

## **Some main information about the 4-year Bachelor Skin Therapy at Hogeschool Utrecht, University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands**



The skin is the largest organ in the human body. In The Netherlands skin therapists treat diseased or damaged skin, often following referral from a general practitioner or a hospital physician such as a dermatologist, vascular specialist, oncologist, plastic surgeon as stipulated by Dutch law. For example, after treatment for breast cancer, many patients present with multiple problems including scar tissue, oedema and skin damage after radiation therapy. A skin therapist educates the patient about appropriate skin care, as well as taking care of actual skin conditions and providing aftercare and advice. Possible treatments may include scar therapy, compression therapy, medical compression stockings and exercise.

### **Professional domain of a skin therapist**

The skin therapist is a paramedical professional working in primary and secondary healthcare in the Netherlands. A skin therapist is a paramedical professional recognised by Dutch law. The title of "skin therapist" is protected by Dutch law and is reserved to those who have the qualifications as prescribed by Dutch law. These qualifications are covered by a diploma of Higher Professional Education in Skin Therapy. The law includes requirements for quality care and the continuing professionalisation and rationalization of the professional conduct of the skin therapist.

The goal of treatment by a skin therapist is to eliminate, reduce or avoid impairments or limitations resulting from a skin disorder. Treatments vary in methods and duration depending on the skin disorder. Skin therapists have always focused on returning function to the patient as quickly as possible.

Skin therapists are widely employed in various sectors of healthcare. They may work in a hospital, private clinic, nursing home, health, social organizations, home care, employment service, multidisciplinary practice, or private practice.

The skin therapist delivers preventive care, curative care, palliative care or after care within his/ her workplace depending on the need for care or care of a patient, patient group, population or other professions. A treatment is initiated from the moment a healthcare problem is analyzed using working models and theoretical underpinnings. This treatment is monitored and adjusted as necessary.

### **A skin therapist is an expert in:**

- advising, instructing and informing individuals and groups of patients in the field of skin related diseases or disabilities;
- examination of patients in order to establish the degree of injury, disablement or handicap as a result of oedema, hypertrichosis, pigmentation disorders, scars, dermal vascular disorders, hyperhidrosis, acne and psoriasis;
- treatment of patients with a view to determining the extent of injury, disability or handicap as a result of sweat and sebaceous gland problems, circulation problems, hair and nail pigmentation disorders, wounds, lymphatic system disorders, tumour problems, work and sports related disorders, allergies, eczema and psoriasis, autoimmune diseases;
- drawing up a plan/protocol for skin therapy treatment;
- treating patients (on referral from a physician as this is stipulated by Dutch law) in order to abolish, reduce or prevent the effects of skin disorder by means of oedema therapy,

laser and Intense Pulsed Light therapy, iontophoresis, microdermabrasion, camouflage therapy, coagulation, dermography, hair-reduction by electrolysis, cryotherapy, self supporting resources like therapeutic elastic stockings and massage in order to support self-care with respect to the effects of skin problems.

The Bachelor's programme in Skin Therapy leads to a number of core qualifications:

- A skin therapist covers a wide range of professional expertise
- A skin therapist applies skills based upon integration of multidisciplinary knowledge
- A skin therapist applies Evidence Based Practice and Best Practice (science based)
- A skin therapist is able to apply skills in different professional settings
- A skin therapist is able to develop new therapeutic methods and procedures
- A skin therapist applies professional methods and standards (problem solving methods)
- A skin therapist works systematically and reflective
- A skin therapist has social and communicative skills
- A skin therapist has basic management skills
- A skin therapist demonstrates societal responsibility

	Period A	Period B	Period C	Period D
<b>1<sup>st</sup> yr</b>	Theme: Orientation on study and profession	Theme: Skin therapeutic Care and Service (SCS) to patients with hair/ nail/ pigment problems	Theme: SCS to patients with sebaceous and sweat gland problems	Theme: SCS to patients with circulation problems
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> yr</b>	Theme: SCS in wound care	Theme: SCS to oedema patients	Theme: SCS to patients with tumour problems	Theme: Screening and diagnostic of skin lesions
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> yr</b>	Senior internship 1	Business Skills in Skin therapeutic practice	Optional courses/ minor	
<b>4<sup>th</sup> yr</b>	Customized Internship	Senior internship 2	Final research thesis	
	Learning community			

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