

Term	Definition	PTA Task Force Recommendations
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 beginning independent entry level practice. ^{18,22,23}	<p>Remove the word “independent” before entry level practice to reflect both PT and PTA Education</p> <p>Feedback/Comments received: A member asked the task force to consider leaving the word “independent” in the definition because they felt the PTA should be able to work independently at entry level.</p> <p>Task Force Action: The task force felt the term entry level was adequate for defining clinical education and was attempting to avoid controversy over the term independent which could be seen as synonymous with autonomous.</p> <p>Note items highlighted in yellow throughout this document reflect those changes proposed prior to comments received and green highlights reflect those following the comment period.</p>
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. ²⁴	No edit necessary
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. ²⁴	<p>Add physical therapist assistant to definition</p> <p>Feedback/Comments received: Members brought into question the term professional.</p> <p>Feedback/Comments: The term professional was the first term that the Task Force attempted to tackle. In general, the feedback received from the ACAPT panel was fairly silent on this issue but it came up with other stakeholder groups and the Task Force members agreed that to move this document forward without controversy, the terms professional and postprofessional education should be utilized with PT only. When used in the context of behavior, no one questions the term professional for the PTA but the task force was unable to locate any published works citing PTA professional or postprofessional education. This is definitely a hot button topic for PT/PTA educators and clinicians alike but the task force agreed not to push the issue within the context of this particular document. The goal</p>

		<p>of this group was to create a parallel document to the ACAPT approved Clinical Education Glossary and provide for some consistency in the terminology utilized for clinical education.</p> <p>*What was done for this definition was simply to move the “/physical therapist assistant” after the word professional instead of before.</p> <p>Subsequent terms with this same issue were dealt with in the same manner. This is consistent with how PT and PTA educational programs are referred to in documents such as the Normative Model. The Normative model for Physical Therapist Professional Education and the Normative model for Physical Therapist Assistant Education.</p>
Clinical education environment	The physical space(s) and/or the structures, policies, procedures, and culture within the clinical education site.	<p>No edit necessary</p> <p>Moved definition from Clinical Education Site category to Clinical Education Infrastructure, reducing number of categories in Glossary.</p>
Clinical education experience	<p>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 may 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 assessment17,18,21,25</p>	<p>Add intraprofessional to definition to reflect collaborative experiences involving the PT and PTA</p> <p>Feedback/Comments received: A question was raised, “Is this to be the formal term replacing rotation, clinical practicum, etc?”</p> <p>Additionally, CAPTE (Sandra Wise) commented that it is an expectation to include IPE, so she suggested removing the word “may”</p> <p>Task Force Response/Action: The intention of the ACAPT panels’ original work was intended to deter the use of terms such as rotation, practicum, affiliation, etc.</p> <p>The word “may” was removed, so as not to confuse the fact that IPE in particular is a CAPTE expectation and should be taking place during clinical education experiences.</p> <p>The word technical was inserted to acknowledge technical skills attained by the PTA.</p>
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.	No edit necessary
Full-time clinical education experience	<p>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.17,21,25 An integrated clinical education experience may be a full-time clinical education experience.</p>	<p>Add “and where applicable by a physical therapist assistant” to definition</p> <p>Feedback/Comments received: CAPTE (Sandra Wise) reminded the group that PTA Clinical Education “hours” were mandated vs “weeks”.</p> <p>Task Force action: Review of CAPTE standards show the following:</p> <p>CAPTE PTA Standard 7K states:The curriculum for the PTA program, including all general</p>

		<p>education, pre-requisites, and technical education courses required for the degree, can be completed in no more than 5 semesters or 80 academic weeks or 104 calendar weeks, including 520-720 hours of clinical education.</p> <p>CAPTE PT Standard 6M states: The series of courses included in the professional curriculum is comprised of at least 90 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) and is completed (including clinical education) in no less than 6 semesters50 or the equivalent. The clinical education component of the curriculum includes a minimum of 30 weeks of full-time clinical education experiences.</p> <p>The solution was to add the word hours to the definition for Full-time clinical education experience, identifying weeks as applicable for PT and hours as applicable for PTA.</p> <p>For subsequent terms with this issue, the task force agreed to add, “minimum time frame...”, it was also noted that there was inconsistency in stating “set forth” by CAPTE vs “required” by CAPTE. The Task Force attempted to make all definition language consistent in this regard.</p>
<p>Integrated clinical education (ICE)</p>	<p>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 number of full-time clinical education weeks time frame required 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.</p>	<p>Add “physical therapist assistant” & “and where applicable by a physical therapist assistant” to definition</p> <p>Task Force Action: Verbiage was made consistent with earlier change(s) in the document.</p>
<p>Intermediate full-time clinical education experience</p>	<p>A clinical education experience designated to achieve the minimum number of weeks 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.</p>	<p>No edit necessary</p> <p>Task Force Action: Verbiage was made consistent with earlier change(s) in the document.</p>

International clinical education experiences	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. ³¹ [Note: The abbreviation ICE should not be used to describe an international clinical education experience.]	Remove plural form of experience from term for consistency. Add physical therapist assistant to definition Task Force Action: Verbiage was made consistent with earlier change(s) in the document.
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.	No edit necessary
Terminal full-time clinical education experience	A single, or set of, full-time clinical education experience(s) designated to achieve the minimum number of weeks 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.	Add physical therapist assistant to definition Task Force Action: Verbiage was made consistent with earlier change(s) in the document.
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. ²⁶⁻²⁹	Add physical therapist assistant to definition
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. ^{18,21}	Add physical therapist assistant to definition Task Force Action: Verbiage was made consistent with earlier change(s) in the document.
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. ²⁰	No edit necessary
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. ¹⁸	No edit necessary
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. ^{18,32}	Add physical therapist assistant to definition

		<p>Task Force Action: Verbiage was made consistent with earlier change(s) in the document.</p>
<p>Physical therapist postprofessional education program</p>	<p>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.^{33 34} [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.]</p>	<p>No edit necessary</p> <p>Feedback/Comments received: A couple of members asked why PTA postprofessional education wasn't included and felt that the Bachelor's degree programs and the APTA's Advanced Proficiency Pathways belong here.</p> <p>Task Force Action: The task force created a glossary based on the ACAPT panel's glossary and worked with the panel to gain feedback on a draft which included new terms before the document was sent out for comment. APP had been included along with the terms Clinical Commitment and Clinical Placement in the version shared with the ACAPT panel. The panel didn't feel that these terms belonged in the glossary for various reasons and asked the group to find citations for the terms if they were included. The Task Force had a difficult time finding legitimate citations where these terms have been defined and utilized in the literature. Before posting a document to be commented on by the PTAE SIG and other stakeholders, the Task Force agreed to remove the controversial terms from the document. The term physical therapist assistant postprofessional education program has not officially been cited in any publications that the Task Force can uncover.</p> <p>Even among the Task Force members there was much debate as to whether this term belonged in this particular document. There is a case to make for raising awareness of APP for PTAs and other opportunities such as Bachelor programs for the PTA. The APP does include a clinical mentoring piece, however, to move the document forward, the task force agreed to make a special notation about opportunities for PTAs vs creating a definition for PTA postprofessional education that lacked a proper citation. The group then agreed to alter the notation stating examples of "post entry level opportunities".</p>
<p>Fellowship</p>	<p>A postprofessional planned learning experience in a focused advanced area of practice. Similar to the medical model, a fellowship is a structured educational experience (both didactic and clinical) for physical therapists that combines opportunities for ongoing mentoring with a theoretical basis for advanced practice and scientific inquiry in a defined area of subspecialization beyond that of a defined specialty area of practice. A fellowship candidate either has completed a residency program in a</p>	<p>No edit necessary</p> <p>Feedback/Comments received: A member informed the Task Force of a change to the definitions for Fellowship and Residency. This had not been noted, as the Task Force had utilized the original definition from the ACAPT panel's CE Glossary.</p>

	<p>related specialty area or is a board-certified specialist in the related area of specialty. Fellowship training is not appropriate for new physical therapist education program graduates³⁰ (http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For_Programs/Apply/ABPTRFE_CredentialingHandbook.pdf);</p> <p>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 http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For_Programs/ABPTRFEProcessesAndProcedures.pdf [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.]</p>	<p>Task Force Action: The Task Force replaced the definition with the current definition for both Fellowship and Residency.</p>
Residency	<p>A postprofessional planned learning experience in a focused area of practice. Similar to the medical model, a residency program is a structured educational experience (both didactic and clinical) for physical therapists following professional education and licensure that is designed to significantly advance the physical therapist's knowledge, skills, and attributes in a specific area of practice (eg, cardiovascular/pulmonary, faculty, orthopedics, sports, pediatrics). It combines opportunities for ongoing mentoring, with a theoretical basis for advanced practice and scientific inquiry based on a Description of Specialty Practice (see definition), Description of Residency Practice (see definition), or valid analysis of practice/comprehensive needs assessment for that specific area of practice. When board certification exists through the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS) for that specialty, the residency training prepares the physical therapist to pass the certification examination following graduation. A residency candidate must be licensed as a physical therapist in the state where the program is located or where clinical training will occur prior to entry into the program. Neither "residency" nor "fellowship" is synonymous with "internship"³⁰ (http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/For_Programs/Apply/ABPTRFE_CredentialingHandbook.pdf);</p> <p>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 http://www.abptrfe.org/uploadedFiles/ABPTRFEorg/F</p>	<p>No edit necessary</p> <p>Feedback/Comments received: A member informed the Task Force of a change to the definitions for Fellowship and Residency. This had not been noted, as the Task Force had utilized the original definition from the ACAPT panel's CE Glossary.</p> <p>Task Force Action: The Task Force replaced the definition with the current definition for both Fellowship and Residency.</p>

	or_Programs/ABPTRFEProcessesAndProcedures.pdf Note: This definition will be updated to remain consistent with future revisions to the ABPTRFE Accreditation Handbook.]	
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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.	No edit necessary
Academic institution	University or college through which an academic degree is granted. ²⁴	No edit necessary
Clinical education consortia	National and regional groups that include academic and clinical education faculty for the purpose of sharing resources, ideas, and efforts. ²⁷	No edit necessary
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. ²⁵	No edit necessary
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. ^{18,24}	Add physical therapist assistant to definition. Moved definition from Clinical Education Site category to Clinical Education Stakeholders category to reinforce partnership and the sites' vital role in educating PT/PTA students. Task Force: An edit was made to grammar, based on feedback/comment received
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 number of weeks time frame required 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. ²⁴	Add "physical therapist assistant" & "and where applicable by a physical therapist assistant" to definition. Feedback/Comment received: Someone posed the question as to whether this definition should have "under the direction and supervision of a PT" Task Force Action: The task force agreed to leave the definition as is, since it was a term with citation. Verbiage was made consistent with earlier change(s) in the document.
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. ^{32,34} [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.]	Task force felt strongly that ACCE needed to appear in this document, to avoid confusion if used, yet wished to acknowledge the preference for the term DCE. The term Director implies an administrative vs faculty position at some academic institutions. Feedback/Comment received from SIG: Someone asked about terms related to a Clinical Education "Team". Task Force: The task force agreed not to define Clinical Education Team or team members, since this was not a part of the ACAPT panel's original document.

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.”	Add “physical therapist assistant” & “physical therapy assistant” to definition Task Force Action: Verbiage was made consistent with earlier change(s) in the document.
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.	Add physical therapist assistant to definition
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. ^{24,35}	No edit necessary

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. ^{18,36,37}	Add physical therapist assistant to definition
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. ^{24,38-40}	No edit necessary
Entry-level physical therapist/physical therapist assistant clinical performance	Performance that demonstrates knowledge, skills, and behaviors consistent with effective, efficient, and safe patient/client management to achieve optimal outcomes. ³⁸	Add physical therapist assistant to term
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. ²⁷	Add physical therapist assistant to definition

Note: Terms in the Clinical Education Infrastructure were reordered in an attempt to group Clinical Experience and Postprofessional Education terms. In addition, the category “Clinical Education Sites” was eliminated with the term Clinical Education Site imbedded under Clinical Education Stakeholders and the term Clinical Education Environment imbedded under Clinical Education Infrastructure.

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 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

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