# Professional Registration Education and Career Framework for Physiotherapy Practitioners in the Maldives

Maldives Allied Health Council

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# Table of Contents

List of Tables ..... 3
1. Executive Summary ..... 4
2. Introduction ..... 5
3. International Alignment and Professional Titles ..... 6
3.1 Transition of Sub-Degree Roles ..... 7
4. Registration and Career Pathway ..... 7
4.1 Academic and Career Progression ..... 8
4.2 Continuing Professional Development ..... 8
4.3 Competency Assessment ..... 9
4.4 Recognition of International Qualifications ..... 9
4.5 Mentorship and Supervision ..... 9
5. Licensing Framework ..... 10
5.1 Licensing Principles ..... 10
5.2 Licensure and Registration Procedure ..... 10
5.4 Professional Misconduct and Disciplinary Action ..... 11
6. Education Standards ..... 11
6.1 Curriculum Philosophy ..... 12
6.2 Core Physiotherapy Modules ..... 12
6.3 Physiotherapy Education: Contact Hours and Credit Allocation ..... 15
6.4 Qualification Weightage and Registration Criteria ..... 16
6.4.1 Certificate in Physiotherapy (1–2 years) ..... 16
6.4.2 Diploma in Physiotherapy (3 years) ..... 16
6.4.3 Bachelor's in Physiotherapy (4 years) ..... 17
6.4.4 Master's in Physiotherapy (1 to 2 years post-Bachelor's in Physiotherapy) ..... 17
6.4.5 Doctorate in Physiotherapy (3 years post-Master's in Physiotherapy) ..... 17
7. Programme Accreditation ..... 17
7.1 Role of MAHC in Approval ..... 18
7.2 Compliance with MQA Guidelines ..... 18
7.3 Continuous Quality Enhancement ..... 18
7.4 Programme Accreditation and Recognition Procedure ..... 19
8. Conclusion and Recommendations ..... 20
9. Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations ..... 22
10. References ..... 23

# List of Tables

Table 1. Standardised Professional Titles..... 6
Table 2. Registration Levels and Minimum Qualifications ..... 7
Table 3. Competency Frameworks and CPD Standards..... 9
Table 4. Programme Hours and Credits ..... 16

## 1. Executive Summary

This framework establishes a unified national system for physiotherapy regulation in the Maldives, setting clear requirements for education, professional titles, registration and career progression. Developed by the Maldives Allied Health Council (MAHC) under the Healthcare Professional Act (Law No. Act 13/2015), it ensures physiotherapy practice is safe, ethical and aligned with World Physiotherapy and WHO rehabilitation standards.

Protected titles are standardised and linked to minimum qualifications. A bachelor's degree is confirmed as the entry-level requirement for autonomous practice. Sub-degree roles remain only during a limited transition and must operate under supervision. Bridging pathways support progression to degree-level qualifications.

A tiered registration structure covers Assistants, Technicians, Physiotherapists, Specialist Physiotherapists and Consultant Physiotherapists. Licensure is mandatory for all who provide clinical care, with defined Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements to maintain competence and regulatory compliance.

The framework sets national education standards aligned with the Maldives National Qualifications Framework (MNQF) and international benchmarks. Programmes must deliver competency-based curricula encompassing foundational sciences, physiotherapy sciences, professional skills, research capacity and supervised practice. Minimum practicum hours are specified to ensure consistent graduate readiness.

Programme accreditation is governed by a structured MAHC process that includes document review, site inspection and approval before student recruitment. All programmes must also comply with Maldives Qualifications Authority (MQA) criteria and maintain continuous quality monitoring.

The framework provides a coherent career pathway supporting advancement to specialist and consultant levels through accredited qualifications and advanced practice. It strengthens workforce sustainability, reduces reliance on expatriate staff and builds national capacity for rehabilitation services.

Overall, the framework establishes a clear, internationally aligned foundation for physiotherapy regulation in the Maldives, improving patient safety, professional accountability and the quality of education and services. MAHC will review and update the framework periodically to ensure continued relevance and alignment with national priorities and global best practice.

## 2. Introduction

Physiotherapy is a primary care, autonomous, client-focused health profession dedicated to optimising movement, function and overall well-being across the lifespan. Physiotherapists support individuals whose movement and functional capacity are affected by ageing, injury, disease, disorder or environmental factors addressing physical, psychological, emotional and social health. Their role spans health promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

Physiotherapists are qualified to conduct comprehensive assessments, make clinical judgements, formulate diagnoses and prognoses, develop and apply evidence-based interventions, provide consultation within their scope, refer clients appropriately, evaluate treatment outcomes and empower individuals through education and self-management strategies.

Physiotherapy services in the Maldives were initially limited to the government tertiary hospital in Malé and delivered by a small number of Maldivians trained overseas, later supplemented by expatriate professionals. Expansion to regional and atoll hospitals as well as private clinics then occurred mainly through expatriate recruitment. The introduction of physiotherapy degree programmes by The Maldives National University marks a significant step toward building a sustainable, locally trained and regulated physiotherapy workforce.

Under the Healthcare Professional Act (Law No. Act 13/2015), all allied health professionals must be registered and licensed to ensure professional standards and patient safety. As the national regulator, the MAHC oversees registration, licensure, disciplinary processes and the recognition of physiotherapy programmes, while the MQA maintains responsibility for academic accreditation and qualification levels under the MNQF.

This framework establishes clear pathways for physiotherapy licensure, registration, education and career progression in alignment with international standards and national regulatory requirements. Its objectives are to

- Define professional titles and minimum educational qualifications,
- Establish academic and career progression pathways,
- Define CPD requirements to support ongoing professional competence,
- Strengthen professional regulation and quality assurance mechanisms across education and practice,

Detailed scopes of practice and ethical requirements are defined in the MAHC *Scope of Practice and Professional Standards for Physiotherapy Professionals in the Maldives*, which must be read alongside this document.

## 3. International Alignment and Professional Titles

Physiotherapy regulation in the Maldives is aligned with the standards of World Physiotherapy and WHO guidance on rehabilitation. These standards emphasise competency-based education, accountable professional practice and the delivery of safe, evidence-informed care. The MAHC applies a standardised set of professional titles based on qualification level, scope of practice and professional responsibility. These titles correspond with the professional categories recognised by the National Pay Commission, although the National Pay Commission and Civil Service Commission may include additional employment-grade designations for remuneration and career progression. Private healthcare providers may also use their own internal job titles for organisational purposes.

However, all titles issued by MAHC are protected titles under the Healthcare Professional Act (Law No. 13/2015) and may only be used by individuals who hold the required qualifications and registration. Employment-grade titles used by public or private institutions do not replace, modify or override MAHC's regulatory titles.

Standardising titles within the MAHC registration system ensures clarity, consistency and international equivalence, supporting a unified understanding of qualification levels, scopes of practice and career pathways across employers, training institutions and regulatory bodies.

**Table 1. Standardised Professional Titles**

| Level | Title | Scope Descriptor* |
|---|---|---|
| Certificate | Physiotherapy Assistant | Direct supervision |
| Diploma | Physiotherapy Technician | General supervision |
| Bachelor's Degree | Licensed Physiotherapist | Independent practice |
| Master's Degree | Licensed Specialist Physiotherapist | Specialised practice |
| Doctorate | Licensed Consultant Physiotherapist | Consultant leadership |

*These scope descriptors provide only a high-level orientation. Detailed scopes of practice for each category are defined separately in the MAHC *Scope of Practice and Professional Standards for Physiotherapy Professionals in the Maldives* (document no)

### 3.1 Transition of Sub-Degree Roles

The MAHC recognises the bachelor's degree as the minimum qualification for autonomous physiotherapy practice in the Maldives, consistent with international norms. However, a small number of practitioners continue to hold sub-degree qualifications, including Physiotherapy Assistants and Physiotherapy Technicians which remain within the workforce as legacy categories. To maintain workforce stability, these roles will continue to be recognised for a defined transition period.

To align national practice with global norms and strengthen long-term workforce capability, the MAHC will guide a gradual transition away from these sub-degree roles as entry pathways. During this transition, eligible practitioners will have access to structured advancement options, including bridging programmes, credit recognition and modular learning opportunities, enabling progression towards degree-level qualifications.

The MAHC will support this process by endorsing structured progression pathways and enabling approved educational institutions to develop programmes that facilitate advancement to degree-level qualifications.

## 4. Registration and Career Pathway

A structured registration and career pathway ensures safe, ethical and accountable physiotherapy practice by defining clear expectations for entry, progression and advanced roles. It provides a coherent system for aligning education, scope of practice and professional responsibilities, thereby enabling consistent standards across the health sector.

**Table 2. Registration Levels and Minimum Qualifications**

| Title | Minimum Qualification | MNQF Level | Licensing Requirement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Physiotherapy Assistant | Certificate in Physiotherapy | Level 4 | Under transition |
| Physiotherapy Technician | Diploma in Physiotherapy | Level 5/6 | Required |
| Licenced Physiotherapist | Bachelor's in Physiotherapy | Level 7 | Required |
| Licenced Specialist Physiotherapist | Master's in Physiotherapy | Level 9 | Required |
| Licenced Consultant Physiotherapist | Doctorate in Physiotherapy | Level 10 | Required if engaged in direct or advisory practice |

## 4.1 Academic and Career Progression

A clear academic and career progression pathway supports lifelong learning and professional advancement in line with MNQF and MAHC standards. It also ensures that practitioners can build on their competencies in a structured and progressive manner as they move into roles of increasing responsibility.

1. **Assistant → Technician**

   Certificate holders may upgrade to diploma or bachelor's degree level through bridging programmes.

2. **Technician → Physiotherapist**

   Diploma holders may progress to a bachelor's degree through credit transfer or lateral entry, gaining eligibility for independent practice upon completion.

3. **Physiotherapist → Specialist Physiotherapist**

   Bachelor's graduates can pursue master's programmes in clinical specialisation, leadership or academia.

4. **Specialist Physiotherapist → Consultant Physiotherapist**

   Master's graduates may continue to doctoral-level education focusing on research, policy or innovation in physiotherapy.

Currently, physiotherapy education in the Maldives is available only at the bachelor's degree level, delivered exclusively through The Maldives National University. While this programme offers a solid foundation for entry level practice, opportunities for postgraduate advancement remain limited. Addressing this gap will be essential for supporting leadership development, reducing reliance on overseas training and broadening the depth and sophistication of physiotherapy services nationwide.

## 4.2 Continuing Professional Development

All registered physiotherapy practitioners must complete annual CPD in accordance with MAHC requirements. CPD ensures continued competence, supports the adoption of emerging evidence and aligns professional practice with national health priorities. CPD activities may include formal learning, supervised practice, quality improvement, research engagement and professional development activities approved by MAHC.

**Table 3. Competency Frameworks and CPD Standards**

| Title | Minimum Entry Qualification | Annual CPD Hours | Examples of CPD Activities |
|---|---|---|---|
| Physiotherapy Assistant | Certificate | 10 hours | Workshops, safety modules |
| Physiotherapy Technician | Diploma | 15 hours | In-service training, case discussions |
| Licenced Physiotherapist | Bachelor's | 20 hours | Clinical workshops, journal clubs |
| Licenced Specialist Physiotherapist | Master's | 25 hours | Specialist courses, mentorship |
| Licenced Consultant Physiotherapist | Doctorate | 30 hours | Publications, academic teaching, student research supervision |

CPD activities must be documented and submitted to MAHC for verification at the time of licence renewal. Failure to meet CPD requirements may result in suspension or revocation of licensure.

### 4.3 Competency Assessment

To ensure readiness for practice, MAHC may require:

- Written examinations assessing theoretical knowledge.
- Practical examinations evaluating clinical skills and patient management.
- Portfolio review including documented clinical experiences, CPD activities and reflective practice.

### 4.4 Recognition of International Qualifications

Physiotherapists trained outside the Maldives may apply for recognition if they:

- Hold a degree from a programme recognised by the relevant national accreditation authority.
- Meet MAHC's entry-level and CPD requirements.
- Successfully complete any bridging courses or competency assessments as directed by MAHC.

### 4.5 Mentorship and Supervision

- Newly registered physiotherapists may require mentorship under a senior physiotherapist for a specified period.

- Mentorship supports skill development, professional integration and adherence to ethical standards.
- Supervision levels may be adjusted according to the practitioner's experience, specialisation and performance.

## 5. Licensing Framework

Licensure under MAHC ensures that physiotherapy services are delivered safely and ethically by practitioners with verified professional competence. Licensure functions as a core public-protection mechanism, ensuring that only suitably qualified and regulated individuals provide physiotherapy care within the Maldives.

### 5.1 Licensing Principles

Licensure is mandatory for all physiotherapists engaged in direct clinical practice, including patient assessment, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. Physiotherapy Assistants and Technicians must also be registered and may work under the supervision of a licenced physiotherapist. Registration without licensure applies to individuals working exclusively in non-clinical roles such as education, research, administration or policy development.

Licensing decisions are based on:

- Verification of a recognised and accredited physiotherapy qualification approved by MAHC and MQA.
- Completion of supervised clinical training in accordance with established standards.
- Adherence to the Physiotherapy Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- Demonstration of continued competence through annual CPD and timely renewal of licensure.

Scope of practice detail associated with licensing is defined in the separate MAHC *Scope of Practice and Professional Standards for Physiotherapy Professionals in the Maldives* document.

### 5.2 Licensure and Registration Procedure

Applications are submitted via the MoH virtual counter until the MAHC website is launched. The steps include:

1. **Application Form Completion**

   Applicants must access and complete the relevant licensure or registration form.

2. **Submission of Supporting Documents**

   All required supporting documents must be compiled into a single PDF file and uploaded with the application.

3. **Payment of Fees**

   Applicants will receive an email notification or text message with payment instructions. Any applicable fees must be paid promptly to avoid delays.

4. **Review and Decision Notification**

   Upon completion of the review process:

   - **If approved:** The applicant will be notified of the time and location for collecting the licence or registration certificate.
   - **If not approved:** The applicant will be informed of the reasons for the decision and, where applicable, guidance for resubmission.

5. **Updates to the Procedure**

   Any amendments to this process will be announced by MAHC through official communication channels. Applicants are encouraged to regularly check updates issued by MAHC in collaboration with MoH.

### 5.4 Professional Misconduct and Disciplinary Action

MAHC may investigate complaints regarding professional misconduct, which includes but is not limited to:

- Practising without a valid licence.
- Breach of ethical or professional standards.
- Inadequate clinical competence leading to patient harm.

Disciplinary actions may include warnings, supervision, suspension or revocation of registration.

## 6. Education Standards

Physiotherapy education programmes in the Maldives must be competency-based, clinically focused and aligned with MAHC requirements as well as national accreditation

requirements. Programmes must integrate theoretical knowledge, clinical practice, research literacy and professional behaviours to ensure that graduates are prepared for safe and effective practice.

## 6.1 Curriculum Philosophy

Programmes must demonstrate a coherent educational philosophy that reflects international physiotherapy standards, including World Physiotherapy's global education framework. Curricula must integrate:

- Foundational scientific knowledge.
- Physiotherapy-specific theory and practice.
- Supervised clinical education across core practice areas.
- Research and evidence-based practice.
- Professional behaviours and communication skills.

Curricula must ensure progressive development of competence, applying vertical and horizontal integration across modules, assessments and clinical learning.

## 6.2 Core Physiotherapy Modules

Physiotherapy programmes must include core components that meet the minimum requirements for professional preparation. Institutions may tailor delivery methods, provided that all expected competencies are achieved. These components reflect internationally accepted standards, including the World Physiotherapy Education Framework (2021).

1. **Basic Sciences (Foundational Modules)**
    - Anatomy (gross, regional, musculoskeletal, neuroanatomy).
    - Physiology (cardiovascular, respiratory, neurophysiology, musculoskeletal physiology).
    - Biochemistry and pathophysiology (cellular processes, metabolism, disease mechanisms).
    - Kinesiology/biomechanics (movement science, posture, gait analysis).
    - Psychology/behavioural science (patient communication, motivation, health behaviour).

- Pharmacology (principles relevant to physiotherapy practice).

**Key learning outcomes:** Understand human structure and function; explain physiological and biomechanical principles underlying movement and dysfunction; apply foundational knowledge to clinical reasoning and establish the scientific basis for physiotherapy practice, which underpins all clinical decision-making.

**Indicative Weighting / Hours:** ~15–20% of total programme content.

**2. Core Physiotherapy Science and Clinical Practice**

- Musculoskeletal physiotherapy (management of musculoskeletal and orthopaedic conditions).
- Neurological physiotherapy (rehabilitation of patients with central and peripheral nervous system disorders).
- Cardiopulmonary / respiratory physiotherapy (rehabilitation of patients with respiratory and cardiac impairments).
- Paediatric and geriatric physiotherapy (age-specific management of developmental and age-related conditions).
- Sports and orthopaedic physiotherapy (injury prevention, performance enhancement and post-injury rehabilitation).
- Women's health and pelvic health physiotherapy (assessment and management of pregnancy-related conditions, pelvic floor dysfunction, pelvic pain and postnatal recovery).
- Pain management and electrotherapy (use of modalities, e.g., TENS, ultrasound, laser for pain control and tissue healing).
- Manual therapy techniques (joint mobilisation, manipulation and soft-tissue techniques).
- Community and public health physiotherapy (health promotion, prevention and rehabilitation within community settings).

**Key learning outcomes:** Conduct comprehensive physiotherapy assessments; diagnose, plan and implement safe, effective and evidence-based interventions across all clinical areas; adapt care to diverse populations representing the central component of physiotherapy education.

**Indicative Weighting / Hours:** ~40–50% of total programme content.

3. **Professional and Clinical Skills**

- Clinical assessment and examination skills (history taking, physical assessment, functional evaluation).
- Therapeutic exercise and rehabilitation techniques (strengthening, stretching, endurance, balance, postural correction).
- Clinical reasoning and evidence-based practice (decision-making, applying research to patient care).
- Ethics and professionalism (patient rights, confidentiality, professional conduct).
- Communication, interpersonal and counselling skills (patient education, interdisciplinary collaboration).
- Health promotion and community physiotherapy (public health interventions, ergonomics, wellness programmes).
- Documentation, record keeping and digital health tools (electronic health records, telerehabilitation and mobile health platforms).

**Key learning outcomes:** Demonstrate ethical, patient-centred care; communicate effectively; collaborate within multidisciplinary teams; maintain accurate clinical records and uphold professional standards which are essential for safe and effective clinical practice.

**Indicative Weighting / Hours:** ~10–15% of total programme content.

4. **Research and Academic Development**

- Research methods and statistics (understanding research design, data analysis and interpretation to inform physiotherapy practice).
- Evidence-based practice and critical appraisal (applying and critically evaluating evidence to support safe, effective and patient-centred care).
- Scientific writing and presentation skills (communicating research findings clearly through reports, publications and presentations).
- Clinical audit and quality improvement (systematically monitoring and improving clinical practice and service delivery).

- Capstone research project or dissertation, for bachelor's and above (conducting independent research to generate new knowledge and inform advanced physiotherapy practice).

**Key learning outcomes:** Critically appraise research literature; conduct and report research; integrate evidence into clinical decision-making; contribute to knowledge advancement which are essential to professional advancement and lifelong learning.

**Indicative Weighting / Hours:** ~10–15% of total programme content.

**5. Clinical Practicum / Supervised Practice**

Clinical education is integral to all levels of physiotherapy training. Students must complete structured, supervised clinical placements across core practice areas to develop professional competence and confidence.

- **Clinical Rotations:** Musculoskeletal, Neurology, Cardiopulmonary, Paediatrics, Geriatrics, Community Health and specialised areas (e.g., Sports, Women's Health).
- **Supervision:** Conducted by licenced physiotherapists or faculty recognised by MAHC.

**Key learning outcomes:** Apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings; demonstrate clinical competence, professional behaviour and independent problem-solving under supervision.

**Indicative Weighting / Hours:**

Diploma: ≥30% of total programme duration under supervision.

Bachelor's: ≥1,000 hours across multiple settings.

Master's and Doctorate: ≥500–1,000 hours of advanced or clinical or research practice.

All programmes must demonstrate coherent integration between theory and practice and ensure that intended learning outcomes are met.

## 6.3 Physiotherapy Education: Contact Hours and Credit Allocation

The allocation of contact and non-contact hours serves to ensure an appropriate balance of classroom instruction, practical skill development and independent study. Contact hours represent structured teaching, laboratory work and supervised clinical training, whereas non-contact hours encompass guided reading, research tasks,

assignments and self-directed learning. As programmes progress from certificate to doctoral level, the proportion of non-contact hours increases to reflect the growing emphasis on autonomous learning, advanced clinical reasoning and research competence.

**Table 4. Programme Hours and Credits**

| Programme | ~ Total Contact Hours | Contact Hours (%) | Non-Contact Hours (%) | ~ Total Hours | ~ Credit Hours |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Certificate | 800–1,200 | 60–70 | 30–40 | 1,200–1,500 | 120–150 |
| Diploma | 2,500–3,000 | 65–75 | 25–35 | 3,300–4,000 | 330–400 |
| Bachelor's | 3,500–4,000 | 60–70 | 30–40 | 5,000–5,500 | 500–550 |
| Master's | 750–1,000 | 55–65 | 35–45 | 1,400–1,800 | 140–180 |
| Doctorate | 1,200–1,500 | 50–60 | 40–50 | 2,400–2,800 | 240–280 |

These indicative ranges provide consistency while allowing institutions flexibility in programme design, provided that outcomes and competency requirements are met.

## 6.4 Qualification Weightage and Registration Criteria

### 6.4.1 Certificate in Physiotherapy (1–2 years)

- Core physiotherapy and clinical content: Basic physiotherapy concepts, patient care support and foundational anatomy/physiology.
- Supervised clinical practice: Majority of practical learning delivered under the direct supervision of licensed physiotherapists.
- Assist physiotherapists in clinical tasks; not eligible for independent practice.
- Eligible for registration as Physiotherapy Assistants.

### 6.4.2 Diploma in Physiotherapy (3 years)

- Core physiotherapy and clinical content: ~70–75% of total programme content.
- Supervised clinical practice: ≥30% of total programme duration.
- Graduates work under supervision; not eligible for independent practice.
- Eligible for registration as Physiotherapy Technicians.

### 6.4.3 Bachelor's in Physiotherapy (4 years)

- Core physiotherapy and clinical content: ~75–80% of total programme content, including research and advanced modules.
- Supervised clinical practice: Minimum 1,000 hours.
- Graduates are eligible for independent practice as Physiotherapists.
- Eligible for registration as Physiotherapists under MAHC.

### 6.4.4 Master's in Physiotherapy (1 to 2 years post-Bachelor's in Physiotherapy)

- Core physiotherapy and clinical content: ~70–80% advanced clinical practice, specialisation modules, research methodology and professional leadership.
- Supervised clinical/advanced placements: ≥500 hours (depending on specialisation).
- Graduates may practise independently in specialised areas, assume leadership roles in clinical services and contribute to research and education.
- Eligible for registration as Specialist Physiotherapists.

### 6.4.5 Doctorate in Physiotherapy (3 years post-Master's in Physiotherapy)

- Core physiotherapy and clinical content: ~60–70% advanced research and scholarly work (including dissertation), with ~30–40% in advanced clinical practice, leadership and professional development modules.
- Supervised clinical/research placements: ≥500–1,000 hours, depending on programme structure.
- Graduates may assume independent clinical, academic and research leadership roles.
- Eligible for registration as Consultant Physiotherapists.

## 7. Programme Accreditation

Programme accreditation is a core regulatory function through which MAHC assures the quality, relevance and safety of physiotherapy education in the Maldives. Accreditation confirms that an institution has the academic governance, qualified faculty,

learning resources and clinical placement capacity required to prepare graduates for competent practice. It also promotes consistency across training programmes and provides assurance to students, employers and regulatory bodies regarding the credibility and comparability of qualifications.

Accredited programmes must demonstrate coherent curriculum design, effective delivery systems, appropriate assessment methods and robust internal quality assurance processes. Accreditation supports continuous improvement by encouraging institutions to align programmes with national health priorities, integrate emerging evidence and maintain current approaches to teaching and clinical training.

### 7.1 Role of MAHC in Approval

The MAHC evaluates programme structure, curriculum alignment, intended learning outcomes, assessment strategies, faculty qualifications and clinical placement arrangements for their relevance and quality. In addition, institutional site inspections ensure appropriate infrastructure, laboratory and clinical facilities, student support systems and internal quality assurance mechanisms.

### 7.2 Compliance with MQA Guidelines

Physiotherapy programmes must obtain formal approval from MQA in alignment with the MNQF. Programmes must meet established MQA requirements for credit structures, qualification levels, learning outcomes, assessment frameworks and faculty credentials.

Institutions must maintain ongoing compliance with both MAHC and MQA accreditation and quality assurance requirements to ensure that programmes remain nationally recognised and that qualifications are credible and portable.

### 7.3 Continuous Quality Enhancement

Training institutions must implement a system of continuous monitoring, evaluation and curriculum review to ensure ongoing alignment with national health needs, professional standards and emerging global developments in physiotherapy education. Regular stakeholder engagement including feedback from students, faculty, employers and regulatory bodies should inform curriculum updates and quality improvement measures.

## 7.4 Programme Accreditation and Recognition Procedure

The MAHC has implemented a structured accreditation process to ensure physiotherapy programmes meet national expectations for educational quality and professional preparation. The procedure comprises the following components:

1. **Application submission**
   - Institution submits MAHC accreditation application form via the MoH virtual counter.
2. **Payment of Fees** (if applicable)
   - Institution pays the required processing fee to ensure uninterrupted evaluation.
3. **Evaluation by MAHC**
   - Review of submitted documents and programme details.
   - Indicative timeline: ~ 2 months.
4. **Site Inspection**
   - Mandatory on-site inspection by MAHC representatives to verify facilities, clinical partnerships and academic governance.
5. **Assessment Outcome**
   - **Full Approval:** Programme meets all requirements.
   - **Conditional Approval:** Minor improvements required; must meet conditions within specified timeline.
   - **Not approved:** Major deficiencies identified; programme must address issues before reconsideration.
6. **Restrictions on Programme Advertisement**
   - Institutions must not advertise or enrol students until approval is formally granted.
7. **Post-Approval Notification**
   - Formal notification of approval allows the programme to proceed with student recruitment and delivery.
8. **Ongoing Compliance**

- Institution must remain updated with MAHC requirements and ensure ongoing adherence to regulatory standards.

## 8. Conclusion and Recommendations

This framework establishes a nationally coherent and internationally aligned system for physiotherapy education, professional registration and career development in the Maldives. It supports consistent standards across the sector, strengthens regulatory oversight and provides clear expectations for practitioners, employers and training institutions.

By defining qualification requirements, registration categories and progression pathways, the framework underpins the development of a competent and sustainable physiotherapy workforce. It promotes safe and accountable practice, enhances the quality of education and enables the profession to contribute effectively to national health priorities, including prevention, rehabilitation and long-term care.

The framework reinforces:

- Standardisation of qualifications and scopes of practice providing consistency and equity across different levels of physiotherapy education and service delivery.
- Safe, ethical and competent service provision, upholding public confidence and protecting patient welfare.
- Clear and transparent career progression from assistant to consultant levels, promoting continuous professional growth and leadership development.
- Strong alignment with national and international rehabilitation standards, supporting global recognition, professional mobility and mutual equivalence of qualifications.
- Enhanced integration of education, regulation and service delivery, ensuring physiotherapy contributes effectively to national health priorities, including preventive, curative and rehabilitative care.
- Promotion of research and evidence-based practice, fostering innovation, policy development and the continual improvement of clinical outcomes.

- Support for workforce planning and professional accountability, ensuring physiotherapy services are delivered by competent practitioners in appropriate roles, supported by robust regulatory oversight.

The MAHC will periodically review, update and strengthen this framework in collaboration with key stakeholders, including MQA, educational institutions, employers and practising professionals. Revisions will ensure continued responsiveness to emerging health needs, technological developments and global best practices in physiotherapy education and practice.

All stakeholders including educators, practitioners and regulatory bodies are encouraged to actively contribute to the continuous enhancement of physiotherapy standards in the Maldives. Through shared commitment to excellence, professionalism and patient-centred care, this framework will guide the evolution of a resilient and high-quality physiotherapy profession that plays a vital role in improving the nation's health and well-being.

## 9. Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

CPD: Continuing Professional Development

MAHC: Maldives Allied Health Council

MoH: Ministry of Health

MQA: Maldives Qualifications Authority

MNQF: Maldives National Qualifications Framework

## 10. References


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