



Dance Movement Therapy
Association of Australasia Inc.

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STUDENT'S WELCOME HANDBOOK

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER



Welcome to the Dance Movement Therapy Association of Australasia (DTAA)!

The Purpose of the Student's Welcome Handbook

It is the DTAA's wish to provide holistic support for Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) trainees whilst they are undertaking DMT training. We provide this handbook to introduce our profession and how we, the DTAA, aim to support you as an emerging DMT in Australasia. The DTAA is committed to widening the scope of DMT in Australia, New Zealand and other Asian regions, contributing to professional growth and greater opportunities for research, employment and access to DMT.

Acknowledgement

DTAA recognises, acknowledges and respects the ancestors, elders and families of all Indigenous peoples of the lands on which we stand and practise.

Conceptualised and written by the Workplace Development Committee

Issued by the DTAA

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1. President's Welcome Comments and Video - E. Connor Kelly

Welcome to the DTAA, the professional body that recognises and registers Professional Members, sets standards for training and practice, offers continuing professional development, and interfaces with other professional organisations and government bodies to promote the profession and create opportunities for Dance Movement Therapists in Australasia. We aim to expand and deepen our viability, visibility and visionary capacities as a profession. Please join us in supporting and growing Dance Movement Therapy in your communities.

Here is a [video message](#) from Connor.

2. Brief History of the DTAA

Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) originated in the United States of America, spearheaded by a dance practitioner, Dr. Marian Chace, who worked with war veterans in the 1940s. The power of dance and movement was soon recognised as DMT was applied as a tool to aid psychological trauma recovery. With the emergence of psychoanalysts in the United Kingdom in the 1950s and the influence of the American Dance Movement Therapy Association, some British DMT pioneers incorporated a psychotherapeutic approach into Dance Movement Therapy.

From the USA, the study and practice of DMT spread across Europe and in Asia, including Australia. The profession was formalised in Australia during the 1970s, primarily through the work of DMT leaders Wynelle Delaney and Hanny Exiner (Dunphy, Lauffenburger & Denning, 2019). In Australia training programs that introduced DMT or provided fuller training began to emerge in the late 1980's/early 1990's.

The DTAA is the recognised professional body for Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) in Australasia and offers registration for Dance Movement Therapists (DMTs) across Australia, New Zealand, and the Asia Pacific region. The DTAA supports the capacity building and ongoing professional development of DMTs and sets the required competencies or standards for clinical work and registration, professional development, ethics, and professional conduct. The DTAA endorses practitioners annually at Clinical Supervisor, Professional, Provisional Professional, and Associate membership levels based on training competency standards, hours of both clinical practice and professional supervision. Together with the other NDIS-recognised therapies such as [Music Therapy](#) and [Art Therapy](#), the DTAA is an associate member of the Allied Health Professions Australia ([AHPA](#)), and a member association of the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA), which is also recognised by the NDIS.

The Dance Movement Therapy Association of Australasia was formally incorporated in 1994, as the Dance Therapy Association of Australia. The DTAA became known as the Dance Movement Therapy Association of Australia in 2012, and then in 2014, members agreed to change the name and scope to the Dance Movement

Therapy Association of Australasia to better include dance therapy colleagues from neighbouring countries in the Australasian region.

3. Aims and Missions

The aim of the DTAA is to promote the growth, development, and recognition of dance movement therapy in Australasia. The DTAA achieves this through the ongoing provision of information, support, resources, and services to its members and to the wider community. This includes setting the standards for training, professional practice and supervision for its members; providing a means of communication, education, and networking between dance movement therapists, other health professionals, employers, and clients; and liaising with other relevant peak and professional bodies.

The DTAA provides a united professional identity for the profession of DMT, while remaining a not-for-profit organisation which respects the diversity of approaches within the field. DTAA's mission encompasses support to the profession, and public accountability and representation of the profession to the wider community, through the following activities:

- support for ongoing knowledge and theoretical and practical skills development, amongst dance movement therapists;
- formulation, monitoring, and review of standards of ethical behaviour in the practice of Dance Movement Therapy, including requirements for CPD and supervision and auditing of same;
- formulation, monitoring, and review of standards of training and education in Dance Movement Therapy in the Australasian region;
- formulation, monitoring, and review of competency standards;
- formulation and ongoing review of the DTAA scope of practice;
- provision of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for members and the wider community through activities that include conferences, workshops, publications, electronic communications, etc.;
- provision of relevant information about qualified registered practitioners to the community and to government agencies through the DTAA Register of Dance Movement Therapists;
- representation of the views of Members on standards and practice issues to the community and to government agencies;
- communication with other relevant national and international organisations to present and represent the profession of Dance Movement Therapy;
- promotion of research into the efficacy of Dance Movement Therapy and its use, to inform practice as well as appropriate agencies, institutions, and clients.

4. DTAA's Leadership

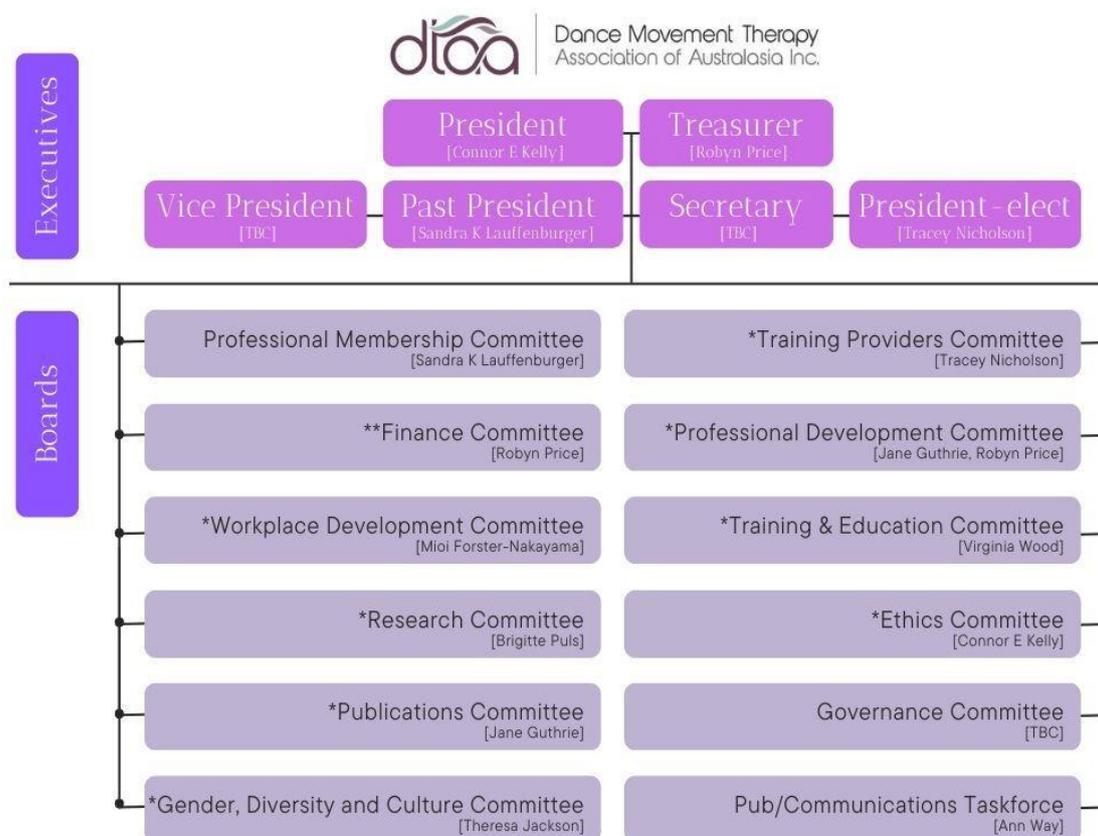
When it was incorporated in 1994, the DTAA was led by a General Committee of Management of practitioners led by a President. On adoption of a constitution at the AGM in 2018 this General Committee of management became a Board. Each Board or General Committee is led by a President. The Present and Past

Presidents of the DTAA are:

- E. Connor Kelly (2021-)
- Sandra Kay Lauffenburger (2019-2021)
- Kim Dunphy (2015-2019)
- Jane Guthrie (2007-2015)
- Denis Kelynack (2001-2006)
- Karen Bond (1998-2000)
- Naomi Aitchison (1997)
- Hanny Exiner (1996)
- Heather Hill (1994-1995)

5. DTAA Governance Structure

The DTAA Board consists of the Executive members and the Conveners who lead each DTAA Committee. The Executive members, elected by the eligible voting membership, are the President, Vice President, President-elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. Information on the current Executive and Board members can be found on DTAA's webpage [Board and Executive - DTAA](#). All board members contribute **voluntarily** to the DTAA's work.



*Student members are eligible to join. **FC - On condition students have bookkeeping / finance experience.

Members at the levels of Professional, Clinical Supervisor, and Provisional Professional are currently eligible to vote in elections and on any matters brought to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or any Special General Meetings (SGM). Students must advance to the level of Provisional Professional before they are eligible to vote.

The [Committees](#) can vary with each election cycle and depend on the needs of the DTAA during those two years. The currently active committees can be found on the DTAA webpage <https://dtaa.org.au/about/committees/>.

Student's Welcome Handbook

'Moving Forward Together'



Student members are welcome and encouraged to serve on a number of these committees but not all of them, for reasons of organisational confidentiality. The following committees welcome you to join them.

Eligible to Join	Convenors	Not eligible for students	Convenors
Workplace Development Committee	Mioi Forster-Nakayama	Executive Committee	E Connor Kelly Robyn Price Tracey Nicholson
Publications Committee	Jane Guthrie	Professional Membership Committee	Sandra K Lauffenburger
Research Committee	Brigitte Puls		
Gender, Diversity and Culture Committee	Theresa Jackson		
Training Providers Committee	Tracey Nicholson		
Finance Committee (On condition students have bookkeeping / finance experience.)	Robyn Price		
Training & Education Committee	Virginia Wood		
Ethics Committee	E Connor Kelly		
Governance Committee	TBC		

6. DTAA's Relationship with DMT Training Organisations

Currently, in Australia and New Zealand, the training options for practitioners of Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) include Vocational Education (VET), private training organisations, and University pathways with several additional 'private' providers offering professional development opportunities on related topics. Programs should generally be structured across two years with participants engaging in both practical and theoretical learning. The programs are required to adhere to the DTAA Competency Standards, and provide students with clinical practice across a variety of client populations.

The DTAA does not accredit any training course but accredits the individual applicant. This policy offers the advantage of ensuring that a variety of training options can lead to accreditation and ultimately registration as a practising Dance Movement Therapist. Additionally, the DTAA recognises the need for training organisations that focus primarily on clinical skills as well as those that balance clinical practice and research.

DTAA currently collaborates with:

- [Creative Arts Therapy Department, University of Melbourne](#)
- [IDTIA - International Dance Therapy Institute of Australia](#)
- [Tensegrity Training](#)
- [Dance Movement Therapy Department, University of Auckland](#)
- [Dance & Arts Therapy New Zealand](#)
- [Vietnam Dance/Movement Therapy \(Trị liệu Múa/ Chuyển động\)](#)
- Taiwan NZ Dance Therapy

7. DTAA's Relationship with Other Allied Health Organisations

Within the field of allied health there are several categories of organisations. Those relevant to DTAA's work include:

- a. Professional Registration/Credentialing bodies
 - i. DTAA
 - ii. PACFA - Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia
 - iii. ANZACATA - Australia New Zealand Association of Creative Arts Therapists
 - iv. AMTA - Australian Music Therapy Association
- b. National Advocacy bodies
 - i. AHPA - Allied Health Professions Australia
 - ii. AHPRA - Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
 - iii. NASRHP - National Alliance of Self Regulating Health Professionals
- c. National Insurance schemes
 - i. NDIS (Australia) - National Disability Insurance Scheme
 - ii. ACC (NZ) - Accident Compensation Commission
 - iii. Medicare (Australia) - Australia's universal health care scheme

The DTAA sits on an equivalent basis within the category of professional registration/ credentialing. DTAA is responsible for the accreditation of Dance Movement Therapists and for regulating the profession of Dance Movement Therapy. Likewise PACFA is responsible for practitioners holding degrees in psychotherapy or counselling, ANZACATA for creative arts therapists, and AMTA for music therapists. The DTAA has NO jurisdiction over any other professional body's regulations and practices. Nonetheless we seek collegial relationships with these allied health organisations.

The DTAA sits under the umbrella of any regulations provided by the Advocacy bodies. Currently the DTAA is an associate member of [AHPA](#). With greater internal governance, the DTAA can work toward becoming a full member of AHPA. Upon achieving full membership in AHPA, the DTAA can then work toward membership in NASRHP. However, we are advised that the application process is extensive and requires several years. Neither the DTAA nor any Dance Movement Therapist is eligible for membership of AHPRA as we are not considered a medical profession.

The ability for DTAA members to participate in the national insurance schemes listed is requisite on which National Advocacy body/bodies we are members of. Currently, DTAA members are not eligible for ACC or Medicare coverage unless they hold other degrees. DTAA has submitted an application to the Minister for Disability Services in Australia (in September 2021) to become recognised under the NDIS. This is under review.

Tips

- Please be advised that qualified Dance Movement Therapists are no longer eligible to register with ANZACATA.
- To register with PACFA, you need additional qualifications such as psychotherapy, counselling or psychology. More details can be found [here](#).
- For NZ DMTs, please go to the 10. DMT Careers and find the Fact section (p.10).

8. The Importance of Clinical Supervision

The DTAA believes that clinical supervision is a vital support for professional and ethical practice, and encourages students to access clinical supervision provided by either your training organisation or privately. The DTAA sets the guideline for clinical supervision, for example, how many hours of supervision in relation to the number of client sessions delivered. Please seek further advice from your training organisation. Please read the [DTAA Rationale and Guidelines for Training Supervision of DMT](#) at the [Appendix](#) for more information.

9. Information on Student Membership

Student members of DTAA are eligible for a number of professional benefits. These include:

- Discounts on DTAA-run workshops and webinars;
- Publication bundles at exclusive Student prices;
- Access to online publications (on DTAA's member page);
- Opportunities to participate in some of the DTAA's active committees (Read 5);
- Interaction with professional members in forums (such as the Research forum) and committees;
- An invitation to contact practising members for help or support, or (for a fee), clinical supervision

Please note: You will not be provided with a membership number when you are a Student member.

Student members are warmly welcomed by the DTAA, and it is assumed that the Student member will abide by the rules and guidelines set by the DTAA. These include:

- Ensuring that they or their training organisation hold Indemnity Insurance for their placements;
- Ensuring they have read, understand, and abide by the DTAA's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct;
- Remaining financial in their membership;

We encourage Student members to ask questions of the Executive or relevant Committee Convener should they have any questions or concerns.

The DTAA accepts that during training a Student member is learning to practise Dance Movement Therapy. Thus, during training and while under the continued guidance of the training supervisor, the Student member can call their work Dance Movement Therapy. However, the DTAA requests that a Student apply for **Associate or Provisional Professional membership** immediately upon graduation in order to **continue calling their work Dance Movement Therapy**. Please contact the [Professional Membership Committee](#) for more information.

Tips

The definition of Dance Movement Therapy clearly states:

" In Australasia, the DTAA recognizes **only Associate, Provisional Professional and Professional level members as ethically credentialed to deliver Dance Movement Therapy, call their work 'Dance Movement Therapy', and call themselves a Dance Movement Therapist.**

Other therapeutic practices of dance and movement, including those provided by members of the DTAA who have not reached Associate, Professional or Provisional Professional Membership status, are not recognised as Dance Movement Therapy by the DTAA."

10. DMT Careers - The Workplace Development Committee (WDC) and its Work

The WDC commits to promoting Dance Movement Therapy as a profession for various stakeholders, Government bodies and other allied health professional organisations. The WDC liaises with other organisations that include NDIS (Australia), PACFA (Australia), AHPA (Australia), ANZACATA (Australia & NZ), ACC(NZ)..

The Job Market

Job opportunities that advertise for 'Dance Movement Therapists' are quite rare in the current job markets in Australia, NZ and other regions. Our profession needs to be more widely recognised and understood in the political, social, and cultural contexts in most regions. You may find similar positions advertised such as:

- Creative arts therapist;
- Expressive therapist;
- Psychotherapist; or / and
- Counsellor.

When applying for jobs, it is important for you to be registered with recognised bodies. For example, in Australia, registration with either DTAA, PACFA, ACA, or ANZACATA may be required if your organisation is a registered NDIS provider, a Government department or Non-Government Organisation (NGO)..

Please be advised that DTAA does not have the resources to support you to obtain a job. The DTAA credential is all we can offer, in addition to the items listed below:

- Advice on the NDIS price guideline, NDIS report writing, service agreement and so forth. Please refer to [the NDIS and DMT page](#) on our website (**Note** - only members can access this page.)
- Guidance on Private Practice - See the guideline.

Employment opportunities - FACTS

In comparison to Psychology, Occupational Therapy and other traditional therapies, Dance Movement Therapy as a profession is relatively new.

In Australia and New Zealand, you may need another qualification to gain employment or widen your job opportunities. You might find yourself using Dance Movement Therapy skills in your employment rather than being directly employed as a Dance Movement Therapist.

In New Zealand, the counselling job market requires at least NZQA (New Zealand Quality Assessment) Level 5. In the mental health and addiction field, NZQA Level 4-7. In New Zealand, job choices can be very limited without additional qualifications. An alternative is to work in private practice. However, as an early practitioner, you are strongly recommended to work within an organisation or as a contractor for some time to gain appropriate exposure to Dance Movement Therapy in the workplace in relation to other allied health professions.

The employment situation is very similar in Australia where an AQF level 7-9 in counselling, psychotherapy or psychology is needed to widen your job opportunities. It is a struggle for qualified Dance Movement Therapists to find ideal job positions where there is adequate professional support and opportunity for collaboration. The work can feel isolated and misunderstood. Therefore, it is important for DMTs to come together in this professional organisation, to work with other members to have your work seen and your voices heard by potential employers and clients.

Tips

- Network with other allied health professionals in your local area - Contact Art Therapists, Drama Therapists, Music Therapists, Psychotherapists etc.;
- Seek supervision - your supervisor can help you develop your practice and investigate new clinical opportunities. Supervision is also a requirement of practising levels of membership. Please read the [supervision requirement](#);
- Organise a DMT taster session for your intended population or agency;
- Social Media - Communicate about your work through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn etc. (Please refer to [the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#).);
- Run a movement group - Bring people into a moving space and promote your DMT work - word of mouth can be powerful.

11. Contact

For further inquiries, please contact us.

Australia - Contact [Mioi Forster-Nakayama](#) (Prof. Member, Clinical Supervisor, and WDC Convenor) or [Sandra Kay Lauffenburger](#) (Prof. Member, Clinical Supervisor and the Past DTAA President, WDC member)

New Zealand - Contact [Doreen Lehmann](#) (NZ WDC member, Prof. Member)

Asia - [Alberto Dimarucut](#) (DTAA Prof. Member and Clinical Supervisor)

This handbook is subject to review. The next review will be August 2024 by the DTAA Board.

12. References

Dunphy, K., Lauffenburger, S. K., & Denning, S. (2021). Moving forwards with competence: developing industry competency standards for dance movement therapists across Australasia. *Arts in Psychotherapy*, 72 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0197455620301143>

Appendix – [DTAA Rationale and Guidelines for Training Supervision of DMT](#)

