

Key terms

Manicure – the care of hands and fingernails.

Pedicure – the professional treatment of feet, toes and nails.

Think about it

Remember health and illness can often be detected in the nails. Healthy nails require a balanced diet with essential vitamins A, B, and D, along with minerals calcium, zinc and iodine.

For your portfolio

Read the code of practice for nail services on the Habia website. If you are able to do so, you can print off a copy to keep as reference; if not make a note of the important points.

Introduction

The practices of improving the appearance of the natural nail and cuticle are known as **manicure** and **pedicure**.

This unit focuses on the treatment of natural nails and cuticles on hands and feet. Units N2 and N3 have been combined in the book as many techniques are common to both skill areas.

Manicure is a popular service in salons as smooth skin, well-shaped and varnished nails are vital in promoting a well-groomed appearance. As a therapist carrying out treatments in manicure and pedicure you need to be aware that there is a code of practice that should be followed when providing this service. The code of practice for nail services provides guidelines to protect both the therapist and the client, and it is important that you know what it says.

Regular professional attention will help prevent minor nail damage. This service is becoming increasingly popular with men who have regular treatments as part of their professional lives.

Pedicure is the professional treatment of feet, toes and nails. This service greatly enhances the appearance of feet and toenails, which are often a neglected part of the body. Professional attention to the nails and surrounding skin encourages nail growth, keeps cuticles pushed back and can prevent minor skin conditions.

Benefits for the client:

- improves the appearance of the nails
- softens the surrounding skin
- enhances overall appearance of grooming (important for men as well as women)
- immediate and visual effect.

Benefits for the therapist:

- mainstay salon service
- variety of treatments can be performed to enhance basic treatments and increase salon revenue
- can be used as part of a salon promotion, e.g. leg wax and pedicure for the summer.



You will be required to create different looks to cover the ranges in the standards

As well as being able to successfully carry out a manicure or pedicure treatment, you will need to have an understanding of the structure of the nail and relate treatments to the bones, muscles and skin of the hands and feet. Refer to Related anatomy and physiology section and You and the skin for information on these areas.

Maintain safe and effective methods of working

In this outcome you will learn about:

- preparing the work area and environment to meet legal, hygiene and industry Code of Practice for Nail Services requirements
- ensuring your personal appearance meets accepted industry Code of Practice for Nail Services and organisational requirements
- wearing suitable personal protective equipment for the work that conforms to the industry Code of Practice for Nail Services
- ensuring all tools and equipment are cleaned using the correct methods
- effectively disinfecting your hands prior to nail services
- maintaining accepted industry hygiene and safety practices throughout the service
- selecting and correctly positioning suitable equipment, materials and products for the nail service
- ensuring your own posture and position minimises fatigue and the risk of injury while working
- ensuring the client is in a comfortable and relaxed position that permits access and minimises the risk of injury to you and the client
- disposing of waste correctly to meet local authority requirements and the industry Code of Practice for Nail Services
- ensuring that the service is cost effective and is carried out within a commercially viable time
- leaving the work area and equipment in a condition suitable for further nail services
- ensuring the client's records are up to date, accurate, easy to read and signed by the client and technician.

Before beginning this section, many of the topics you need to know are addressed in earlier units, and you will need to refresh your memory by referring to the topics covered within Professional basics. Please refer to:

The unit	For topics on:
Professional basics – You and your client (pages 00–00)	Hygiene and avoiding cross-infection Salon requirements and presentation
Professional basics – You – the therapist (pages 00–00)	Personal appearance Personal safety
Professional basics – You, your client and the law (pages 00–00) Unit G20 Make sure your actions reduce risks to health and safety (pages 00–00)	Risk assessment Preparing the working environment to meet legal, hygiene and treatment requirements
Professional basics – You – the therapist (pages 00–00) You and your client(pages 00–00) You – the therapist(pages 00–00) You, your client and the law (pages 00–00) and Unit G20 Make sure your actions reduce risks to health and safety (pages 00–00)	Making effective use of your working time Ensuring the use of clean resources Ensuring your own posture and position minimises fatigue and risk of injury while working Disposing of waste materials safely and correctly



Preparing the work area and environment

Preparation is the key to being a professional beauty therapist regardless of the treatment being carried out.

Many salons have a designated working area for manicure and pedicure treatments. Sometimes this is in the reception area. Wherever you carry out a treatment you should ensure all materials, equipment and products are within easy reach.

The area required for manicure and pedicure varies greatly, with more versatility in manicure than pedicure.

Think about it

Your salon will have correct work wear to conform to industry standards and this should always be worn when undertaking treatments.

Think about it

Some pieces of equipment are designed only for single use. The extra cost of these items should be reflected in the prices for manicure and pedicure treatments. Which items could be considered single use?

For your portfolio

Cost the price of single-use items. Find out the cost of buying in bulk and then work out the individual item price.

Do you think that the cost has been taken into account within your salon price list?

Think about it

When disposing of single-use items remember to put them in the appropriate waste bin.

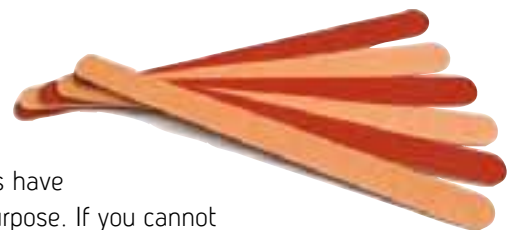
Manicure	Pedicure
Client across a couch	Sitting only – can be combined with a manicure
Sitting across a table	
At a manicure station	
In a hair salon while having hair done	
Client lying on a beauty couch while having a facial	

Selecting equipment and materials for manicure and pedicure treatments

To ensure that no cross-infection or contamination occurs, the manicurist must make sure everything is clean.

Emery board

This has two sides: a coarse side for shortening nails and a fine side, which is used for shaping and bevelling. Emery boards are difficult to clean although some manufacturers have developed special cleansers for this purpose. If you cannot clean the file, it should be disposed of, or given to the client.



Orange stick

The two ends of the orange stick each have a different purpose. The pointed side is used to apply cuticle or buffing cream. The other side, when tipped with cotton wool, can be used to clean under the free edge, remove excess enamel and ease back the cuticle. When tipped with cotton wool this should be disposed of after each use. If not tipped, they are only for one use.



Cuticle knife

This is used to mould back the cuticle and remove any excess attached to the nail plate.



Cuticle nipper

Used to remove hangnails and dead skin around the cuticle



Nail scissors

Used to cut nails.



Toe nail clippers

Used to cut and shorten nails prior to filing.



Nail buffer

A pad covered with chamois leather and with a handle. Used in conjunction with buffing paste. Buffing adds sheen, stimulates circulation and growth at the matrix. Useful in pedicure, male manicure or when nail varnish is not going to be applied. To clean, wipe with a suitable cleansing solution.



3-way buffer

This is used to smooth the nail and to remove any longitudinal and horizontal lines. Wipe between uses with a suitable cleansing solution.



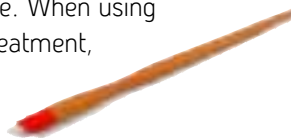
Nail brush

To brush the nails and clean them effectively. Also used to clean the therapist's nails. Wash in hot soapy water or sterilise in a chemical solution. Usually plastic, may be wooden, with a rubber end to ease back the cuticle. Pointed, and may be tipped with cotton wool to clean under free edge. When using from nail to nail, clean with a steriliser. On completion of treatment, sterilise in a cold sterilising solution.



Hoof stick

Usually plastic, may be wooden, with a rubber end to ease back the cuticle. Pointed, and may be tipped with cotton wool to clean under free edge. When using from nail to nail, clean with a steriliser. On completion of treatment, sterilise in a cold sterilising solution.



Hard skin rasp/file/grater

To be used after the feet have been soaked and can be used in conjunction with hard skin remover. Use on areas of hard skin in a rubbing action with light pressure. Wash after use in hot soapy water and remove debris; sterilise in chemical solution.



Pumice stone

As with hard skin rasp.



Think about it

Remember to sterilise all metal equipment: it should be placed in a chemical steriliser or autoclave. While performing the treatment, cleanse with a suitable sanitising solution. (Refer to Professional basics, pages 00–00, for information on sterilisation and sanitisation.)



Think about it

Some chemical solutions may dissolve the glue that attaches the rasp element or bristles in this equipment. All metal equipment should be regularly checked, e.g. hinges and springs on scissors and clippers. Also check that cutting surfaces are smooth and sharp. Once sterilised all equipment should be stored hygienically to prevent contamination occurring.





Paronychia

Key terms

Erythema – vasodilation of the blood capillaries, causing surface reddening of the skin.

Paronychia (pronounced par-on-ik-ee-ah)

This is a bacterial infection of the nail fold, the two types of bacteria generally responsible being staphylococci and streptococci. In paronychia, the nail fold is damaged either from a bad manicure, or by the hands being constantly immersed in water and harsh detergents. The symptoms are **erythema**, swelling and tenderness around the nail fold. There may be signs of slight shrinkage of the nail plate, which is separated from the nail bed. If the condition is not treated, then the symptoms are accompanied by pus formation under the nail fold. After this, other types of bacteria set in, turning the nail plate a dark brown or black colour. Eventually, if the condition is not treated, a fungal infection known as Candida takes over. Candida is the worst form of paronychia and is hard to destroy. The more common form of paronychia is very often found among dental and nursing staff. *Paronychia should not be manicured.*

Whitlows (Pararitium)

These are small abscesses at the side or base of nail. The skin around the nail becomes soft and open to infection by Herpes simplex virus or by bacteria, usually through a prick with a dirty pin or other sharp object. *Nails with this condition must not be manicured.*

Onychia (pronounced on-ee-kee-ah)

This is the inflammation of the nail matrix, accompanied by pus formation. Improper sanitisation of nail implements and bacterial infections may cause this disease. *Nails with this condition must not be manicured.*

Viral infections

These infections are very common and treatment can be adapted by using a waterproof dressing and avoiding the area. Gloves could be worn by the manicurist, as viral infections are highly contagious if touched, and disposed of after use.

Verruca vulgaris (common warts)

These are small and highly contagious. They are caused by a viral infection. They are rough and hard and can be darkish in colour or natural skin tone. They are found either singly or in groups and appear around the nail fold area. They create pressure above the matrix, which can lead to deformities appearing in the growing nail plate (dystrophy). Warts should be left alone or untouched since they tend to disappear of their own accord, as suddenly as they appear. *Area must not be manicured unless covered with a suitable waterproof dressing.*



Verruca vulgaris (common warts)

Verruca plantaris (verruca of the foot)

This condition belongs to the same family as the common wart, but instead of being raised on the surface of the skin, verrucas tend to grow inwards, so until they get fairly large the client can be unaware of having a verruca. They are often caught in swimming pool areas and are highly contagious. The skin's surface can be smooth and the appearance can be like a circular piece of hard skin with a black dot or dots in the centre.



Verruca plantaris (verruca of the foot)

Parasitic infections

Scabies is a parasitic infection caused by a small mite that burrows into the skin, leaving tell-tale red tracking marks. This condition is highly contagious and *under no circumstances is the client to be treated*.

Other conditions

- Eczema – clients who have eczema can be treated, providing the area is not open and weeping. Caution may be required when selecting products so they do not irritate or dry the skin.
- Psoriasis – the same rules apply as with a client who has eczema.
- Dermatitis – certain products could cause dermatitis to flare up, so caution should be used when selecting suitable products. Again, you should not treat if the area is open or infection is present.

Contra-indications that may restrict the service

There are also other conditions that may require an amendment in treatment but are not necessarily a reason for stopping treatment.

Onycholysis (pronounced on-ee-ko-lie-sis) or nail separation

This is a disorder where the nail separates from the nail bed (usually only part of and not the whole nail). It results from a build-up of debris found in the moist warm space between the digits, which attracts bacteria and fungal organisms, and in severe cases turns the nail plate a dark green or black colour. The infected nail plate grows faster than those that are uninfected. In feet, onycholysis occurs through wearing a tight-pinching shoe, poor general circulation and lack of attention to foot care.

Non-infectious nails can be manicured or pedicured as long there is no fungal or bacterial infection. However, severe separation should not be treated.

Onychocryptosis (or ingrowing nails)

This may affect either the fingers or toes. In this condition, the nail grows into the sides of the flesh and may cause infection. Filing the nails too much in the corners or over vigorous cutting is often responsible for ingrowing nails. If the area is open or infection is present, this would prevent the treatment from taking place.

Split nails, brittle nails (Defluvium unguinum)

Normally these are the result of abuse with drying agents, like those found in harsh detergents, cleaners, paint-strippers and film-developing fluids. Cotton-lined, rubber gloves are good protection. Since the nail begins forming at almost the last finger joint, sometimes injury to the finger or diseases like arthritis can result in split nails. If accompanied by an overall dryness of skin and hair, split nails could indicate poor circulation.

Treatment will increase the circulation, bringing more nutrients and oxygen to help with cell regeneration. Hydrate the nail plate and surrounding skin with hot oil or paraffin wax. The use of a cuticle cream or oil for home use will be effective between treatments. *Manicure should be given.*

Think about it

Although you must know what to look for, you must never attempt to diagnose fungal, bacterial, viral and parasitic conditions and disorders yourself as you are not medically trained to do so. Always refer clients to their own GP for treatment.



Paronychia due to in-growing toenail

My story

Focus on manicure and pedicure

Hi, my name is Aisha. A client came into the salon for a manicure. She had brittle, ridged nails. I asked her how long she had worn nail extensions as her nails showed weakness often seen by clients who have worn nail extensions for a long period of time. The client said that she had never worn nail extensions, but when I carried out the consultation I realised that the nails were fragile due to the medical treatment she had been receiving. It was an important lesson for me to remember that health is reflected in the condition of the nail plate.



Beau's line

Blue nails

Usually a sign of bad circulation of blood or a heart condition, *manicures and pedicures may be given* and massage usually helps circulation.

Beau's line

This is a disorder caused by an acute illness. As a result, the matrix temporarily stops producing new cells for the duration of the illness. When it once again begins to reproduce, the period of the illness is clearly marked by a definite furrow or series of furrows. This grows forward and eventually disappears as it is cut away as part of the free edge. *This disorder is non-infectious and can therefore be manicured.*



Finger biting

Nail biting/finger biting (onychophagy – pronounced on-o-ko-fag-ee)

This is a nervous habit where the individual bites and chews the free edge of the nail plate right down to expose the bulging nail bed below. The individual may also chew at the hardened cuticle and nail wall, causing a multitude of hangnails.

Nails should be regularly manicured. Massage and buffing will help to increase circulation and therefore stimulate growth. The use of special preparations to discourage nail biting may be recommended.

Hangnail

This is a condition whereby the cuticle around the nail plate splits leaving loose, flaky pieces of dry skin. It is caused by extreme dryness of the cuticle and from not keeping the cuticle free from the nail plate, so that it is stretched forward as the nail plate grows and eventually snaps leaving hangnails.



Splinter haemorrhages

Splinter haemorrhages.

These appear as tiny streaks of blood under the nail plate, usually near the tip. Like nail separation, splinter haemorrhages can result from a traumatic blow to the nail. Sometimes, however, these red streaks can indicate a liver disease or possibly trichinosis (a ringworm infection caused by eating undercooked meat).

Overgrown cuticles (Pterygium – pet-er-ee-gee-um)

This is caused by excessive cuticle growth that adheres to the base of the nail plate. Suggest that your client has a manicure or that she gently pushes the cuticle back with a soft towel after bathing and apply cuticle cream as often as possible. If the cuticles are very dry, a hot oil or paraffin wax manicure will help hydrate the area.

Pits and grooves

These are linked to both **dermatological** disease and systematic irregularities. However, many people who complain about pits and grooves in their nails have no apparent systematic diseases. It is very common and sometimes an unexplainable phenomenon, which can be dismissed with gentle buffing.

Flaking and breaking nails (Onychorrhexis – on-ee-ko-rex-is)

This is a very common complaint. The nail plate becomes dry and brittle and can be due to lack of vitamins A and B2, general ill-health, incorrect filing, excessive use of enamel remover, or excessive use of solvents and harsh detergents. Use of a nail strengthener may help this condition if applied regularly. It is also advisable to keep the nails fairly short to prevent them breaking.

Bruised nails

Bruising occurs when the nail receives a heavy blow. It is seen as a dark purple patch on the nail which will grow out with the nail. In severe cases the nail may detach itself from the nail base. Unless there is damage to the matrix, a new nail will grow normally to replace it. *Severely bruised nails should not be treated.*

Eggshell nails

These are recognised by the nail plate being noticeably thin, white and much more flexible than in normal nails. The nail plate separates from the nail bed and curves at the free edge. This disorder may be caused by chronic illness or may be of systemic or nervous origin.

Corrugations (or wavy ridges)

These are caused by uneven growth of nails, usually the result of illness or injury. When giving a manicure to a client with corrugations, buff to minimise ridges and use a ridge filler when painting for a smoother finish.

Furrows (depressions)

These may either run lengthwise or across the nail. They are usually the result of an illness or an injury to the nail cells, in or near the matrix. The nails are fragile, so care must be taken.

Leuconychia (pronounced loo-ko-nee-ee-kah) or white spots

These appear frequently in the nails but do not indicate disease. They may be caused by injury to the base of the nail or they might be air bubbles. As the nail continues to grow, these white spots eventually disappear. This is a very common disorder.

Other conditions of the feet**Callous**

This is a hard build-up of skin that is often found in areas of friction or as a result of incorrectly fitting shoes. The skin over grows for protection.

Varicose veins

These are visible, distended veins which are often present in the legs (especially the lower legs). If serious, varicose veins will prevent massage taking place as this could be painful and cause extra blood to flow in the area.

Key terms

Dermatological – of the skin; often referring to a skin condition.



Bruised nail

Suggested manicure procedure

If you do specialised manicures and pedicures at your salon using a particular brand of products, you will probably go on a course which shows you how to use these products and gives an order for the procedure that should be followed. You therefore need to adapt your treatments at all times according to the manufacturer's instructions. However, whichever products you use, the basic principles for manicure and pedicure are the same.

Before starting the treatment, always carry out the following steps.

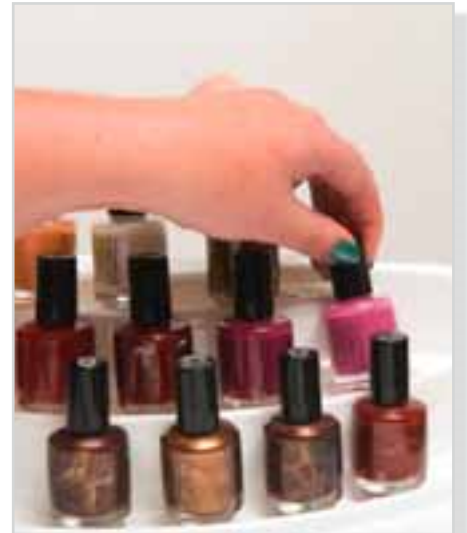
- Ensure equipment is sterile and all materials and products are easily accessible.
- Complete a consultation form, check for contra-indications (see above) and discuss and agree with the client a service that meets their needs.
- Remove all the client's jewellery, including watches, so that a thorough treatment can be carried out. Keep in a safe place.

Step-by-step manicure

1 During the consultation discuss the needs of the client and adapt the service to suit. You should cover preferred nail length and shape and the type of polish required. If there are no contra-indications present you are ready to begin.



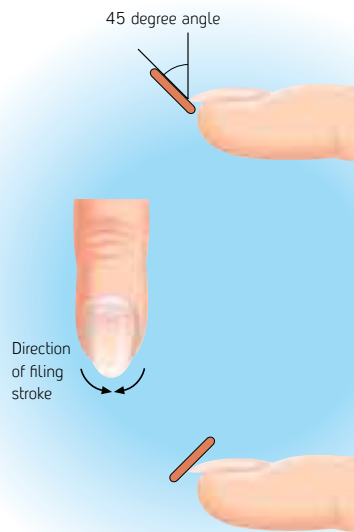
2 Ask the client to pick her choice of varnish – dark, plain, frosted or French manicure. You should recommend a nail finish suitable for the client. Remember, dark colours will make the nails appear shorter, so this may not be a suitable colour for short or bitten nails.



3 Remove the old varnish and check the nails for ridges and problems as you go. Removing the polish will allow the nail plate to be examined in a natural condition. Sanitise the hand to prevent cross-infection while you do a manual contra-indication check.



4 Cut the nails into shape if required, using sterilised scissors. Nail clippings need to be caught in a tissue and disposed of.



Beveling seals the free edge layers to prevent water loss and damage.

Think about it

When performing treatments on the cuticle never push back or nip beyond the eponychium or infection could occur.

Think about it

Do not use a sawing action as this can cause the layers of the nail plate to split and separate.

5 File the nails using an emery board working outside in one way one side and then the other – avoid using a sawing action.



6 Beveling seals the free edge layers to prevent water loss and damage.



7 Using an orange stick decant and apply cuticle cream around the cuticles.



8 Gently massage the cream into the cuticles. This softens the skin, making removal easier.



9 Soak the hands in warm water (tested by you first) to absorb the cuticle cream and to soften them.



10 Remove one hand at a time and dry the hands thoroughly.



11 Apply cuticle remover with a cotton wool bud. It is caustic, so take care to apply sparingly and not on to the surrounding skin. Refer to COSHH regulations and the manufacturer's instructions.



12 Using a hoof stick flat to the nail plate, gently push the cuticle back using circular motions.

13 You may need to use the cuticle knife to ease the excess cuticle away from the nail plate. This should be kept flat and the nail plate should be damp so that the nail plate is not scratched. The knife should also be kept flat to avoid cutting the cuticle.



14 Cuticle nippers may be used to trim off the excess cuticle; use a tissue to dispose of the waste.



15 Bevel again, to give a smooth finish to the free edge.



16 Using a suitable medium begin your hand massage with light effleurage movements. Support the hand and effleurage right up to the elbow.



17 Circular thumb frictions get rid of tension in the flexors and extensors of the forearm



18 Do circular frictions over the back of the hand.

19 Support the hand and give gentle circular manipulations to each finger – this will free tension in the knuckles. Do not pull on the finger or make the circles too big.



20 Grip the client's finger between your bent first and middle fingers and pull and twist gently down the length of the finger.



Frequently asked questions

Q	What will happen if I don't check for contra-indications?
A	Infections of the hands and feet can be spread very easily – especially warts and verrucas.
Q	Can I use a dark-coloured varnish on short or bitten nails?
A	Lighter colours will make the nails appear longer; a dark colour will draw attention to bitten and badly kept nails.
Q	What happens if I don't keep the cuticle knife flat and wet?
A	Keeping the knife flat helps prevent cutting the skin, and wetting the knife prevents scratching the nail plate.
Q	Why can't I use foam toe separators between the toes when painting the toe nails?
A	Tissues are used because they are disposable. Foam separators may harbour germs and cause infections to be passed from client to client. If you do use these in your salon they should be costed into the treatment price and given to the client to take home.
Q	Do I have to buff with every treatment?
A	Buffing stimulates nail growth and gives the nail a nice natural sheen, a must for natural looking nails. In a treatment that has colour applied to the nail plate it will help to even out the minor ridges as well as stimulating growth. Ridges are often more apparent on toe nails and buffing should be carried out.
Q	Do I really have to cut toe nails straight across?
A	Yes, this will prevent ingrowing toe nails, a condition which can cause pain and infection if left untreated and which, in severe cases, may require an operation.



Check your knowledge

- 1 How would you recognise a verucca?
- 2 Is athlete's foot a virus, fungus, or bacteria?
- 3 How should you cut toenails?
- 4 What is the purpose of a hoof stick?
- 5 If the nails are stained what could be the cause(s)?
- 6 What salon treatment could you recommend for a client with very dry skin or cuticles?
- 7 What is leuconychia?
- 8 Why do you bevel the nail when filing?
- 9 What are finger and toenails made from?
- 10 What nail shape suits most colours of varnish?
- 11 List five things that you should include in a consultation.
- 12 How should you store acetone and what legislation should you follow when storing it?
- 13 If the nails have corrugations, what treatments could you offer to minimise this?
- 14 What could incorrect filing do to the nails?
- 15 What is the purpose of cuticle cream?
 - a) To soften the skin on the hands and the feet
 - b) To massage hands and feet
 - c) To soften cuticles before soaking
- 16 What condition would a nail have if it flaked and broke easily?
 - a) Ridges
 - b) Overgrown cuticles
 - c) Dry brittle nails





Getting ready for assessment

You cannot do any simulation within this unit, but the evidence can be gained quite easily. Remember to keep all paper evidence of any actions, feedback or witness statements that you have been given to support this work.

Your assessor will observe your performance on at least three occasions for both manicure and pedicure treatments (a minimum of six treatments for both the units).

- Treat a range of clients for both manicure and pedicure – although the range does not stipulate treatment on men, male treatments are becoming increasingly popular in both salon and spa.
- Use all consultation techniques.
- Use all the equipment and materials: files, scissors, nippers, clippers, cuticle tools and foot rasp.
- Apply all types of hand and foot treatments: paraffin wax, hand and foot masks, thermal mitts and boots and exfoliators.
- Apply all massage mediums.
- Apply all types of nail finish, including dark colour, French, high shine buff (manicure only).
- Maintain suitable environmental conditions (ventilation, heat, etc.).
- Prepare the client to suit the treatment.
- Deal with contra-indications that may prevent or restrict the treatment.
- Deal with contra-actions.
- Provide treatment advice: includes suitable aftercare products, homecare routines, e.g. avoidance of activities that may damage the nails and surrounding skin, as well as recommended intervals between treatments.

Evidence of these can be provided by the observation of your assessor, but also by written work, projects, witness statements, photographic and video evidence and APL statements.

You must prove to your assessor that you have the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to perform competently on all ranges within the criteria for this unit.