#### Trent University LogoEXEMPT JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:**  Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator

**Job Number:** X-446 | VIP: 1909

**Band:** EXEMPT-5

**Department:** Athletics & Recreation

**Supervisor Title:** Assistant Director, Sport & Student Engagement

**Last Reviewed:**  March 21, 2024

#### **Job Purpose:**

Reporting to the Assistant Director, Sport & Student Engagement, this position will be responsible for overall management of health and wellness programs for the Trent Excalibur’s varsity program. This position will provide athletic therapy services including the assessment, management, and treatment of acute and chronic athletic injuries among the Excalibur varsity programs. Designing rehabilitative programs, the incumbent will also assist in the prevention of athletic injuries using various prophylactic taping and bracing techniques, as well as education towards training. This position will coordinate pre-season medicals and is the lead organizer for the overall sport medical coverage for the Excalibur Varsity program (working with contractors or third-party providers).

This position will work collaboratively with the Student Wellness Centre, CSIO, and other community partners on the development of wellness plans and training for our varsity student-athletes. The position will provide our varsity student-athletes with education, knowledge, and skills to be successful in pursuing their high-performance athletic and academic careers.

Duties include providing and organizing therapy coverage for our varsity program (in partnership with third party providers, contractors, and the Trent Kinesiology program) with key components including: prevention, assessment, and rehabilitation of athletic injuries; and supervision, delegation, and education of student trainers and certified athletic therapists/sports medicine providers.

#### Key Activities:

##### Athletic Therapy

* Provide clinical athletic therapy services for our varsity program with key components including injury prevention, assessment, and rehabilitation; responsible for supervision, delegation, and education of student-trainers and certified athletic therapists. Provides on-field coverage as required.
* Hire and schedule athletic therapists, sport physiotherapists, or other qualified healthcare providers, to assist in field coverage for varsity games, practices, and training camps.
* Responsible for interviewing and placing student-trainers with varsity teams; oversee that all requirements and expectations are being met.
* Provide quality athletic therapy and wellness services to student-athletes; this includes injury rehabilitation, assisting in accessing resources on campus, and providing timely and effective feedback to coaches, student-trainers, student-athletes, and allied health care providers.
* Update field coverage providers with any relevant information prior to game coverage.
* Keep kit bags fully stocked and ensure all equipment is easily accessible for game days and practices.
* Responsible for being familiar with industry leading information, techniques, and developments in the athletics, injury rehabilitation and health and wellness fields.
* Operate the clinic space in a professional manner (cleanliness, security, timeliness).
* Maintain positive and professional relationships with internal and external contacts.
* Promotes a positive professional image of the Excalibur program by providing high-quality customer service to all student-athletes.
* Leads by example and is a role model for other staff, encouraging a welcoming environment and professional and courteous service.

##### Education & Experiential Learning

* Work directly with Kinesiology & other relevant departments (ie. Biomedical Sciences, Nursing) to develop experiential learning opportunities for Trent students.
* Develop a student-trainer program at Trent University; create and implement a student-trainer curriculum, ensure appropriate courses and certifications have been completed, review the university policies and procedures, and provide bi-weekly educational seminars, in-season.
* Develop and hold mandatory training for all healthcare providers providing field coverage prior to varsity training camps; continue to keep providers updated with any changes to policies and procedures over the course of the school year.
* Create informative talks for first year orientation events, hosts regular Athletic Therapy & Wellness meetings for coaches and student-athletes, and participate in all departmental and inter-departmental training and meetings.
* Be available to coaches, student-athletes, and student-trainers to host information sessions specific to their needs, review skills, and discuss any areas of concern.
* Work with Student Wellness Centre, CSIO, and other community partners to develop training on such topics as concussion awareness, sport psychology, sport nutrition, team building, and strength training and conditioning.
* Work with the Student Wellness Centre to streamline the process and assist student-athletes in accessing care, when needed.
* Possesses current knowledge about government and interuniversity sport league standards on doping control and drug education and is the main liaison for CCES for the Trent Athletics department.

##### Administration

* Excellent managerial, organizational, teamwork and interpersonal skills
* Maintains an accurate records management system, both electronic (Player’s Health) and paper records for our varsity program; meeting all applicable compliance standards, privacy and health requirements and protocols. Maintains accurate documentation of treatments and related insurance claims.
* Responsible for scheduling appointments, billing, and contacting student-athletes for any necessary follow-up.
* Responsible for ordering any necessary clinical and first aid supplies and ensuring everything remains stocked.
* Reviews and responds to student-athlete and coach inquiries in a thorough and timely fashion.
* In consultation with the Assistant Director, monitor the athletic therapy and wellness equipment, service, and training budget.
* Assists in developing contracts and agreements with partners for the delivery of athletic therapy and wellness programs to our Excalibur varsity teams.
* Works cooperatively with other Athletics Department staff to share information that is pertinent to other program areas.
* Assists in developing and reviewing Trent University Policies and Protocols applicable to Varsity Athletics and suggests edits when appropriate.

##### Human Resources

* Leads and motivates part-time student staff and student therapists (i.e. Kinesiology, Biomedical, and/or Nursing students) to support athletic therapy and wellness programs and initiatives.
* Conducts recruitment, hiring, training, performance reviews, and corrective action for part-time staff/contracted field coverage providers/placement students/volunteers, ensuring that an appropriate level of staffing is in place for program delivery and to meet health and safety requirements.
* Develops staff schedules for all program areas: athletic therapy clinic, student therapists, placement students, contracted athletic therapists/sports medicine providers, and strength & conditioning coach(es).
* Administers regular training programs for athletic therapy staff to ensure that all staff certifications are maintained, and that staff have the required skills and abilities to meet and deliver high quality programs.
* Provides regular in-services training to student trainers and recertification courses as needed.
* Supervises and develops staff and volunteers, through ongoing training, supervision, and coaching.
* Completes bi-weekly timesheets for all part-time staff, ensuring that they are coded correctly and submitted to payroll within prescribed timelines.
* Responds in a professional and timely manner to inquiries, complaints or suggestions from our varsity teams and partners.

#### Education Required:

* Honours Bachelor’s Degree (4 year).
* Advanced Certificate in Athletic Therapy from a CATA-accredited institution or Master of Science in Physical Therapy (MScPT) or equivalent.
* Continuing education as required by the governing body to remain in good standing.

#### Experience/Qualifications Required:

* Minimum of five (5) years’ experience in a relevant work environment, preferably at the professional, University or College Level.
* Certified physiotherapist or athletic therapist in good standing with their governing body.
* Valid Emergency First Responder and First Aid & CPR/AED certification
* Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (NSCA) is considered an asset.
* Strong organizational and communication skills.
* Experience in sport field care at a high-performance level, preferably in an interuniversity sport setting.
* Training in health and wellness environment.
* Demonstrated knowledge base in exercise and wellness theory and practice.
* Strong supervisory, interpersonal, and training skills.
* Solid organizational and time management skills.
* Conflict resolution skills: ability to diffuse potentially volatile situations.
* Demonstrated ability to work as a team player within an athletics environment.
* Must be able to work evenings/weekends during varsity season.

**Job Evaluation Factors:**

##### Responsibility for the Work of Others

Direct Responsibility

1. Part-time student staff (2), placement students (10-20), and volunteers (2-5)
2. Part-Time Varsity Clinical Therapist (August – October only) (1)
3. Contracted athletic therapists/sports medicine providers for field coverage (5-10)
4. Excalibur Strength & Conditioning Coach (1-3)

The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is responsible for hiring, training, and supervising all the above positions.

* Supervision: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is responsible for supervising the work of student trainers and contracted field coverage providers to ensure that they adhere to professional and organizational standards, and best practices in athletic therapy. This includes providing guidance, direction, and feedback to support the development and performance of these individuals.
* Training and Education: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is responsible for providing training, education, and mentorship to student trainers and contracted field coverage providers to enhance their knowledge, skills, and competencies. This involves holding orientation sessions, educational workshops, and facilitating hands-on experiences.
* Quality Assurance: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is responsible for maintaining the quality and consistency of care provided by student trainers and contracted field coverage providers. This includes monitoring their performance, conducting performance evaluations, and implementing quality improvement initiatives to ensure that student-athletes receive safe, effective and evidence-based responses to injuries.
* Collaboration and Communication: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is responsible for fostering effective collaboration and communication among student trainers, contracted field coverage providers, and other members of the healthcare team. This involves facilitating collaboration, sharing information, and coordinating care to promote seamless integration of injury response and care.
* Ethical and Professional Conduct: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is responsible for upholding ethical and professional standards in the supervision of student trainers and contracted field coverage providers. This includes promoting ethical behaviour, respecting confidentiality and privacy, and maintaining integrity and professionalism in all interactions.

The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator has a significant responsibility for the work of others when overseeing student trainers and contracted field coverage providers. By providing supervision, training, quality assurance, collaboration, and ethical leadership, the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator contributes to the delivery of high-quality care and support for student-athletes.

Partnerships

1. Trent Kinesiology & other relevant Academic Departments
2. Third Party Contractors
3. Trent Student Wellness Centre
4. Canadian Sport Institute Ontario
5. Canadian Athletic Therapist Association
6. Sport Specific Provincial or National Sport Organizations

**Analytical Reasoning**

Analytical reasoning skills are crucial for the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator as they assess injuries, develop treatment plans, and make decisions regarding athletes’ rehabilitation. Examples include:

* Responding to Medical Emergencies: Analytical reasoning skills are crucial for the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator when responding to medical emergencies. They must quickly assess the situation, make informed decisions, and take appropriate action to ensure the safety and well-being of the individual in distress. They must be able to prioritize intervention and provide effective care under pressure to ensure a positive outcome for the individual in distress.
* Injury Assessment: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator analyzes the nature and severity of athletes’ injuries quickly and accurately. This involves observing symptoms, conducting physical examinations, and interpreting diagnostic tests to determine the best course of action.
* Problem-Solving: When faced with complex injuries or conditions, the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator uses analytical reasoning to identify underlying issues, such as biomechanical issues or structural weakness, and develop effective treatment strategies to address them.
* Treatment Planning: Analytical skills are essential for creating comprehensive treatment plans tailored to each athlete’s specific needs and goals. This may involve integrating various therapeutic modalities, exercises, and interventions to optimize recovery and performance outcomes.
* Progress Evaluation: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator continuously assesses athletes’ progress throughout the rehabilitation process, analyzing changes in symptoms, functional abilities, and performance metrics to adjust treatment plans accordingly and ensure optimal outcomes.
* Risk Assessment: Analytical reasoning is required for the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator to identify potential risk factors for injury or re-injury, such as biomechanical deficits, overtraining, or inadequate recovery protocols. By analyzing these factors, they can implement preventative measures to mitigate risk and promote long-term athletic health and performance.
* Interdisciplinary Collaboration: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator collaborates with other healthcare professionals, coaches, trainers, and university staff (ie. Student Accessibility Services) to provide comprehensive care for athletes. Analytics skills are required for interpreting and synthesizing various courses to facilitate effective communication and collaboration with other stakeholders.

Analytical reasoning skills are required for athletic therapists to make informed decisions, solve complex problems, and optimize outcomes for the athletes under their care. Continuous refinement of these skills through education, experience, and professional development is essential.

As the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is overseeing student trainers, their analytical reasoning skills become even more crucial in guiding and supervising these individuals effectively. Examples include:

* Assessment of Student Performance: Athletic Therapists must analyze the skills, knowledge, and performance of student trainers to identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement. This involves observing their interactions with student-athletes, evaluating their ability to apply therapeutic techniques, and assessing their understanding or injury management protocols (ex. Concussion protocols, Ottawa Ankle Rules, etc.)
* Problem Solving Guidance: When student trainers encounter challenges or uncertainties in their roles, the Athletic Therapist needs to provide guidance and support to help them navigate these situations effectively. Analytical reasoning skills are essential for diagnosing the root causes of problems and developing appropriate solutions or strategies for resolution.
* Training and Education Development: Analytical skills are necessary for designing and implementing training programs and educations materials for student trainers. This involves assessing the learning needs of the students, identifying key concepts and competencies to be addressed, and structuring instructional activities to facilitate comprehension and skills development.
* Risk Assessment and Management: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator analyzes potential risks associated with student trainers’ activities, such as the risk of injury to athletes or liability issues. By applying analytical reasoning skills, they can identify risk factors, develop preventative measures, and establish protocols to ensure student trainers operate safely and ethically.
* Performance Evaluation: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator assesses the effectiveness and competency of student trainers through performance evaluation and feedback mechanisms. Analytical reasoning skills enable them to objectively evaluate performance based on predetermined criteria, identify areas for improvement, and provide constructive feedback for growth and development.
* Interpersonal Communication: Effective communication is essential when overseeing student trainers, and analytical reasoning skills play a role in understanding the perspectives of students and student-athletes. This includes analyzing barriers, facilitating constructive dialogue, and fostering positive relationships to promote a collaborative and supportive learning environment.

**Decision Making**

The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator makes many decisions in their job through a combination of clinical expertise, evidence-based practice, collaboration, and critical thinking. Examples include:

* Assessment: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator assesses student-athlete injuries through comprehensive evaluations including a medical history, physical examinations, and utilizing diagnostic tests or imaging where necessary. The assessment provides essential information to inform subsequent decisions regarding working diagnoses, treatment, and rehabilitation.
* Working Diagnosis: Based on assessment findings, the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator formulates a working diagnosis. They use their clinical expertise, knowledge of anatomy and biomechanics, and diagnostic skills to accurately identify musculoskeletal injuries, concussions, and other conditions commonly encountered in a sport setting.
* Treatment Planning: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator develops individualized plans tailored to each student-athlete’s specific needs, goals, and preferences. They draw upon evidence-based practice guidelines, best practices in sports medicine, and their own clinical experience to select appropriate interventions for managing injuries, reducing pain, and promoting recovery.
* Rehabilitation: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator designs and implements rehabilitation programs to facilitate student-athletes’ return to play following injury or surgery. They use exercises, manual therapy techniques, and functional rehabilitation strategies to restore mobility, strength, and function while minimizing the risk of re-injury.
* Monitoring and Adjustments: Throughout the rehabilitation process, the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator continuously monitors student-athletes’ progress, reassessing their condition and functional abilities to track recovery milestones and adjust treatment plans as needed. They use outcome measures, objective assessments, and feedback from student-athletes to valuate the effectiveness of interventions and make informed decisions about ongoing care.
* Return-to-Play Decision Making: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator determines when a student-athlete is safe to return to sport following injury or surgery. They assess student-athletes’ readiness for return to play based on objective criteria, functional assessments, and considerations such as injury severity, tissue healing, and risk of re-injury
* Injury Prevention Strategy: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator develops and implements injury prevention programming to minimize the risk of injuries among student-athletes. They must make decisions regarding the selection and implementation of appropriate preventative measures, such as warm-up routines, work load, and equipment modifications.
* Emergency Response: In the event of medical emergencies and acute injuries on the field, the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator makes rapid decisions regarding the provision of immediate care and the activation of emergency medical services. They must prioritize action to stabilize a student-athlete’s condition, manage life-threatening injuries, and ensure appropriate follow-up care.
* Collaboration: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator makes informed decisions on when collaboration is needed to provide the best care for a student-athlete. This may require referrals to other healthcare providers (ie. orthopedic surgeons, sports medicine doctors).
* Ethical Considerations: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is required to adhere to ethical principles and professional standards in their decision-making process, prioritizing the welfare and autonomy of student-athletes, respecting confidentiality and privacy, and maintaining integrity and transparency in their interactions with stakeholders.

The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator utilizes clinical expertise, evidence-based practice, collaboration, and ethical considerations to make informed decisions to provide high-quality care and support for student-athletes throughout the injury management and rehabilitation process. As the sole healthcare provider in the Athletics Department, all the above decisions are made independently.

Policy creation would be done in collaboration with the Assistant Director, Sport & Student Engagement and Director, Athletics & Recreation, and where required Risk Management and Health & Safety.

**Communication**

Communication is a vital part of the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator role. Communication facilitates effective care, collaboration, and support for student-athletes. The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator communicates with a variety of stakeholders including:

* Student-Athletes: Building a strong rapport with student-athletes is essential for effective treatment and rehabilitation. The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator needs to communicate clearly and empathetically with student-athletes to understand their injuries, concerns, and goals. They provide instructions on exercises, return to play, educate student-athletes about injury prevention, and offer emotional support throughout the recovery process.
* Coaches: The Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator collaborates closely with coaches to ensure that student-athletes receive appropriate care while minimizing disruptions to training and competition schedules. They communicate injury status, treatment plans, and rehabilitation progress to coaches, providing guidance on modifying training programs to accommodate student-athletes’ needs safely.
* Athletics Department: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator may need to communicate with Athletics Department administrative staff (ie. Assistant Director, Sport & Student Engagement) to coordinate scheduling (ie. league games and exhibition games)
* Contracted Field Coverage Providers: Effective communication with contracted therapists is essential for ensuring alignment with organization goals and protocols, coordinating student-athlete care and maintaining continuity of care. Communication is needed to provide updates on clinical policies, share patient information, and ensure a seamless transition from field to clinical services.
* Student Trainers: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator oversees student trainers and communicates with them to provide guidance, feedback, and mentorship. Clear communication helps student trainers understand their roles and responsibilities, learn proper techniques for injury prevention and management, and adhere to protocols. Regular communication is key to ensure that the Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is aware of any issues or injuries that the student trainers are dealing with when they are not on site.
* Other Healthcare Providers: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is required to communicate with other healthcare providers in a collaborative approach to patient care (ie. orthopedic surgeons, sports medicine doctors). Effective communication and collaboration can optimize student-athletes’ outcome.
* Other Departments on Campus: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator will collaborate with other departments on campus to ensure that student-athletes are supporting during their injury. This includes Student Health & Wellness, Counselling, and Student Accessibility Services. This communication may include referrals, collaborative meetings, information sharing, training and education. Proper communication ensures that student-athletes get the support they need to continue to succeed throughout the injury recovery process.

**Effort**

Athletic therapy is a very physically demanding career. Athletic therapists provide manual therapy (ie. soft tissue therapy, joint mobilization), hands-on assessment, and must be able to demonstrate rehabilitation exercises. Some physical requirements of the job includes:

* Physical Stamina: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator is required to stand for prolonged periods of time during treatments and game coverage, as well as move around to actively assist athletes.
* Mobility: Must be able to move freely to assess and treat athletes. They also must be able to demonstrate rehab exercises.
* Dexterity: Must be able to perform manual therapy and assessments with precision.
* Strength: Assessments and treatment required physical strength, such as providing manual therapy, assisting with rehab exercises, and physically moving body parts during assessments.
* Endurance: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator may work long hours during clinic, events, or games, requiring endurance to maintain focus and provide care throughout.
* Body Mechanics: proper body mechanics are essential to prevent injury while assisting patients or performing physical tasks repeatedly throughout the day.
* Regular Movements: pushing/pulling, reaching, kneeling, lifting, moving, and carrying.

Additionally, there is a large mental load and demand for this position. They are responsible for the physical well-being of 250 student-athletes. Outside pressure from coaches and student-athletes to get student-athletes back on the field can be intense during season. Additionally, The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator may be required to respond to medical crisis situations that can take a mental toll (ie. medical emergencies including cardiac arrest and serious head or neck injuries).

* Pressure to Perform: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator works in a high-pressure environment, especially during competitive seasons where the health and performance of athletes are paramount. The pressure can lead to stress and anxiety.
* Stress Management: dealing with high-pressure situations, such as treating athletes during events or handling multiple injuries simultaneously. Must be able to remain calm and focused.
* Empathy: Understanding and empathizing with athletes’ physical and emotional challenges are crucial for providing effective care and support.
* Emotional Impact: Witnessing athletes sustain injuries or dealing with the emotional aftermath of serious injuries can be emotionally taxing. It may require them to provide support not only for the physical recovery, but also for the psychological well-being of the athletes.
* Responsibility: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator bears a responsibility for the health and safety of student-athletes under their care. This responsibility can weigh heavily on them, especially during critical situations.
* Dealing with season/career-ending injuries: helping athletes navigate career-ending injuries can be challenging and emotionally draining for athletic therapists, as they must provide support and guidance during a difficult transition period.
* Crises: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator will deal with both physical (ie. neck/head injuries) and mental crises (ie. mental health, disordered eating) which can be emotionally intense for those responding and dealing with the aftermath of these situations.
* Continuous learning and professional development: keeping up with advancements in sports medicine and rehabilitation requires ongoing learning and professional development, which can add to the mental workload of athletic therapists.

Overall, the combination of physical demands, emotional strain, and the high stakes involved in Athletic Therapy can contribute to significant mental tolls for athletic therapists.

**Working Conditions**

* Exposure to Environmental Hazards: The Varsity Athletic Therapist & Wellness Coordinator will work in various environments including outdoor fields, gyms, and training facilities, where they may be exposed to environmental hazards such as extreme temperatures (hot or cold), inclement weather, or poor air quality.
* Repetitive Strain Injury: The nature of the job may involve repetitive tasks such as performing manual therapy or assisting with rehabilitation exercises, which can increase the risk of developing repetitive strain injuries.