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Watsu® Instructor Certification (revision 2021.07.28)

What is Instructor Certification? Certification is the official process by which Watsu Practitioners become Assistants, qualified to assist Instructors, and by which Assistants become Instructors, qualified to teach Watsu at a designated level – Basic Watsu, Watsu 1, Watsu 2, Watsu 3, and Clinical Watsu 3. The certification process ensures that Assistants and Instructors meet internationally accepted standards for professional excellence, as established by the Worldwide Aquatic Bodywork Association (WABA). Only Assistants and Instructors who are Registered (listed in the WABA Registry) are authorized to assist or teach WABA classes.

Training Programs: WABA Assistant and Instructor Training Programs throughout the world (Table 1) offer required core certification courses – Assistant Training Course (ATC) and Instructor Training Course (ITC) (Table 2).

Training Overview: Assistants and Instructors commit to follow the WABA Teaching Philosophy and Code of Ethics, and complete training requirements for a designated level (Table 3). Each certification level requires experience assisting and co-teaching, mentoring with Senior Instructors (SIs) (Table 4), and evaluation of proficiency. ITC Instructors evaluate proficiency for Basic Watsu, and Coach Advisors (CAs) evaluate proficiency for all other levels (Table 5).

Approvals: WABA Board of Directors (BD), in consultation with WABA Educational Standards Advisory Committee (ESAC), approves certifications for advanced Instructors, and for SIs and CAs (Table 6). See glossary of WABA Acronyms and terms (Table 7).

Table 1. Watsu Assistant and Instructor Training Programs

Training Program	Contact/Website
Germany – Institute Für Aquatische Körperarbeit ATC/ITC	Helen Schulz helen@iaka.de http://www.watsu.de/en
India – Watsu India ATC/ITC	Gianni De Stefani <agsgds@gmail.com> http://www.watsu.in
Italy – Watsu Italia ATC/ITC	Gianni De Stefani <agsgds@gmail.com> http://www.watsu.it/en
Poland – Watsu Polska ATC	Tomasz Zagórski <szaman3w@wp.pl> http://www.watsu.pl
South America – South America ATC/ITC	Pending
United States – Theri Thomas ATC/ITC	Theri Thomas <theri1@aol.com> http://www.aquaticbodywork.com
United States – US Team ATC/ITC	Cameron West, Peggy Schoedinger, and Mary Seamster <cameron@aquaticintegration.com>

Note: ATC/ITC Programs from any given country may be offered worldwide

Table 2. Core Assistant and Instructor Training Courses

Course	Prerequisites	Details
Assistant Training Course (ATC)	• Be certified Watsu Practitioner for minimum one year • Give 60 professional sessions during previous year • Complete Basic Watsu one time and Watsu 1 three times Or Watsu 1 twice and Watsu 2 twice; one class must be current Watsu 1 <u>Application Package</u> a. Application Form b. Resume c. Letter of Intent stating why you wish to be an Assistant d. Description of practice – how long active, where, kind and quantity of clients... e. WABA Transcripts – courses taken and audited f. Professional licenses and insurance g. Written recommendations from two registered Instructors h. Criminal Background Check Submit application to Assistant Training Program of choice (Table 1).	<u>Core Topics</u>: • Guidelines for assisting • Roles • Watsu® skills • Communication and listening skills • Creating a safe and positive learning environment • Learning styles • Class dynamics • Supporting land and pool classes <u>Duration</u>: 3-4 days, 30+ hrs <u>Considerations</u>: • Watsu 1 (50 hours) may be completed in modules as Basic Watsu (16 hours) and Watsu Transition Flow (34 hours) • Only one recommendation required in countries with two or fewer Instructors • ATC Instructors may require additional assignments to complete certification after ATC completion
Instructor Training Course (ITC)	• Pass ATC • Assist Watsu 1 three times, with at least two different Instructors <u>Application Package</u> a. Letter of Intent stating why you wish to be an Instructor b. Resume c. Description of practice – how long active, where, kind and quantity of clients... d. WABA Transcripts – courses taken, audited, and assisted	<u>Core Topics</u>: • Role of Instructor • Creating and Maintaining Safe Container • Managing Communication • Teaching Styles • Watsu Skills • Teaching Land and Pool Classes • Ethics • Business Practices

	e. Professional licenses and insurance f. Evaluation from each Instructor assisted g. Written recommendations from two registered Instructors Submit application to Instructor Training Program of choice (Table 1).	Duration: 7 days/70+ hours Considerations: • Assisting Watsu 1 (50 hours) may be completed in modules as Basic Watsu (16 hours) and Watsu Transition Flow (34 hours) • Assisting Watsu 2 (50 hours) may be substituted for one of the assists • ITC Instructors may require additional assignments to complete certification after ITC completion.

Table 3. Watsu Instructor Certification. (Requirements for each level must be completed before advancing to that level.)

Level	Requirements	Authorizations
Watsu Assistant	• Pass ATC	• To assist Watsu courses • To teach Introduction to Watsu and Watsu Round, up to 8-hour class • To register Introduction to Watsu and Watsu Round students in WABA Registry • To conduct Supervisions of Basic Watsu and Watsu 1, up to 3-hour supervision
Basic Watsu Instructor-In-Training	• Pass ITC	• To co-teach Basic Watsu classes with experienced Watsu 1 Instructor (who has taught at least four Watsu 1 classes)
Basic Watsu Instructor	• Co-teach three Basic Watsu classes with two different authorized Watsu 1 Instructors • Submit Application to Instructor Training Program and receive approval	• To teach Basic Watsu independently • To register students in WABA Registry • To create Training Institute (TI) independently or with colleagues

Watsu 1 Instructor-In-Training	• Teach three Basic Watsu classes independently • Register students for these classes • Assist Watsu 1 or Transition Flow three times, one class within last two years • Submit Application to Instructor Training Program and receive Program approval	• To co-teach Watsu 1 classes with Senior Instructor
Watsu 1 Instructor	• Co-teach three Watsu 1 or Transition Flow classes with two different Senior Instructors • Teach one 50-hour Watsu 1 class independently, mentored and evaluated by Coach Advisor • Assist current Watsu 2 within last two years • Submit Application to Instructor Training Program, pass ESAC review, and receive BD approval	• To teach Watsu 1 independently
Watsu 2 Instructor-In-Training	• Be registered Watsu 1 Instructor for at least two years • Teach five Watsu 1 classes independently or in a team • Register students for these courses in WABA Registry • Assist three Watsu 2 classes, one class within last two years • Submit Application to ESAC and receive BD approval	• To co-teach Watsu 2 classes with Senior Instructor

Watsu 2 Instructor	• Co-teach three Watsu 2 classes with two different Senior Instructors • Teach one Watsu 2 class independently, mentored and evaluated by Coach Advisor • Submit Application to ESAC and receive BD approval	• To teach Watsu 2 independently • To approve Demonstration of Mastery (DOM) as prerequisite for Watsu 3 class
Watsu 3 Instructor-In-Training	• Be registered Watsu 2 Instructor for at least three years • Teach five Watsu 2 classes independently or in a team • Assist three Watsu 3 classes, one class within last two years • Submit Application to ESAC and receive BD approval	• To co-teach Watsu 3 classes with a Watsu 3 Instructor
Watsu 3 Instructor	• Co-teach three Watsu 3 classes, with two different Senior Instructors • Teach one Watsu 3 class independently, mentored and evaluated by Coach Advisor • Submit Application to ESAC and receive BD approval	• To teach Watsu 3 independently • To approve Hands-On for Practitioner certification
Instructor Application Package: *WABA Instructor Application Guidelines*, Level-Specific *Application Form*, and *Student Evaluation Summary* spreadsheet downloadable from WABA Registry. For each level of certification, Instructor-In-Training submits a complete application package: a) Application Overview Form (checklist for application package and requirements) b) Letter of Intent (level, professional goals, description of practice) c) Transcripts (from WABA Registry, courses completed and taught) d) Written Evaluation and Recommendation from Co-Instructors d) Written Evaluation and Approval by Coach Advisor (CA) e) Professional Licenses and Insurance to meet local legal requirements		

f) Student Evaluations for each course co-taught, taught, and coached, and Student Evaluation Summary Form.

Applicants are responsible for keeping copies of their own Evaluations, in conjunction with their TIs, Mentors, SIs, and CAs.

Instructor Certification Considerations and Clarifications

- **Audit/Intern Requirement:** Assistants must audit and intern a class before assisting at a particular advanced class level (Watsu 2, Watsu 3, Clinical Watsu 3, Watsu 4...). ESAC may waive this requirement if Assistant is considered to be sufficiently prepared. Note that ATC prerequisites include equivalent requirement for Watsu 1 level.
- **Class Size Requirement:** Classes must have a minimum of four students, with at least two non-auditors.
- **Requirement to Assist and Co-Teach with Different Instructors:** For each level assisting and co-teaching must be performed with at least two different approved Senior Instructors.
- **Basic Watsu Independent and Team Teaching:** Watsu 1 Instructor-in-Training may combine independently taught Basic Watsu and co-teaching of Watsu 1 Transition Flow for the co-teaching requirement, but not for the CA evaluated independent teaching requirement. At least one co-teaching must be a full 50-hour course in five or six consecutive days, to ensure proficiency in teaching 50-hour intensives.
- **Organizing Classes Requirement:** For co-teaching and CA evaluated independent teaching, at least two required classes must be organized by the Instructor-In-Training, including all aspects of scheduling, listing, advertisement, enrollment, and arrangement to use facilities.
- **Watsu 3 Requirement:** Watsu 3 Instructors-In-Training are encouraged to take Clinical Watsu 3.
- **DOM and Hands-On Authorization**: Watsu 2 and 3 Instructors are authorized to approve DOM, and Watsu 3 Instructors are authorized to approve Hands-On. In special cases, WABA BD may authorize other Instructors to approve DOM or Hands-On, based on recommendation of Watsu 3 Senior Instructor, skills and supplementary training/mentoring.
- **Apprenticeship Path:** Training Programs to accommodate disability and special needs may be designed in an apprentice/mentor framework to meet equivalent requirements, experience, and evaluation, and must be approved ahead of time on a case-by-case basis by WABA BD based on recommendations from ESAC.
- **Core Curriculum:** WABA is establishing Core Watsu Training Curriculum to ensure that the Watsu® service mark remains a symbol of consistent professional excellence. Local ATC and ITC Programs may have additional requirements.
- **Dues, Registry, Watsu® Trademark:** Assistants and Instructors must pay annual Instructor Dues, as well as pay Posting Fees to register each student in every class. Registered Assistants and Instructors are listed in the WABA Registry and authorized to use the Watsu® trademark as a symbol of professional excellence.
- **"Grandfathered" Certification:** For each major revision of Instructor Standards, Instructors are "grandfathered in" to keep authorization to teach Watsu, as long as they teach the current form, unless otherwise approved by WABA BD. If an Instructor requires more

training, WABA BD, in consultation with ESAC, may require completion of ITC or additional requirements.

- **Continuing Education:** Practitioners, Assistants, and Instructors are required take 50 hours of Continuing Education (CE) every three years to enhance and maintain professional skills. WABA maintains a list of WABA approved CE courses. Other courses may be approved by ESAC on a case-by-case basis.
- **Agreement:** Assistants and Instructors agree in writing to read, understand, share, and follow these Instructor Certification Standards and future updates as a responsibility of their WABA certification.
- **Finances:** Fees for taking classes, auditing, assisting, supervising, co-teaching, teaching, or coach advising must be agreed upon in writing by all parties ahead of time, and are typically set by the Instructor.
- **Requirement Changes:** In cases where Instructor Certification requirements change, applicant may follow either new requirements or older requirements (ex post facto) for up to five years from the date ATC or ITC is passed, the date certification is approved at a particular level, or the date when first co-teaching is completed for the next level of certification:
  - **Date ATC Passed:** requirements for Assistant certification and pre-requisites for ITC Class in effect on that date apply for up to five years.
  - **Date ITC Passed:** requirements for W1 Instructor certification in effect on that date apply for up to five years.
  - **Date Certified W1 Instructor:** requirements for W2 Instructor certification in effect on that date apply for up to five years.
  - **Date Certified W2 Instructor:** requirements for W3 Instructor certification in effect on that date apply for up to five years.
  - **Date Complete First Co-Teaching at next level:** requirements for next level certification in effect on that date apply for up to five years.

Table 3A. Clinical Watsu 3 Instructor Certification.

Level	Requirements	Authorizations
Clinical Watsu 3 Instructor-In-Training	• Be registered Watsu 2 Instructor for at least three years • Teach five Watsu 2 classes independently or in a team • Assist three Clinical Watsu 3 classes with two different Instructors, one class within last two years • Provide copy of professional healthcare license or certificate	• To co-teach Clinical Watsu 3 classes with a Clinical Watsu 3 Instructor **<u>Clinical Watsu 3 Core Curriculum</u>** • Physiological effects of immersion in water • Precautions for Aquatic Bodywork and Immersion in Water • Clinical reasoning for precautions • Safety on land and in pool

	• Provide proof of professional healthcare education – Anatomy (100 hrs), Physiology (100 hrs), Pathology (100 hrs), Clinical Reasoning for indications / precautions for bodywork and immersion in water, Somatic Psychology/Trauma/PTSD (100 hrs) or approved equivalency • Five years in Professional Practice – e.g., Treatment of Orthopedic and Neurological Conditions; Trauma/PTSD Treatment; clinical treatment with adults and children • Submit Application to Clinical Watsu 3 Instructors (currently Peggy Schoedinger and Cameron West) and receive approval	• Managing risk: environmental, physical, emotional • No sequence used or taught • Free Flow and Follow Movement • Listening to body's natural movements and tendencies • Acute vs chronic conditions, staying within Scope of Practice • Clinical Intake Form, assessing risks • How to document sessions • Use of special needs models (within Scope of Practice) for 1-3 sessions during class • Progression of treatment: less is more • Typically addressing trunk and neck needs first, then proximal to distal with extremities • Providing handouts regarding different conditions
Clinical Watsu 3 Instructor	• Co-teach three Clinical Watsu 3 classes, with two different Senior Instructors • Teach one Clinical Watsu 3 class independently, mentored and evaluated by Clinical Watsu 3 Instructor • Submit Application to ESAC and receive BD approval	• To teach Clinical Watsu 3 independently • To approve Hands-On for Practitioner certification

Table 4. WABA Senior Instructors (SIs)

Name	Email	Location
Ahara Vatter	aharava1@hotmail.com	USA (New Mexico)

Alexander George	healingdance@hotmail.com	Germany
Alexis Lee	alexislee@me.com	USA (Hawaii)
Antonio Maria Cardozo Acosta	antoniomcacosta@gmail.com	Brazil
Arjana Brunschwiler	arjana@watsu-wata.com	Belgium
Batia Siegel	batia@watsu-ways.co.il	Israel
Cameron West	cameron@aquaticintegration.com	USA (California)
Carolyn Crawford	c.j.crawford@xtra.co.nz	New Zealand
Cristina Levi	crilevi@watsu.it	Italy
Eberhard Petschel	shanti.petschel@creavista.org	Germany
Fernando Calixto	fcwatsu@yahoo.com.br	Brazil
Georges Amir Kunzler	info@lewatsu.ch	USA (Oregon)
Gianni De Stefani	awticino@bluewin.ch	Switzerland
Helene Schulz	helen@iaka.de	Germany
Inika Spence-Whaley	inikasati@gmail.com	USA (Hawaii)
Je-Won Park	j-falc@hanmail.net	South Korea
Jun Hong Kim	aqua-Kjh@hanmail.net	South Korea
Jurgita Svediene	watsu@sati.lt	Lithuania
Karla Caspers	karlacaspers@gmx.de	Germany
Keli Procopio	keli@watsu.it	Italy
Kim L Hartz	watsukim@gmail.com	USA (California)
Mary Seamster	maryseamster@earthlink.net	USA (Washington)
Mary Theri Thomas	theri1@aol.com	USA (California)
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Miguel Angel Bertran	miguebertran@gmail.com	Spain
Minakshi	minakshiwatsu@comcast.net	USA (Florida)
Peggy Schoedinger	pegaquatic@aol.com	USA (Colorado)
Tomasz Zagorski	szaman2w@wp.pl	Poland
Toru Ogasawara	ogasawara@watsucenter.jp	Japan
Tuvia Stuchiner	hydrotuv@gmail.com	Israel
Xavier Boisson	xavierboisson@hotmail.com	France

Table 5. WABA Coach Advisors (CAs)

Name	EMail	Location
Batia Siegel	batia.siegel@gmail.com	Israel
Cameron West	cameron@aquaticintegration.com	USA (California)
Gianni De Stefani	agsgds@gmail.com	Switzerland
Helen Schulz	helen@iaka.de	Germany
Keli Procopio	keli@watsu.it	Italy
Mary Seamster	maryseamster@earthlink.net	USA (Washington)

Minakshi	minakshiwatsu@comcast.net	USA (Florida)
Peggy Schoedinger	pegaquatic@aol.com	USA (Colorado)
Tomasz Zagorski	szaman2w@wp.pl	Poland

Table 6. Senior Instructor (SI) and Coach Advisor (CA) Certification

Level	Requirements	Authorizations
Senior Instructor (SI)	• Teach Watsu 1 for five years and Watsu 2 for three years, with five Watsu classes per year during last three years • Maintain active professional aquatic bodywork practice • Demonstrate professional excellence as Instructor, with effective communication skills, and impeccable ethical record • Submit Application to ESAC and receive BD approval	• To mentor, Co-Teach, and evaluate Instructors-In-Training
Coach Advisor (CA)	• Be SI for four years and registered Watsu 3 Instructor • Mentor, co-teach, and evaluate five Instructors-in-Training, with demonstration of excellence • Demonstrate professional excellence as SI, with effective communication skills, and impeccable ethical record • Submit Application to ESAC and receive BD approval	• To coach, evaluate, and recommend approval of Instructors-In-Training for certification
SI and CA Application Package: *WABA Instructor Application Guidelines*, *SI and CA Application Forms*, and *Student Evaluation Summary* spreadsheet downloadable from WABA Registry. SI or CA candidate submits a complete application package to ESAC:		

a) Application Overview Form (list teaching and experience that meets requirements)
b) Transcripts (from WABA Registry, courses co-taught and taught)
c) Written Evaluation and Recommendation from Mentor
d) Student Evaluations for each course co-taught and taught and Student Evaluation Summary

Applicants and Mentors must prepare applications using WABA Guidelines for Instructor Certification Applications, SI and CA Application Forms, and Evaluation Summary spreadsheet (downloadable from Registry). Applicants are responsible for keeping copies of their own Evaluations, in conjunction with their TIs, Mentors, SIs, and CAs.

SI and CA Certification Considerations and Clarifications:

- **Class Size Requirement:** Classes must have a minimum of four students, with at least two non-auditors.
- **Dues, Registry, Watsu® Trademark:** SIs and CAs must consistently pay annual Instructor Dues, as well as pay Posting Fees to register each student in every class.
- **"Grandfathered" Certification:** For each major revision of SI or CA Standards, certification is "grandfathered in" under the rules in effect for original certification, as long as they teach the current form of Watsu, unless otherwise approved by WABA BD.
- **Professional Excellence:** with respect to logistics (scheduling, listing, advertising, registering…); diversity of venues, backgrounds, teaching styles, and cultures; objective and effective feedback/evaluation; timely communication via email, telephone, etc.; supportive and non-judgmental communication skills; prepare evaluations and review in person; coordination between TI, SI, CA, Co-Instructors, and Instructors-In-Training; impeccable ethical standards; understanding and support of WABA certification standards; timely and complete preparation of application packages.
- **Requirement Changes:** in cases where SI or CA Certification requirements change, applicant may follow either new requirements or older requirements as follows:
  - **Date Certified W3 Instructor:** requirements for SI certification in effect on that date apply for five years.
  - **Date Certified SI:** requirements for CA certification in effect on that date apply for five years.
  - **Date of Intent Request:** requirements for SI or CA certification apply for five years after a letter of intent to apply for certification is submitted to ESAC and approved by BD.

Table 7. Glossary of WABA Assistant and Instructor Certification Terms

Acronym	Description
ATC	**Assistant Training Course** – see Table 2
	Assistant: WABA certified professional authorized to assist Instructors in teaching Watsu courses
	Authorizations: official rights or duties of WABA certified Assistants and Instructors, in particular to assist or teach at a designated level, to register

	students, to use the Watsu® trademark, to found TIs, to create elective courses, and to conduct Supervisions, as approved by WABA BD
BD	**Board of Directors:** official group of Practitioners and Instructors that oversees and provides leadership for WABA, through policy and operational decisions, approval of certifications, management of website, fundraising, coordination of committees, and enactment of standards
	Certification: official WABA process by which Watsu students become Practitioners, Practitioners become Assistants, and Assistants become Instructors authorized to teach at a designated level (Basic, Watsu 1, Watsu 2, and Watsu 3); certification requires completion of all requirements for designated level and ensures professional competence
CA	**Coach Advisor:** WABA certified Senior Instructor (SI) who mentors, evaluates, and recommends certification of Instructors
CE	**Continuing Education:** Coursework required of Practitioners, Assistants, and Instructors to enhance skills and maintain certification.
DOM	**Demonstration of Mastery (DOM):** evaluation of readiness to take Watsu 3; approved and placed in WABA Registry by Watsu 2 or 3 Instructors (or other BD approved Instructor) based on receiving session from Student; in some cases, additional preparation may be required before approval
ESAC	**Educational Standards Advisory Committee:** official WABA committee that advises WABA BD about educational policy and standards pertaining to Watsu Provider, Practitioner, and Instructor certification, and that also helps with implementation of educational standards, certification, and approval of elective courses
Hands-On	**Hands-On (former also called DOP- demonstration of proficiency):** evaluation of readiness to give sessions as Practitioner; approved and placed in WABA Registry by Watsu 3 Instructors (or other BD approved Instructor) during or after Watsu 3, based on receiving session from Student; in some cases, additional preparation may be required before approval
	Instructor Dues: annual professional payment required of all WABA Assistants and Instructors to be Registered, helps pay costs of maintaining the WABA Registry and other administrative services
ITC	**Instructor Training Course** – see Table 2
	Instructor-In-Training: Watsu Practitioner or Instructor authorized to co-teach at a designated level, as required for certification as Instructor at that level
	Instructor: Watsu professional certified to have training and experience necessary to teach Watsu courses independently at a designated level
	Level: category of Watsu course – Basic, Watsu 1, Watsu 2, and Watsu 3 – that comprises standard set of professional skills, sequence of moves, and officially recognized degree of mastery
	Licensed: Practitioner who fulfills local legal requirements to be able to practice aquatic bodywork in particular country, state, province, county, or region

	Posting Fees: payments charged to cover the cost of maintaining student, Assistant, Instructor, and course records in the WABA Registry
	Practitioner: WABA certified professional authorized to give Watsu sessions; based on training courses, experience, and assessment of proficiency
	Provider: professional authorized by WABA to give Watsu sessions under an existing license-to-touch at spa, clinic, or other facility, while completing coursework and other requirements for certification as Practitioner
	Registered: Assistants and Instructors who have paid annual Instructor Dues and are listed in Registry; authorized to use Watsu® trademark as symbol of professional excellence, and authorized to assist or teach WABA approved courses
	Registry: online WABA database containing student transcripts, certification records, course offerings, Practitioner and Instructor listings, and official documents (maintained by Worldwide Aquatic Bodywork Registry, WABR, organization run by Harold Dull)
SI	**Senior Instructor:** experienced WABA certified Instructor who mentors, Co-Teaches, and helps evaluate proficiency for Instructor certification
	Supervision: one-on-one training session in which an Assistant or Instructor mentors a Watsu student to develop professional skills, for credit hours posted in the WABA Registry
TI	**Training Institute:** officially recognized organization that offers Watsu training for Practitioners and Instructors, including Watsu courses, electives, ATC, and ITC
	Watsu®: form of aquatic bodywork characterized by one-on-one sessions in which a Practitioner gently cradles, moves, stretches, and massages Receiver in warm water, with nose and mouth above water surface; for relaxation, recreation, personal growth, and therapy; originally developed by Harold Dull at Harbin Hot Springs.