



THE MCKENZIE INSTITUTE INTERNATIONAL

DIPLOMA IN MECHANICAL DIAGNOSIS AND THERAPY™ GENERAL INFORMATION

THE DIPLOMA

The Diploma in Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy (MDT) is awarded to candidates who have qualified in accordance with the criteria approved by The McKenzie Institute International Board of Trustees and is designed to assess competencies in relation to the Diploma Curriculum.

The criteria for registration are attendance at the Institute's Education Programme Parts A–E and a successful pass in The McKenzie Institute International Credentialling Examination.

Applicants must be either a physiotherapist, medical doctor or chiropractor. They must also be engaged in active clinical practice, and hold registration in their respective country of residence. Applications must be submitted by **31 October** to commence the Distance Learning Component in February of the following year. Enrolments are limited to 25 candidates per year.

The tuition fee for the Diploma MDT Programme is US\$15,000. This does not include the fee for the Final Examination. The fee is paid in 3 installments.

The language of the Diploma Programme is English. The Institute requires a reasonable standard of English. **All candidates from countries where English is not the first language must provide evidence of English language competency in the form of successful IELTS, TOEFL or Pearson testing (specific score minimums on final page).** The date of the test results must be within two years of applying for the Diploma Programme. So that candidates for whom English is not their first language are not disadvantaged, their application and supporting documentation can be submitted without the English language result, however the official result must be sent to the Institute by 31 October.

The Diploma MDT Programme and the Final Examination must be completed within three years of a candidate commencing the Programme, unless a waiver is granted due to illness, significant personal reasons or national / international circumstances.

DIPLOMA CURRICULUM

The Diploma Curriculum has, as its foundation, the teaching of MDT as developed by Robin McKenzie. It consists of two components: Theoretical and Clinical.

Aims of the Diploma

1. Enable candidates to develop a high level of competence in the theory and practice of MDT for spinal and musculoskeletal disorders based on the philosophies of Robin McKenzie.
2. Enable candidates to identify clinical conditions that are unsuitable for MDT care.
3. Enable candidates to develop skills in accessing, understanding and evaluating research relevant to MDT.

4. Promote critical analysis and clinical reasoning skills.
5. Further develop interpersonal and communication skills.
6. Foster the candidates' awareness of their professional responsibilities, including legal, ethical and cultural issues.

Programme Note: Aspects of the Theoretical and Clinical Component may be refined from time to time to ensure the best possible learning experience. Should any updates be made, candidates will be advised as early as possible.

Theoretical Component:

The Theoretical Component, utilising Schoology, an online learning management system, is conducted over 12 weeks commencing in February each year. This component involves 280 hours of candidate study and academic work. This consists of set tasks, reflective reading, electronic communication through a discussion board, critical evaluation and analysis of literature on MDT topics and group work. **We highly recommend that candidates do not attempt to work more than 50% of a full-time clinical workload whilst undertaking the Theoretical Component.**

The educators for the Theoretical Component are Faculty of the McKenzie Institute International. All teaching will be conducted online and is presented as modules of study. Candidates will require a computer device with reliable internet access.

A pass in the Theoretical Component of the Diploma Programme is required before commencing the Clinical Component.

Theoretical Component Outcomes:

1. Discuss and evaluate the process of critically analysing the literature and identifying key steps in the proposal and development of a case report
2. Analyse and interpret the Mechanical Diagnosis assessment process of a given patient towards a provisional classification
3. Critically evaluate the current evidence and the clinical use of mechanical loading on spinal and extremity tissue
4. Discuss and evaluate both the clinical significance of and the current evidence base for the key principles of MDT
5. Execute an MDT evaluation and management plan for a patient presenting with extremity symptoms and define the key principles related to the education of patients with extremity symptoms utilising MDT management principles
6. Critically discuss and evaluate the relevance, the 'pros and cons' and the supporting evidence of the disc model for clinicians, patients, and third parties
7. Discuss and evaluate the process of differentiating between a spinal and/or local source of pain in patients presenting with primary shoulder pain
8. Discuss and evaluate the literature relating to three key areas of communication: Motivational interviewing, language and teach back
9. Describe the current understanding of pain and discuss its relevance within the Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy of individual patients. Discuss the potential drivers of pain and / or disability and relate how these factors impact individual patient management

10. Discuss and analyse the roles of the history and examination in the process of differentiating between potential classifications and demonstrate advanced clinical reasoning through the use of patient vignettes
11. Develop and prepare an MDT related patient case report

CLINICAL COMPONENT:

The Clinical Component consists of a minimum of 360 hours of clinical practice based on a variety of musculoskeletal disorders. It emphasises the central importance of “the evidence” of the patient.

There are mandatory self-directed learning tasks for all candidates to complete and submit prior to arriving at their clinical venue. Failure to submit tasks may result in postponement or rescheduling of the Clinical Component. The hours of clinical practice will include: supervised patient assessments and treatments, formal and informal tutorials and self-directed learning. The maximum ratio of candidates to a Clinical Educator is limited to two.

Qualified McKenzie practitioners, known as Diploma Clinical Educators, who are appointed by, and have undergone their training with, The McKenzie Institute International, provide supervision. The Clinical Educator conducts continuous assessments of the clinical performance of the candidates and regular formal assessments. Satisfactory proficiency in the Clinical Component is determined by the Clinical Educator and/or by The McKenzie Institute International appointed assessors. Proficiency is determined by performance in both the formal assessments and in the continuous assessments.

The Clinical Component is an intensive learning experience. We encourage candidates to come with an open mind and an eagerness to learn. The experience is designed to not only advance and refine your clinical application of MDT but also to progress broader aspects of clinical care and professional practice. We encourage candidates to be prepared to be challenged and willing to reflect and engage in critical questioning of their practice under the guidance of the Clinical Educators in all aspects of their patient care.

Clinical Component Objectives:

At the completion of this component the candidate should be highly competent in:

1. The integration of the theory of MDT and its application in the management of patients.
2. Examining patients using the MDT history taking and physical examination procedures.
3. Using the information derived from the examinations to determine an appropriate classification for the patient.
4. Documenting the assessment and management of patients.
5. Effectively and safely managing patients and modifying management as appropriate.
6. Maximising treatment efficiency, effectiveness by the appropriate provision of education, self-management procedures, clinician procedures and preventative measures.
7. The application of the MDT clinician procedures.
8. The identification of contraindications to MDT and the performance of the pre-manipulative testing procedures.
9. Communicating effectively with all persons involved in the management of the patient's problems.

Pathways Available for the Clinical Component:

To allow for the varied needs of the Diploma candidates there are a number of alternative pathways available to complete the Clinical Component of the Diploma.

Clinical Training sites are currently available in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Netherlands, Sweden and the USA. However, the availability of some of these sites may vary from year to year, hence there is no guarantee that a Diploma candidate will be able to complete their clinical at a specific site.

If travelling abroad is the only option for your Clinical Component or you choose to travel abroad, you will likely need a visa for that specific country. Please be aware that you will be responsible for obtaining your visa and if you are not successful in your visa application, you will not be able to complete your clinical in that venue country.

Accommodation and transportation are not provided at any of the clinical venues. However, the Diploma Clinical Educators will assist candidates to access suitable accommodation. For accommodation considerations, please keep in mind that some venues have more than one site, with the clinical time being split between sites.

- **Clinical Training in Australia (Geelong)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in either a 1 x 9-week block, or 3 x 3-week blocks.

To attend this venue, candidates must have Australian or New Zealand health professional registration and insurance.

- **Clinical Training in Belgium (Maasmechelen)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in 3 x 3-week blocks

This venue is only available to candidates residing in Belgium or Luxembourg.

- **Clinical Training in Canada (Montreal)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in either a 1 x 9-week block, or 3 x 3-week blocks.

This venue can accommodate both English and French speakers.

- **Clinical Training in Czechia**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in either a 1 x 9-week block, or 3 x 3-week blocks.

This venue is only available to Czech speaking candidates.

- **Clinical Training in Denmark**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in either a 1 x 9-week block, or 3 x 3-week blocks.

This venue is only available to Danish speaking candidates.

- **Clinical Training in France (Poitiers/Poulx)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in either a 1 x 9-week block, or 3 x 3-week blocks.

This venue is only available to French speaking candidates.

- **Clinical Training in Germany (Freiburg)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in either a 1 x 9-week block, or 3 x 3-week blocks.

This venue is only available to German speaking candidates.

- **Clinical Training in India (Mumbai/Bhiwandi)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in a 1 x 9-week block.

This venue is only available to Hindi speaking candidates.

- **Clinical Training in Netherlands (Delden/Tilburg/Velp)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in either a 1 x 9-week block, or 3 x 3-week blocks.

This venue is only available to Dutch speaking candidates.

- **Clinical Training in Sweden (Ornskoldsvik/Stockholm/Varberg)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in 3 x 3-week blocks at 3 separate clinical venues.

This venue is only available to Swedish speaking candidates.

- **Clinical Training in USA (Austin):**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in 1 x 9-week block.

This venue is for candidates confident to manage and interact with patients in English.

- **Clinical Training in USA (Cedar Grove)**

Choice of this pathway allows the candidate to undertake their clinical training in 1 x 9-week block.

*This venue is only available to US candidates who are able to obtain a State of New Jersey Licence and are not in clinical practice within a 50 mile radius of the Cedar Grove Clinical Venue. It is the candidate's responsibility to obtain licensure in the State of New Jersey. **This can take up to six months.***

A pass is required in the Clinical Component of the Diploma to allow candidates to undertake the Diploma Final Examination. However, sometimes it may not be possible for the candidate to reach the passing standard of the Clinical Component of the Diploma in the allotted time. In these circumstances it **may** be possible for the Clinical Component to be extended or repeated. The decision on whether further clinical education is appropriate is made by the Clinical Educator(s) in conjunction with the Diploma Coordinator.

If this is agreed on, the candidate will be provided with a remedial plan which will allow them to undertake preparatory work prior to returning for further clinical mentoring either face-to-face or virtually. A fee will be payable for any additional clinical face-to-face or virtual mentoring. You will be advised of the amount of time required for further face-to-face tuition or virtual mentoring by the Diploma Coordinator.

If the candidate is not successful on the second attempt, after a maximum of three additional weeks face-to-face clinical or a maximum of 25 hours of virtual clinical mentoring, then no further attempts will be allowed and the candidate will not be eligible to sit the Diploma Final Examination.

FINAL EXAMINATION FOR THE DIPLOMA IN MDT

To be eligible to sit the Final Examination, candidates must have completed and passed both the Theoretical and Clinical Components of the Diploma Curriculum.

There must be a minimum of two months between completion of the Clinical Component and taking the Final Examination to allow time for the candidates to prepare for the examination.

The Final Examination is conducted in the English language by Faculty appointed by The McKenzie Institute International and is supervised by the International Director of Education.

There is a fee for the Final Examination and retakes as detailed below. The examination is conducted over two days. The structure comprises 4 examinations of 60-75 minutes duration (3 simulated clinical examinations and 1 oral examination). Candidates are required to achieve a Pass in each examination to attain an overall Pass in the Final Examination. If a candidate is unsuccessful in one or more of the individual examinations, they may retake those failed examinations. However, retakes are only permitted on two occasions. No grades will be provided to the candidates for the Final Examination.

Examinations are held online twice per year: April/May and October/November.

Once a candidate has attained a Pass in the Final Examination, they will be issued with a McKenzie Institute International Diploma in MDT certificate, their name recorded in the Institute's International Diploma Register, and they will be eligible to apply for McKenzie Institute International Diploma Membership

PAYMENT

Full Diploma tuition fee

US\$15,000

Payment of fees are as follows:

- US\$1,500 payable on acceptance of your application.
- US\$7,500 payable 8 weeks prior to commencing your Theoretical Component.
- US\$6,000 payable 6 weeks prior to commencing your Clinical Component.

You will receive an invoice when the fees are due.

A separate fee of US\$1,200 is payable to take the Diploma Final Examination. This is payable when your examination date is confirmed.

Examination retakes: There is no fee if one of the four examinations needs to be retaken. For each additional examination there will be a fee of US\$300.

GENERAL

Upon approval of the application by the Institute's International Director of Education, a confidentiality agreement in relation to the Diploma Programme will be forwarded to the applicant for completion, together with payment details.

Application for the Diploma Programme is completed online via the Institute's website. Supporting documentation will be required to be uploaded, please ensure that you have this ready when you commence the application process. Any queries should be submitted to the Diploma Coordinator at: diploma@mckenzieinstitute.org.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this document is correct as at 1 June 2026. The McKenzie Institute International reserves the right to change, cancel or postpone any portion of the Diploma MDT Programme, and shall not be liable for any claim other than the proportion of Programme fees which the cancelled portion bears.