

ABC ORTHOTIC FITTER

Pre-Certification Course Approval Standards

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ABC ORTHOTIC FITTER PRE-CERTIFICATION COURSE APPROVAL STANDARDS

ABC has established standards for the delivery and content of Orthotic Fitter Pre-Certification Courses in order to provide guidance to program instructors of both online and classroom education courses. The standards ensure that the didactic and lab portions of the course are representative of current Orthotic Fitter practice and that the provision of orthotic devices are appropriate and safe for the patient. The mechanisms used to formulate the standards include surveys, survey analysis, focus groups, subject matter expert committees and psychometric consultants.

All ABC approved orthotic fitter pre-certification courses are approved for a three-year term. For information about how to apply for course approval, click [here](#). Upon expiration of a pre-certification course's initial three-year approval, the provider may request the course be renewed for one additional three-year period. Please see the [ABC Pre-Certification Course Renewal Policy](#) for details.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course must be a minimum of 32 hours, with a minimum of 16 hours each of didactic and in-person fitting lab.

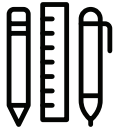
The instructor of both the didactic and lab instruction must be either a certified or licensed orthotist or certified or licensed orthotic fitter and be in good standing with their credentialing board.

Announcements, catalogs, publications and advertising must accurately reflect the program offered and must describe what is required for completion of the program. All activities associated with the program must be non-discriminatory and in accord with federal and state statutes, rules and regulations. The health and safety of patient models, students and faculty associated with the course must be adequately safeguarded.

The sponsor must report substantive change(s) to ABC in a timely manner, including:

1. Change/addition/deletion of content that represents significant departure in approved course content;
2. Change in method of course delivery;
3. Substantial increase/decrease in requirements for successful completion of course;
4. Changes in chief executive officer and required program personnel including faculty.

ABC reserves the right to audit any course offering during the approval period. This audit may be in-person or virtually. Course providers agree to provide ABC representatives with access to the designated course location, including but not limited to lab facilities or other approved venues, upon request.



DIDACTIC CONTENT • minimum sixteen hours

Students must have comprehensive exposure to all of the following content:

- Orthotic Fitter Knowledge and Skills (Appendix A)
- Required Pathologies (Appendix B)
- Required Devices (Appendix C)
- Professional Ethics (*ABC Code of Professional Responsibility*)

Upon completion of the course, students must have a basic knowledge of the content areas, have been assessed in their understanding of the required devices, demonstrate their knowledge and use of the required devices and demonstrate understanding of their appropriate use as they relate to patient care.

Course content outside of the *ABC Orthotic Fitter Scope of Practice* is not recognized and will not be counted towards the minimum time required for the course.



DELIVERY FORMAT

Didactic – course content may be delivered synchronously (live online or in-person) or asynchronously (on-demand).

On-demand coursework is acceptable if the education provider offers opportunity for student/instructor communication during regular business hours (e.g., via instant messaging, video conferencing, email, phone, etc.) to ensure comprehension.



DIDACTIC ASSESSMENT

Each student must be assessed to determine if they have obtained the required base set of competencies in the areas of orthotic fitter knowledge and skills, required pathologies, required devices, professional ethics and practice management during and at the completion of the course.

Student Assessment Guidelines

- Case studies are encouraged to reinforce treatment concepts.
- A final graded exam is required at the conclusion of the course. Open book tests are not allowed.
- A maximum of six months can elapse between completion of the didactic portion and the beginning of the lab portion of the course.

Lab – minimum sixteen hours of in-person instruction with a maximum ratio of one instructor to ten students.



LAB ASSESSMENT

Each student must be assessed in person to determine if they have obtained the necessary skill in the measurement, assembly, proper donning/doffing sequence and proper use and function of devices listed in Appendix C.

APPENDIX A

Required Knowledge and Skills

At the completion of the course, students should demonstrate the following knowledge and skills.

ANATOMY/PHYSIOLOGY

Knowledge of:

- General musculoskeletal anatomy, including upper limb, lower limb, spinal
- Bony landmarks relating to gross musculoskeletal anatomy of upper limb, lower limb and spine
- Gross neuroanatomy (e.g., major peripheral nerves of the upper and lower extremity)
- The circulatory system as it relates to prefabricated orthotic care
- Anatomical planes, planes of motion and normal range of motion (ROM)
- Human development and aging, including pediatric, adult and geriatric, as they relate to prefabricated orthotic care
- Medical terminology as it relates to prefabricated orthotic care

PATHOLOGIES

Knowledge of:

- Pathologies* including cause and progression (e.g., vascular neurologic, orthopedic)
- Tissue characteristics (e.g., ulcers, pressure sores)
- Volumetric changes (e.g., edema, weight gain/loss)

**See Appendix B for list of Required Pathologies*



BIOMECHANICS

Knowledge of:

- Normal human locomotion
- Gait deviations
- Biomechanics (e.g., actions of lever arms, application of force systems)

PATIENT ASSESSMENT

Knowledge of:

- Assessment techniques, including gait observation, weight bearing status, skin/tissue assessment, manual muscle testing (MMT), pain evaluation and volumetric assessment
- Measurement tools and techniques (e.g., tape measure, ML gauge, goniometer, Brannock device)
- Psychosocial issues of orthotic patients
- Orthotic forms (e.g., assessment, measurement)
- When to refer the patient to other healthcare providers (e.g., when patient needs are beyond fitters' scope of practice)



Skill in:

- Interpreting referral documents (prescriptions and authorization for service)
- Interviewing patients
- Communicating with referral sources
- Taking patient history and performing physical assessment
- Patient assessment techniques (e.g., measuring range of motion (ROM), determining muscle strength, body segment alignment)
- Interpretation of physical findings (e.g., recognizing skin pressures, dermatological conditions, skeletal deformities)

TREATMENT PLAN

Knowledge of:

- Prefabricated orthotic design and fitting criteria of orthoses and compression garments (e.g., anatomical/device relationships, device trimlines)
- Care and maintenance of prefabricated orthoses and compression garments
- Device warranties
- Available educational and resource materials (e.g., fitting instructions, manufacturer's guidelines)

Skill in:

- Managing patients relative to their diagnosis and condition as it pertains to prefabricated orthoses
- Measuring for prefabricated orthoses and compression garments including upper limb, lower limb and spinal
- Fitting, modifying and adjusting prefabricated orthoses and compression garments
- Evaluating fit and function of prefabricated orthoses and compression garments
- Determining outcomes as they relate to the treatment goal (e.g., reduction of pain, immobilization, improved gait, improved function)
- Documentation (e.g., patient records, billing documentation, incident reports)

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT/TOOLS

Knowledge of:

- Safety procedures and standards (e.g., OSHA, SDS)
- Hand and power tools
- Product design, composition and materials

Skill in:

- Selection of and/or use of materials and components as it relates to prefabricated orthotic treatment
- Use of safety equipment (e.g., personal protective equipment)
- Safe use of hand and power tools (e.g., bending irons, heat gun, drill, grinder)

FOLLOW-UP PLAN

Knowledge of:

- When to modify the device based on reassessment of fit and function
- When to refer the patient to other healthcare providers (when patient's health condition(s) require attention by other health care professionals)

Skill in:

- Restoring the optimal fit and function of prefabricated orthoses and compression garments
- Maintenance and repair of prefabricated orthoses
- Solving patient's problems related to Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) (e.g., dressing, driving)

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge of:

- Appropriate documentation procedures
- Policies and procedures regarding privileged information (e.g., HIPAA)
- Roles and responsibilities associated with other healthcare professions
- Reimbursement protocols (e.g., DME MAC, PDAC)
- Universal/Standard precautions including sterile techniques and infection control
- ABC Scope of Practice of the orthotic fitter
- ABC Scope of Practice of other orthotic credentials
- Federal and state rules, regulations and guidelines (e.g., FDA, ADA, licensure)



APPENDIX B

Required Pathologies

Upon completion of the course, students must have a basic knowledge of origin, cause and treatment(s) for the following pathologies and know the appropriate devices associated with the orthotic management of the pathology.

CERVICAL SPINE

- Whiplash
- Stenosis
- Degenerative disc disease

UPPER EXTREMITY

- Clavicle fracture
- Shoulder subluxation
- Lateral and medial epicondylitis
- Tendonitis
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- De Quervain's syndrome
- Sprain/strain

THORACIC AND LUMBAR SPINE

- Osteoporosis
- Degenerative joint disease
- Stenosis
- Low back pain
- Herniated disc
- Laminectomy syndrome
- Anterior compression fracture
- Spondylolysis
- Spondylolisthesis
- Geriatric kyphosis

LOWER EXTREMITY

- Diabetes mellitus
- Venous insufficiency
- Deep vein thrombosis
- Lymphedema



KNEE

- Chondromalacia (Patellofemoral syndrome)
- Patellar subluxation disorder
- Osteoarthritis
- Osgood Schlatter's disease
- Anterior cruciate insufficiency
- Posterior cruciate insufficiency
- Medial collateral insufficiency
- Lateral collateral insufficiency
- Meniscus tear
- Sprain/strain

ANKLE/FOOT

- Sprain/strain
- Bursitis
- Tendonitis
- Plantar fasciitis
- Heel Spur
- Ulcers
- Posterior tibialis tendon dysfunction
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Achilles tendon rupture
- Midfoot/metatarsal fractures

APPENDIX C

Required Device List and Recommended Lab Times

The lab times should focus on the appropriate selection of orthoses and performance of competencies (measurement techniques, fitting parameters and techniques, adjustments and/or modifications to orthoses, etc.).

DEVICE	LAB TIME
Cervical Spine	1 Hour
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soft cervical collar• Semi-rigid collar	
Upper Extremity	1 Hour
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Figure 8 splint• Shoulder immobilizer elastic• Tennis elbow strap• Elbow sleeve• Wrist splint• Wrist splint with thumb	
Spinal	4 Hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thoracolumbar corset• Anterior frame hyperextension TLSO• Lumbosacral corset• Lumbosacral corset with rigid frame/panel• Semi-rigid LSO• Semi-rigid TLSO	
Lower Extremity	4 Hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knee• Hinged knee orthosis• Patellar tendon orthosis• Elastic knee sleeve• Knee immobilizer• Post-op knee orthosis• Prefabricated functional knee orthosis• Prefabricated Unloader knee orthosis	

Ankle/Foot**5 Hours**

- Multiligamentous ankle support
- AFO plastic or other material with ankle joints, prefabricated
- Ankle control orthosis, stirrup style
- Pneumatic walker
- Plantar fasciitis night splint
- Pressure relief (heel) AFO
- AFO, plastic or other material, PLS, prefabricated
- Post-op shoe
- Un-loader shoe

Shoes

- Non-diabetic depth-inlay shoe

Gradient Pressure Garments**1 Hour**

- Below Knee 20-30 & 30-40 mmHg compression garments
- Above Knee 20-30 & 30-40 mmHg compression garments
- Lymphedema Sleeves





ABC Pre-Certification Course Renewal Policy

POLICY:

Upon expiration of a pre-certification course's initial 3-year approval, the provider may request the course be renewed for one additional 3-year period if the following have not changed:

- course content
- method of delivery
- requirements for successful completion
- instructors

If there have been significant changes to the above, the course provider may be required to submit a new application, application fee and required supporting documentation. Failure to notify ABC of any program changes may result in termination of the course approval.

After the initial approval and one renewal period (total of 6 years) the course provider must submit a new application for initial course approval.

FEE SCHEDULE:

Fitter Pre-certification Courses – \$150 renewal fee

Pedorthic Pre-certification Courses – \$400 renewal fee