

Guidelines on Professional Titles for Music Therapists

In the UK some professional titles are protected by law and practitioners must be registered in order to use these titles legally. 'Music Therapist' is a legally protected title under the Health Professions Order 2001. Only practitioners registered with the HCPC as Arts Therapists (Music Therapist) can use this title.

Registered practitioners are not required to use only this professional title. Rather, unregistered people are prohibited from using it. Practitioners are free to use other (non-protected titles) if they wish. However, BAMT provides the following guidelines on professional titles, based on these principles:

- Titles should be easily understood and recognized by the general public;
- Protected titles should only be used by legally registered practitioners;
- Non-protected titles should, as far as possible, be used consistently with the use of the same or similar titles by other professionals.

Currently the BAMT guidelines are as follows:

1. All HCPC registered music therapists are entitled to use the protected title 'Music Therapist'. Using this title is the simplest way to show you are registered with the HCPC. If further clarity is needed the terms 'registered music therapist' or 'music therapist (HCPC registered)' can be used. The term 'state registered' should, however, not be used.
2. Descriptive prefixes can be freely added to show seniority, specialism or approach, and student status (HCPC approved programmes only). E.g. 'Senior music therapist', 'Lead music therapist', 'Neurological music therapist', 'Community music therapist', 'Student/Trainee music therapist' etc.. Prefixes should always accurately represent the practitioner's role and experience and should not state or imply differences of quality, such as additional qualifications or accreditations. Such differences should be indicated separately if required.
3. The title 'Music Psychotherapist' can be used as an alternative to 'Music Therapist'. It is not currently a protected title but can be seen as equivalent in meaning to the parallel title 'Art Psychotherapist', which is protected, and is simply an alternative to the title 'Art Therapist'. BAMT advises that members who use this title do so on the understanding that:
 - a. they are registered with HCPC as a music therapist, and
 - b. it is used as an alternative to the title Music Therapist, and
 - c. it does not imply additional qualification or accreditation.
4. There is no requirement for HCPC registered music therapists to include the words "music therapist" in their job title. Music therapists may work in roles that have titles that do not include the words 'Music Therapist' at all, e.g. 'Primary Mental Health Worker'. In such cases practitioners can, if they wish, indicate their registration with HCPC as 'Arts Therapist, HCPC registered' or 'Registered Arts Therapist'.