 2026

Responsibility: DE

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Sutherland-Chan is fully accredited by the CMTCA

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Purpose

Sutherland-Chan's Non-Academic Standards & Policies exists as a single reference point for several stand-alone policies and as a comprehensive resource for students, instructors, and administrative staff when questions arise about behaviour in classrooms, clinics, and the school community. These policies and standards are important because of the values in massage therapy and the conduct expected of health care professionals.

The intention of this document is also to convey an underlying philosophy with respect to the high standards we maintain and the educational experience we aim to deliver. It supports adult learners who value autonomy, relevance, and application of knowledge, and emphasizes problem-solving, collaboration, and respect for individual needs and motivations.

This document is updated as needed to ensure compliance with Ministry requirements and is reviewed annually (at minimum) to ensure the content remains consistent with the needs of our staff and students and the requirements of the program as a whole.

Every instructor and student receives a copy of this document.

Updates of this document are the responsibility of the Director of Education (DE) and Education Team.

Administrative Staff

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Education Team: Peter Becker, Heather Wright, Shannon Marshall

Relevant and Related Documents

These *Non-Academic Standards & Policies* exist in partnership with several Sutherland-Chan policies, procedures, and documents including (but not limited to) our:

- *Vision Statement*
- *Mission Statement*
- *Complaints Policy*
- *Academic Standards & Policies*
- *Withdrawal & Expulsion Policy*
- *Student Dress Code & No Scent Policy*
- *Privacy Policy*
- *Social Media Policy*

Together, these documents support and represent Sutherland-Chan's commitment to our Core Values:

Integrity in relationships, the way we communicate, and our work ethic. Integrity means being accountable, honest, and transparent.

Respect for the time, beliefs, and boundaries of others and of ourselves, for each person's role at the school, and for our place in the school community.

Leadership means having a clear vision of the school and how we can contribute positively to it. We are always looking and planning ahead while at the same time, learning from our history.

Innovation means encouraging and embracing new ideas and making changes that will make the school and its environment better.

Community is a group of people working together towards common goals.



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Code of Ethics

Introduction

Massage Therapy is a regulated profession in the province of Ontario. Sutherland-Chan School of Massage Therapy trains individuals in the art and the science of Massage Therapy in preparation for joining the profession. Upon graduating from our program, students/candidates must then pass the provincial examinations to obtain the protected title “RMT/MT”. This title grants recognition by the provincial regulator of the profession, the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (CMTO).

The School’s Code of Ethics is grounded in the following three Principles:

Principle One

To implement the study of massage therapy respecting all members of the school community, assisting in the development of competence in the application of those learned skills, and always operating within a framework of honesty and integrity.

- I communicate willingly and honestly
- I act within the limits of my current education level, the massage therapy scope of practice, or other professional codes as applicable to me
- I am reliable in doing what I say I will do
- I respect the worth, individuality, and autonomy of my patients and colleagues
- I recognize that people deserve respect in the performance of their duties and responsibilities
- I appreciate the cultural diversity and different beliefs of my patients and colleagues
- I am aware of and respect the boundaries that apply in my interactions with patients, colleagues, and members of the school community
- I value competence and understand that it is essential for good health care delivery
- I am diligent in fulfilling my educational and professional obligations
- I collaborate with others in the best interests of learning and patient care
- I seek advice and mentoring when I am unsure
- I behave professionally independent of my personal beliefs

Principle 2

To commit to a discipline of self-reflection, evidence-informed caring, and a community-minded approach to all students, staff, faculty, and patients.

- I consciously reflect on my values and how they apply in situations that (may) arise
- I am accountable for my learning, my work, and my own behaviour
- I take responsibility for self-regulation and for seeking assistance as needed in situations that are difficult or challenging
- I seek out current information and research and use such resources to inform my educational and clinical work
- I provide sensitive and compassionate patient-centered care
- I pursue continuous learning to stay current with my knowledge and skills
- I willingly engage when situations require teamwork
- I recognize that health care professionals must uphold society's trust
- I recognize that I represent the massage therapy profession in the community
- I recognize the expertise of others and am comfortable consulting and referring when needed

Principle 3

Employ all available resources to develop professional judgement and critical thinking skills that benefit the entire Sutherland-Chan School community.

- I approach problem-solving and conflict situations in an open and collaborative manner
- I acknowledge conflicts of interest and address them openly, seeking assistance as needed
- I carefully consider potential power imbalance, conflict, or dual relationship scenarios and seek to act according to my best self
- I am attentive to all forms of communication: verbal, non-verbal, written, and digital
- I think about how my work and my actions affect all members of the community
- I support the spirit of inquiry and evidence-based pursuits
- I employ touch with therapeutic intent
- I act in the best interests of my patients and of all patients who come to the school
- I am clear and forthcoming about my credentials and qualifications
- I honour my contractual and non-contractual relationships
- I uphold the honour and integrity of the massage therapy profession



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Zero Tolerance Policy

Purpose

Sutherland-Chan is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, professional, and inclusive learning environment for students, staff, patients, and visitors.

While many concerns involving professionalism, communication, or conduct may be addressed through education, coaching, remediation, or progressive discipline, certain behaviours are considered so serious that they may result in immediate suspension, dismissal from clinic activities, or expulsion from the School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Complaints Policy*, *Withdrawal & Expulsion Policy* and other applicable School policies.

Professional Misconduct vs. Zero-Tolerance Violations

The School recognizes that mistakes, lapses in judgment, misunderstandings, and knowledge gaps may occur during the learning process. Depending on the circumstances, these situations may be addressed through:

- Education and coaching
- Reflective assignments
- Remediation plans
- Behavioural contracts
- Progressive disciplinary measures

Examples may include isolated inappropriate comments, communication difficulties, minor professionalism concerns, or first-time conduct issues where there is no significant risk to safety, integrity, or wellbeing.

However, the behaviours listed below are considered fundamentally incompatible with the standards expected of students in a healthcare profession. While expulsion of the student is the usual outcome, the School will consider the nature and severity of the conduct, the available evidence, the impact on affected individuals, and any other relevant factors when making its decision.

Zero-Tolerance Violations

The following list is not exhaustive.

Professional Integrity and Boundaries

- Providing false, misleading, or fraudulent information to the School, including on admissions, health, security, or other required documentation (ref.: *Admissions Refusal Policy, Vaccination and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Requirements*, Student Enrolment Contract).
- Falsification of patient/clinic documentation or tracking of Direct Patient Care (DPC) hours.
- Serious breaches of professional boundaries including relevant CMTO expectations.
- Sexual misconduct, sexual advances, sexual harassment, or sexualized behaviour toward patients, students, staff, or visitors (ref.: *Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy*).

Patient Safety

- Conduct that places a patient, student, staff member, or member of the public at significant risk of harm.
- Providing treatment while impaired by alcohol, cannabis, illicit substances, or misuse of medications.

Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence

- Harassment, bullying, discrimination, or intimidation that is severe, persistent, targeted, or threatening.
- Hate-motivated conduct, including racist, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, ableist, or other discriminatory behaviour intended to demean, threaten, or harm.
- Threats of violence, coercion, stalking, assault, sexual violence, or other violent behaviour.
- The possession of any weapon – including but not limited to knives, pocket tools, blades, or firearms – on School property, Specialty Clinic sites, and school-sponsored events, regardless of whether the item is concealed or openly displayed.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- Unauthorized recording of individuals in classrooms, clinics, or School activities.
- Sharing images, recordings, personal information, or confidential information without authorization or consent.
- Serious breaches of patient confidentiality or privacy (ref.: *Privacy Policy, Social Media Policy*).

Criminal or Illegal Activity

- Theft, fraud, assault, sexual assault, or other criminal conduct occurring on School property, during School activities, or where the conduct reasonably affects the safety or reputation of the School or the School community.

Failure to Comply with Safety Requirements

- Deliberate or reckless disregard for safety policies, infection prevention and control requirements, or other safety procedures.
- Refusal to comply with reasonable directions intended to protect the health, safety, or wellbeing of patients, students, staff, or visitors.

Administration of the Policy

Reports of alleged zero-tolerance violations will be reviewed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the *Complaints Policy*.



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Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment Policy

Purpose

Sutherland-Chan School of Massage Therapy ("the School") is committed to maintaining a learning, working, and clinical environment that is safe, respectful, inclusive, and free from sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Allegations involving sexual violence or sexual harassment will be addressed promptly, fairly, and in accordance with this policy, the *Complaints Policy*, *Sexual Misconduct Towards Students* policy, *Zero-Tolerance Policy*, *Non-Academic Standards & Policies*, and all applicable legislation.

This policy applies to all students, faculty, administrative staff, contractors, volunteers, patients, visitors, and any individual participating in School-related activities, whether on campus or off-site. Everyone is responsible for helping to create a safe environment.

Statement of Commitment

The School will:

- support individuals who disclose or report sexual violence or sexual harassment
- respond promptly and appropriately to disclosures and complaints
- protect privacy and confidentiality to the greatest extent possible
- provide reasonable academic, workplace, and clinical accommodations
- investigate formal complaints fairly and impartially
- take steps to prevent recurrence
- prohibit retaliation against any person who makes a disclosure, files a complaint, participates in an investigation, or seeks support

Definitions

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence means any sexual act, attempted sexual act, threat, or act targeting a person's sexuality, gender identity, or gender expression without their consent. Sexual violence includes, but is not limited to:

- sexual assault
- sexual abuse
- stalking
- voyeurism
- indecent exposure
- sexual exploitation
- distribution of intimate images without consent
- coercion into sexual activity

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct, comments, gestures, or communications of a sexual nature that are known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to:

- sexual jokes or comments
- displaying sexually offensive material
- unwanted sexual attention
- repeated requests for dates or intimacy
- sexually suggestive remarks
- inappropriate physical contact
- unwelcome comments about appearance, sexuality, gender identity, or gender expression

Consent

Consent means the voluntary and ongoing agreement to engage in sexual activity. Consent:

- must be freely given
- is not silence or the absence of “No.”
- cannot be given if the victim is impaired by alcohol or drugs, or is unconscious
- can be withdrawn at any time
- cannot be obtained through coercion, intimidation, manipulation, threats, abuse of authority, or incapacitation
- cannot be assumed based on previous interactions or relationships

Stalking

A form of criminal harassment prohibited by the Criminal Code of Canada. It involves behaviours that occur on more than one occasion, and which collectively instill fear in the victim or threaten the victim/target’s safety or mental health. Stalking can also include threats of harm to the target’s friends and/or family.

Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is any form of behaviour—including psychological, physical, and sexual behaviour—that is based on an individual’s gender and is intended to control, humiliate, or harm the individual.

Bystander

In the context of sexual abuse, a bystander is anyone who is neither a victor nor an offender, but who could potentially get involved to make a difference (before, during, or after the act).

Victim Blaming

Victim blaming occurs when the victim of a crime or an accident is held responsible, in whole or in part, for the crimes that have been committed against them.

Professional Boundaries

As a healthcare educational institution, the School maintains strict expectations regarding professional boundaries. Sexual relationships, sexual solicitation, or sexualized conduct between faculty and students or therapists and patients are considered serious breaches of professional conduct and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, mandatory withdrawal, or expulsion. Please also reference the School's *Sexual Misconduct Towards Students* policy.

Sexual Abuse Prevention Measures

The school educates faculty, staff, and students about this policy and how to prevent sexual violence and harassment. This includes general considerations and expectations for health care professionals.

Sutherland-Chan School of Massage Therapy is committed to preventing sexual violence and sexual harassment through the following measures:

Education and Training

- Orientation for students and employees regarding sexual violence, consent, professional boundaries, and reporting procedures.
- Integration of professional ethics, therapeutic boundaries, informed consent, and patient safety into the curriculum.
- Ongoing training for faculty, staff, and supervisors regarding prevention, recognition, and response to incidents of sexual violence and harassment.

Clinical Environment and Patient Safety

- Clear standards regarding draping, privacy, informed consent, and professional conduct in clinical and educational settings.
- Appropriate supervision of students in classroom, clinics, and outreach environments.
- Measures to support a safe and respectful learning, working, and patient-care environment.

Reporting and Response

- Accessible and confidential reporting options for students, employees, patients, and visitors.
- Timely investigation and resolution of complaints in accordance with School policies and applicable legislation.
- Protection from retaliation for individuals who report concerns or participate in investigations.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Regular review of policies, procedures, and training programs.
- Analysis of reported incidents and emerging risks to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of respect, dignity, safety, and accountability.

Disclosures and Reporting

Anyone who has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment may choose whether or not to make a formal complaint.

A disclosure may be made to any member of the Management Team or Education Team. Complaints involving a member of the Management Team may be reported directly to the School Owner or an external investigator designated by the School.

They may choose to:

- seek support only
- file a formal complaint with the School
- report the matter to police
- pursue remedies available through external agencies

A person disclosing sexual harassment or violence has the right to:

- be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect
- have their privacy protected
- receive information regarding available supports
- have a support person or other representation present during the investigation or decision-making processes
- request reasonable accommodations (please speak to the CESC or ADE)
- determine whether to pursue a formal complaint
- choose not to request an investigation
- choose not to participate in the investigation
- withdraw a complaint at any stage, however the School may continue to act on the issue to comply with its obligations

Individuals do not need to report an incident or make a complaint about sexual violence in order to receive supports, services, or accommodations relating to sexual violence.

False Statements

Knowingly submitting a false complaint or providing false information will result in disciplinary action.

Confidentiality

The School will maintain confidentiality to the greatest extent possible. Information will only be shared where necessary to:

- investigate a complaint
- protect the health or safety of an individual
- comply with legal obligations
- address an immediate risk to the School community

Protection from Reprisal

Retaliation against any person who makes a disclosure, files a complaint, participates in an investigation, or supports another person in doing so is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

Investigation Process

Complaints involving sexual violence or sexual harassment will be investigated in accordance with the *Complaints Policy*.

Where an allegation presents an immediate risk of violence, harm, or ongoing safety concerns, the School may implement interim measures prior to the completion of an investigation.

Complainants will not be subject to disciplinary action for violations of School policies related to alcohol or drug use at the time of the alleged incident.

Individuals involved in investigations will not be asked irrelevant questions regarding sexual history or sexual expression.

Appeals

Should the complainant or respondent wish to appeal an investigation decision, they should reference the process outlined in the *Complaints Policy*.

Reporting Obligations

The school will collect and provide data related to sexual violence to the Superintendent, Private Career Colleges Branch, Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security, as requested.

Supports and Resources

The School will provide information regarding available community, medical, counselling, legal, and crisis resources to any person seeking support.

Toronto Rape Crisis Centre
416-597-8808/416-597-1171

Victim Services Toronto
416-808-7066
victimservicestoronto.com

Oasis Centre des femmes
www.oasisfemmes.org
416-591-6565
services@oasisfemmes.org

This is by no means an exhaustive list of support available in the City of Toronto. Please speak to the CESC or ADE for further assistance.

Policy Review, Distribution, and Training

This policy will be reviewed annually by the School's Management Team. Students will be provided with the opportunity to participate in the review process through consultation, feedback mechanisms, or student representation.

All amendments (not including updates to supports/services available or to the identity of staff involved) will be approved by the School's Management Team.

This policy is available to staff and Students on SharePoint, is on the School's website, and is available to anyone who requests it.

All students receive a copy of this policy in their enrolment package.

This policy is included in the onboarding and training processes for all new employees.



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Sexual Misconduct Toward Students

The Ontario Legislature's Bill 26 (*Strengthening Post-Secondary Institutions and Students Act*), passed on December 8, 2022, set out the following provisions for postsecondary universities and colleges, including private career colleges:

"Sexual misconduct" means, in relation to a student of an institution:

- (a) physical sexual relations with the student, touching of a sexual nature of the student or behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature toward the student by an employee of the institution where, (i) the act constitutes an offence under the Criminal Code (Canada), (ii) the act infringes the right of the student under clause 7 (3) (a) of the Human Rights Code to be free from a sexual solicitation or advance, or (iii) the act constitutes sexual misconduct as defined in the institution's employee sexual misconduct policy or contravenes the policy or any other policy, rule or other requirement of the institution respecting sexual relations between employees and students, or*
- (b) any conduct by an employee of the institution that infringes the right of the student under clause 7 (3) (b) of the Human Rights Code to be free from a reprisal or threat of reprisal for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance. ("inconduite sexuelle")*

As outlined in this act, Sutherland-Chan School of Massage Therapy (S-C) confirms the following are part of school policy:

1. If an S-C employee engages in sexual misconduct with a student, the employee will be disciplined.
2. If termination of their employment is considered appropriate, the termination will be for just cause (employee is not entitled to notice or termination pay).
3. No collective agreement, mediation or arbitration will supersede such a termination decision.
4. The employee will not be re-employed at any future date.
5. No one will be disciplined or otherwise adversely affected for disclosing information about an allegation or complaint of sexual misconduct of an employee toward a student.

S-C admin staff and faculty members are expected to comply with the *Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy*.