

ART THERAPY AT LA TROBE

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The La Trobe University Post Graduate Art Therapy courses welcomes your inquiries about the Graduate Diploma of Art Therapy and Master of Art Therapy courses.



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This is a list of some of the most frequently asked questions about Art Therapy and the La Trobe Post graduate courses:



How would you define "art therapy"?

According to the American Art Therapy Association, it is "the therapeutic use of art making, within a professional relationship, by people who experience illness, trauma or challenges in living, and by people who seek personal development. Through creating art and reflecting on the art products and processes, people can increase awareness of

self and others, cope with symptoms, stress and traumatic experiences; enhance cognitive abilities; and enjoy the life-affirming pleasures of making art."

- ART THERAPY combines the healing powers of art and the transformation of materials, with the healing process of the therapeutic relationship between therapist and client.
- The psychotherapeutic use of visual art as a process encourages emotional and cognitive integration of the individual, the growth of self awareness, esteem, attitudinal and behavioural change
- ART THERAPY is distinguished from other treatment modalities in its reliance on art as the agent, the context and the catalyst for the therapeutic experience.
- Therefore it is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of the various dimensions of the art experience and how they become therapeutic in nature.

Where is Art Therapy practised ?

APPLICATIONS are incredibly diverse. Art Therapy may be used in schools, special education, clinics, hospitals, hospices, mental health clinics, community centers, forensic institutions, crisis intervention, rehabilitation services, substance abuse, palliative care, wellness settings and private practice.

Describe some of the ways that Art therapy can be used ?

Art Therapy goals may be:

- Educational
- Recreational
- Rehabilitative
- Preventative
- Therapeutic

What does Art Therapy training involve ?

Art therapists are trained as both artists and therapists. Their work involves furthering the healing process by engaging people in the arts. Practitioners combine the visual arts with the practice of psychotherapy to further the healing process.

A central feature of this process will be a focus on the holistic development of the intending art therapist. The course will cultivate intellectual, practical and research skills and, perhaps more importantly, the emotional growth and self-awareness necessary for the student's future ability to engage clients in the therapeutic process.

How do your courses differ from other Art Therapy courses in Australia?

La Trobe Art Therapy Post Graduate Courses offer a holistic, humanistic approach to Art Therapy. Students learn art therapy skills as applied to a wide variety of client populations. These programs provide a synthesis of creative and psychotherapeutic theory. Courses present a thorough theoretical framework which is integrated into personal and practical application through an experiential process. Art is created in every class and used to directly learn therapeutic skills. Students focus on a wide variety of populations. Both courses are for students who want a broad body of skills, integrated with a strong theoretical framework.

What are the entry requirements?

An undergraduate degree is required for admission. Art therapy requires that practitioners have training and skills in two different disciplines; art and therapy. Prospective students need formal study or training in areas of fine art such as life drawing, painting, ceramics or sculpture as well as training in the areas of abnormal psychology, psychopathology, lifespan development or human development and counselling skills

A minimum of 1 years counselling or counselling related experience (volunteer or paid) is also required.

In the selection process of prospective students the staff are concerned particularly with the following questions:

- Does the applicant have personal qualities appropriate for training in art therapy?
- Does the applicant have a sincere interest in and commitment to work as an art therapist and the specific training that this course provides?
- Does the applicant have prior and current experience in self expression through various visual art media?
- Does the applicant meet the education requirements in counselling (or related field) and in visual art and will the applicant be able to meet the academic demands of this course?
- Does the applicant have prior and preferably recent or current work experience in a counselling or closely related facilitative role?

Who are the staff in the La Trobe Post Graduate Art Therapy Courses?

Hannah Menahemi MA AATR IATR, the Course Coordinator has been involved in the field of art therapy teaching and training for over 20 years. In her extensive work in program development she has been particularly involved with the development of professional standards in Art Therapy Training Programs and ethical issues specific to art therapy practice. One her special interests is that of the importance of the art therapist's continued involvement in her/ his personal creative process Hannah has extensive experience as an art psychotherapist in clinical art therapy practice working with adults, adolescents and families from diverse cultural backgrounds, with a wide range of issues including identity, relationship issues, family art therapy, post trauma stress disorder, holocaust survivors and their families and multi cultural issues.

Teaching staff includes experienced art therapists practicing in the field, visiting speakers, overseas lecturers and clinical placement supervisors with the appropriate academic and professional qualifications to maintain our academic and professional standards: Our staff have extensive experience teaching in Universities and continue to practice as consultants, educators and therapists.

Patricia Fenner MA AATR: Lecturer

Patricia has taught in the La Trobe University Art Therapy program since 1999. She has spent many years prior to coming to La Trobe in psychiatric rehabilitation settings as Manager/practitioner. Clinical supervision has been a primary aspect within this work, both of individuals and teams. Patricia also runs a private practice.

Vicky Nicholls MA (A.Th) AATR : Senior Art Therapist at the Austin CAMS Unit, ANATA Regional Co-Ordinator 2001

Rena Urbach MA (A.Th)AATR: Art Therapist / social worker in private practice, ANATA Regional Co-Ordinator 2001

Zeb Briely MA (A.Th) AATR: Art Therapist, 2002 Acting President of ANATA, background in Drama, group work

Camille Mc Donald

Juliet Walsh: Placement Co-ordinator,

What are the professional credentials needed for of practice in Art Therapy in Australia

The professional body representing art therapists in Australia is the **Australian National Art Therapy Association (A.N.A.T.A.)**. This organization was founded in 1987 as a result of the increasing interest in art therapy throughout the country. A.N.A.T.A. developed guidelines for the professional training of art therapists that meet the highest international standards at the Masters degree level.

The La Trobe Master of Art Therapy program is designed with these standards and the standards of the American Art Therapy Association and the British Association of Art Therapy as guidelines for training.

Students in the La Trobe Art Therapy Program are encouraged to participate as student members of A.N.A.T.A. and to work towards credentials as art therapists through the Australian National Art Therapy Association. Faculty, alumni and students are active in the national and regional professional art therapy organization and are influential in the growth of the art therapy profession in this country

Students completing the La Trobe Master of Art Therapy may also apply to PACA to be placed on their Register of Counsellors

What employment opportunities are available to the graduates of your programme?

Upon graduation students will be prepared to seek clinical positions in a number of settings. It is important to note especially in the ever-increasing competitive arena of providing social services that the La Trobe Master of Art Therapy is comparable to masters level training in other clinical areas such as counselling, social work, and counselling psychology. Students who complete this program successfully receive training, skills and practical experience to enable them to practice in clinical settings including hospitals, community health programs, rehabilitation services, education psychiatric, substance abuse, eating disorders, geriatric, special education, medical rehabilitation, palliative care, forensic AIDS, the homeless, wellness settings and private practice.

La Trobe Art Therapy Graduates are working with

- children with learning disorders, behavioral problems, emotional disturbances,
- mentally retarded children and adults,
- handicapped children with visual, hearing, speech or physical impairments
- psychiatric patients, closed and open departments, out patients,
- post psychotics, follow up and rehabilitation treatment
- people with eating disorders,
- physically or sexually abused children or adults, shelters for battered women,
- children or adults with medical problems, pre or post surgery, terminally ill,
- chronic illnesses, psoriasis, CF, cancer, AIDS,
- Post trauma sufferers, Victims of terror,
- Holocaust survivors and their families,
- Diverse cultural groups, ethnic, racial and cultural issues,
- War veterans, head injuries, battle shock, physical disability.
- Alcohol and drug abuse,
- Short and long term prisoners,

Art Therapy may also used by normal, healthy individuals for stress reduction, self exploration and awareness, self actualisation.

Are students required to be in therapy during the program?

From time to time personal issues might arise that are important to deal with in a counselling/ therapy situation. We recommend students have access to therapists and can refer students should the need arise.



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Thank you to the students whose art work is reproduced above.