



# ISMETA

International Somatic Movement  
Education & Therapy Association

## REGISTERED SOMATIC DANCE EDUCATOR REQUIREMENTS

### Scope of Practice:

A Somatic Dance Educator is a qualified professional dance educator with a background in somatic movement education. In addition, Somatic Dance Educators have also studied means for integrating somatic principles of anatomy/physiology/kinesiology into their teaching of dance.

The purpose of Somatic Dance Education is to enhance human movement potential, body-mind integration, individual and cultural expression, and creative exploration through movement awareness and dance education within the art of dance. It does not include applications to somatic movement education and/or therapy as defined in ISMETA's Registered Somatic Movement Therapist (RSMT) and/or Registered Somatic Movement Educator (RSME) Scope of Practice, which both require a more comprehensive amount of training.

The practice of somatic dance education includes, but is not limited to, diverse and culturally-informed forms of:

- Dance education focused on self and group awareness
- Guided imagery and practices to increase interoception
- Experiential anatomy
- Clear communication and somatic guidance through verbal cues
- Postural and movement assessment
- Respectful, informed, and appropriate use of touch to enhance proprioception, kinesthetic awareness, and body/mind/community integration

Somatic Dance Education acknowledges and respects a wide range of diverse and culturally-informed teaching and training methodologies including community, studio-based, academic, and other types of programs. Each of these methods helps, but is not limited to, supporting students in developing the following capacities:

- Focus on body awareness in goal-oriented as well as process-oriented approaches, in addition to functional and expressive movement perspectives
- Refine perceptual, kinesthetic, proprioceptive, and interoceptive sensitivity
- Recognize habitual patterns of perceptual, postural, and movement interaction
- Support structural, functional, and expressive integration
- Access and deepen into the use of the creative process
- Experience an embodied sense of vitality that supports increased meaning and enjoyment of life

### **Registered Somatic Dance Educator Educational Requirements:**

A. One of these forms of education in dance:

i) BA, BFA, MFA, MEd, or equivalent

**OR**

ii) Doctorate in Dance Education or equivalent

**OR**

iii) Equivalent professional experience (see application for details)

**AND**

B. One of these types of teaching experience or training in dance education:

i) Higher Education degree in dance education with evidence of dance pedagogy course work.

**OR**

ii) Equivalent professional teaching experience (see application for details)

**AND**

C. One of these types of Somatic Movement Training

i) 250-contact hour Somatic Movement Certificate – ISMETA Approved Training Program or other comparable program (link to ISMETA ATPs)

**OR**

ii) Transcript showing 250-contact hours of Somatic Movement coursework that meets the following criteria (1 semester credit = 15 contact hours; 1 quarter credit = 10 contact hours; see application for details)

### **Somatic Movement Training:**

250 total class hours of formal instruction preferably with an actively credentialed Registered Somatic Dance Educator (RSDE), Registered Somatic Movement Educator

(RSME), and/or Registered Somatic Movement Therapist (RSMT) must include (see application for details):

1. Instruction in ways that enhanced internal sensory and kinesthetic movement awareness, and techniques for teaching others in the same manner
2. The philosophy of a body-mind approach, providing a fluid interconnection between movement, proprioception, and thought
3. Instruction in approaches to working with dance students in somatic movement facilitation
4. Methods that utilize movement exercises or explorations that involve the whole being
5. Skills and tools for guiding students in their own self-discovery process
6. Ways to identify the potential for change in students and ways to offer movement-based resolutions to functional and/or developmental themes
7. An understanding of the inter-relational aspects of movement experience (e.g. functional, artistic, cultural, environmental, etc.)
8. Techniques to identify and work with movement inhibition and resistance
9. Methodologies for working with multi-cultural and multi-generational population
10. General movement education including but not limited to: movement observation and analysis; efficient alignment; spatial awareness; perceptual and motor development; neuromuscular, skeletal, tissue, and fluid awareness
11. Active experiencing of subjective learning through kinesthetic or embodied movement applications, in addition to objective learning or cognitive analysis

**In addition, the instruction in somatic movement training must:**

1. Be oriented toward the training of a Somatic Dance Educator so that the individual is skilled in working with movement patterns in others, and not geared simply for purposes of personal development. The courses of study may include experiential anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, and movement classes
2. Provide an ethical, professional, and culturally appropriate approach to the intentional use of touch
3. Include assessment skills and interventions that draw from knowledge related to efficient alignment, ease of movement, neuromuscular awareness, perceptual-motor development, etc.
4. Require student's coursework or classes, in the form of graded and/or other directly evaluated work, be done so by the attending faculty and/or program director



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## REGISTERED SOMATIC DANCE EDUCATOR STANDARDS OF PRACTICE + CODE OF CONDUCT

### Standards of Practice

The following standards define the professional level of practice of a Registered Somatic Dance Educator (RSDE). Together with the Code of Ethics and the Scope of Practice, these Standards of Practice establish guidelines for the conduct of ISMETA Registered Somatic Movement Dance Educators.

#### **Standard I – Education and Training**

In the interest of the public and the profession as a whole, an ISMETA Registered Somatic Dance Educator (RSDE) practices only after professional preparation. This education consists, at a minimum, of the completion of 250-hours of training in Somatic Education and consequent acceptance to ISMETA as an RSDE. It is advised that all ISMETA RSDEs engage in ongoing professional development.

#### **Standard II: Educator Responsibilities**

The RSDE shall practice with honesty and integrity and provide services of the highest caliber. The purpose of the practices of somatic dance education is to enhance human processes of psychophysical awareness and functioning through movement learning. In the professional role, the RSDE shall:

Acknowledge and respect a wide range of diverse and culturally-informed teaching and training methodologies and be knowledgeable of the Scope of Practice and practice within these limitations:

- Accurately and truthfully inform the public of the types of dance education provided
- Recognize personal limitations as an educator and be respectful of these limitations
- Provide a physical setting that is safe and meets all applicable legal requirements for health and welfare
- Use universal precautions to support safe and hygienic teaching and training practices
- Maintain adequate and customary liability insurance if contextually warranted

- Display and/or discuss schedule of fees in advance of classes that are clearly understood by the student
- Make financial arrangements in advance that are clearly understood by and safeguard the best interests of the student
- Follow acceptable accounting practices, file all applicable taxes, and maintain accurate financial records
- Recognize the value of constructive feedback, including formal evaluations, from students in classes, and participants in research, and strive to work professionally, self-critically, and creatively within the inherent holism of somatic work
- Seek professional guidance, mentoring, and/or consultation when needed

### **Standard III: Representation as a Professional Dance Educator**

The RSDE must comply with high standards of professional conduct and must accurately represent themselves in regards to the profession of somatic dance education. In the professional role, the RSDE shall:

- Honestly represent all professional qualifications and affiliations
- Only use the initials RSDE to designate the professional ability and competency within the field of somatic dance education when in good standing with ISMETA
- Clearly identify and give credit to ideas, techniques, and principles derived from the unique contribution of each discipline within the field
- Promote integrity and avoid potential and actual conflicts of interest in all business and educational proceedings
- Do not use sensational, sexual, or provocative language and/or images to promote classes, programs, and/or businesses
- Advertise in a manner that is honest, dignified, and representative of services that can be delivered and remains consistent with the ISMETA Code of Ethics
- Be a member in good standing of ISMETA
- When using the ISMETA registration number or RSDE Logo on business cards, brochures, advertisements, and stationery, do so only in a manner that is within established ISMETA guidelines
- Do not duplicate the ISMETA certificate of registry for purposes other than verification of credentials
- Submit to peer review processes conducted by ISMETA's Ethics and Standards Committee in the case of any alleged violations of the Code of Ethics or Standards of Practice

### **Standard IV: Legal Rights and Compliance**

The RSDE must comply with all the legal requirements in applicable jurisdictions that regulate dance education. In the professional role, the RSDE shall:

- Obey all applicable local, regional and national laws

- Refrain from being discriminatory towards students and peers (relative to age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, able-bodiedness, socio-economic status, etc.)
- Report to ISMETA any criminal convictions
- Report to ISMETA any pending litigation and resulting resolution
- Respect existing publishing rights and copyright laws

### **Standard V: Professional Dance Educator Boundaries**

A. The RSDE shall:

- Acknowledge and respect the student's freedom of choice and right to terminate the educational contract
- Recognize the dance educator's influential position with the student and avoid exploitation of the relationship for personal or other gain, including employees.
- Clarify all relationships that could impair professional judgment or result in conflicts of interest with family members, close friends, employees, and/or colleagues

B. Issues of dependency, trust, and inequalities of power can lead to increased vulnerability on the part of the student and require that an educator not engage in a sexual relationship with a student. In the professional role the RSDE shall:

- Refrain from any behavior that demeans or disempowers the student
- Understand that sexual intimacy is inappropriate, as is the use of touch on any part of the student's body with which the student is not comfortable
- Desist from becoming sexually involved with a student even if the student initiates or implies consent to the contact
- Comply with all laws regarding sexual harassment

### **Standard VI: Educator - Student Confidentiality**

The RSDE shall respect the confidentiality of student information and records in accordance with local laws. In the professional role, the RSDE shall:

- Protect the student's identity and pertinent information in conversations, written communications, and all other manners unless requested by the student in writing, or mandated by law
- Protect the interests of students who are minors or who are unable to give voluntary consent by securing permission from an appropriate third party or guardian
- Solicit only information that is relevant to the professional student/educator relationship
- Maintain any student files for a minimum period of three years and store and dispose of student files in a secure manner

### **Standard VII: Inter-Collegial Relationships**

The RSDE understands the need for collaboration with others. To further implement relationships the RSDE shall:

- Develop collegial relationships and show respect for diversity among colleagues/associates (age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, able-bodiedness, socio-economic status, etc.)
- Show respect for various personalities, styles, educational trainings, and backgrounds
- Act with integrity and in a constructive manner with colleagues, other organizations, agencies, institutions, referral sources, and other professionals
- Possess basic knowledge of the nature of other somatic practices while maintaining clear identification of one's own expertise
- Never falsely impugn the reputation of any colleague

### **Standard VIII: Grievance Procedures**

The RSDE must provide the opportunity for students to contact ISMETA and file a grievance if they have complaints regarding the ethical conduct of the educator. Notification of ISMETA's receipt of the grievance must be given to the student within one week after the grievance is filed.

### **Code of Ethics**

A Registered Somatic Dance Educator (RSDE) agrees to practice according to ISMETA Scope of Practice, Standards of Practice, and the following Code of Ethics. Whenever practicing Somatic Dance Education:

1. The RSDE acknowledges and respects a wide range of diverse and culturally-informed teaching and training methodologies
2. The RSDE may not diagnose or prescribe for medical or psychological conditions
3. The RSDE must abide by laws and statutes governing educator's area of jurisdiction and which shall supersede the Code of Ethics and registration entitlement of ISMETA when in conflict
4. The RSDE shall adhere to professional boundaries
5. The RSDE shall recognize personal limitations and be respectful of these limitations
6. The RSDE shall recognize the influential position held with the student and avoid exploitation of the relationship for personal or other gain
7. The RSDE shall clarify all complex relationships that could impair professional judgment or result in exploitation of the student or employees and/or co-workers
8. The RSDE shall not exploit the trust and dependency of others, including students and employees/co-workers. Sexual intimacy is inappropriate, as is the use of touch on any part of the student's body with which the student is not comfortable, as part of any class in an educational setting. In addition, if the student and the educator have a personal relationship outside of the typical educator/student relationship, then each party must be aware of the shift from the educator/student session to the social setting of the personal relationship
9. The RSDE shall comply with all laws regarding sexual harassment

10. The RSDE understands that only those authorized to use the RSDE title may use that title to address their work
11. The RSDE shall clearly identify and give credit to the ideas, techniques, and principles of others when teaching