Learning and development standards for pre-registration education

Revised Edition 2019

Royal College of Occupational Therapists

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Therapists

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Introduction and background

What are the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education*?

The new *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education* (the Standards) reflect the current and future needs of the profession, as determined by key stakeholders and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists' (RCOT) membership. That our profession is not static, but instead responsive and evolving, represents both a strength and a challenge. Graduates must establish a strong sense of identity as occupational therapists, have core professional knowledge and skills, demonstrate professionalism and hone leadership skills to take the profession forward. This will require all those involved in the education of the future workforce – educators, practitioners, practice educators, researchers and managers – to help realise this through engagement with the concepts expressed within this publication.

The Standards describe the expectations of the profession that education providers must meet when delivering an occupational therapy pre-registration programme in the United Kingdom (UK). RCOT manages an Accreditation Process, using these Standards to assess occupational therapy pre-registration programmes and ensure quality in their design and delivery.

The values and beliefs central to occupational therapy have remained largely unchanged throughout the life of the profession; however, the shape and form of our services are dynamic, as are the contexts within which they are delivered. For this reason, and to ensure that new occupational therapists are appropriately prepared for their professional careers, it is essential to regularly review the standards and frameworks that guide their education.

In 2018, RCOT continued this cycle of review with a focus on the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education* (COT 2014a) and the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education: accreditation process* (COT 2014b). These publications support education providers to develop and deliver quality pre-registration programmes and describe the process for applying for, and maintaining, RCOT accreditation.

What is the role of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT)?

RCOT sets the professional and educational standards for the occupational therapy profession and works to position the profession, and all members, for the 21st century. RCOT represents the profession at national and international levels, while playing a crucial role in promoting the profession and meeting the professional needs of occupational therapists in the UK. The British Association of Occupational Therapists is the professional body representing the diverse and thriving community of occupational therapists across the UK. RCOT is a registered charity and wholly-owned subsidiary of the Association, which acts on behalf of all members of the Association.

RCOT is the guardian of the body of knowledge that underpins occupational therapy practice and education in the UK and actively engages members in discussions about the professional standards for practice and the ethical and professional conduct expectations. Through this process, RCOT determines the threshold for 'fitness for the profession'.

RCOT's Accreditation Process uses the Standards to assess whether a pre-registration programme, and the education provider that delivers that programme, provides learners with the knowledge, skills and professional attributes necessary to competently and ethically meet the occupational needs of the community. The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) is a federation of occupational therapy organisations recognised by the United Nations with official standing with the World Health Organization. WFOT sets the minimum standards for occupational therapy practice internationally (WFOT 2016). As an organisational member of WFOT, RCOT holds the delegated authority to confer WFOT approval.

Therefore, RCOT's Accreditation Process ensures that UK occupational therapy pre-registration programmes:

- meet the education standards set by the profession;
- meet the education standards set by the international community;
- are responsive to current and predicted local, national and global issues which may affect the profession;
- produce graduates who are fit for academic award, practice, purpose and the profession;
- produce graduates who hold a qualification recognised in any WFOT member country.

Further information about RCOT's Accreditation Process can be found at *www.rcot.co.uk/accreditation-process*

What is the role of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)?

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is the regulatory body for allied health professions in the UK, established by the government to protect the public. HCPC maintains a register of health and care professionals who meet its *Standards of conduct, performance and ethics* (HCPC 2016), the profession-specific *Standards of proficiency* (HCPC 2013) and the *Standards of continuing professional development* (HCPC 2018). It also sets *Standards of education and training* (HCPC 2017), which are used to assess pre-registration programmes, thereby ensuring that a learner who successfully completes their education meets the standards of proficiency and is eligible to apply to register with the HCPC. While the HCPC determines 'fitness to practise', RCOT determines 'fitness for the profession', which is above and beyond the expectations of the HCPC. HCPC approval of a pre-registration programme is a pre-requisite for RCOT accreditation.

How do occupational therapy principles underpin pre-registration education?

Occupational therapists believe that the ability to engage in meaningful occupations is fundamental to the facilitation and maintenance of health and wellbeing. By engaging

with occupations (activities we have, need to, or want to do), we gain a sense of our own being. It is not enough, however, to just 'do and be', we also need to engage in meaningful occupations in order to become something in the future. So by 'doing', 'being' and 'becoming', we also gain a sense of 'belonging' to a wider community or group (Hitch et al 2014). The four concepts of 'doing', 'being', 'becoming' and 'belonging' are interrelated rather than linear. Through our understanding of these concepts, we also see what happens when people engage in occupations that are meaningful but harmful. Occupational therapists see health and wellbeing as constructed through engagement in meaningful occupations rather than focusing on a medical diagnosis to determine wellness.

Occupational therapists who graduate from an RCOT accredited pre-registration programme are educated within a bio-psychosocial framework to deliver occupation-focused, person-centred interventions across the spectrum of public, independent, private and third sector settings and health, wellbeing, social and integrative care systems. They are qualified to be autonomous, reflective professionals, whose work is predicated on the fundamental recognition of the contribution of meaningful occupation to the mental and physical health and wellbeing of individuals. Regardless of the setting, an occupational therapist's focus is always to enable individuals and communities to establish ways of living that are personally meaningful and sustainable and which support the achievement of people's occupational aspirations.

Occupation is essential to the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities and is both the goal and the main tool of occupational therapists in their efforts to fulfil their professional purpose. Therefore, occupation must be the core of every occupational therapy pre-registration curriculum, into which all other subjects are integrated. The centrality of occupation in human life and in the occupational therapy curriculum must be made explicit for learners to experience the transformative potential of occupation.

To ensure that the worth of occupational therapy is recognised and valued, the profession must become a stronger advocate for itself. To achieve this, learners preparing for the workforce must steadfastly embrace the power of occupation to transform lives as the central tenet of the profession. This belief should be at the core of each learner's professional identity, must underpin all activities and should be drawn on to bring about transformational change to the benefit of individuals and communities who access occupational therapy services. Critical to implementing change is an understanding of the local and system-wide contexts in which occupational therapists work, as well as political astuteness and leadership skills at all levels to ensure that occupational therapy continues to evolve and maintain relevance.

What is the role of the education provider?

The education provider is responsible for ensuring that the foundation principles of occupational therapy influence and shape every aspect of the design and delivery of a pre-registration programme. It is also the responsibility of the education provider to enable future development of the profession by ensuring that the graduating workforce is equipped to practise in changing and dynamic environments. This requires learners to develop competence and capability in three key areas:

- Professionalism: including a strong professional identity; established values and beliefs in occupational therapy; professional attitudes and aspirations; and critical thinking and capability.

- Knowledge: including understanding of the nature and importance of occupation to individuals, communities and populations; the relationship of occupation to health and wellbeing; the professional purpose of occupational therapy and how

occupational therapy works to improve health and wellbeing. Knowledge of underpinning sciences is also necessary, such as anatomy, physiology, pathology, psychology, social science and occupational science.

■ Skills: including a broad range of critical thinking, problem solving and reasoning skills; occupational therapy process skills; and skills in the analysis and use of activities as therapeutic media.

To be able to meet these Standards and maintain quality in their educational delivery throughout the accredited period, the education provider must be committed to appropriately resourcing the pre-registration programme. Pre-registration programmes must be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, and fit for purpose. Educators and practice educators need to be prepared, willing and sufficiently resourced to support learners and it is vital that they are credible to learners and society (WFOT 2016). Educators must also maintain their knowledge and understanding of the contexts of occupational therapy practice, ideally by remaining connected to a practice setting.

In recent years, the profession has evolved away from valuing a national curriculum for occupational therapy pre-registration education, consistent with other health professions. Therefore, it is not the focus of the Standards to explicitly describe what should be taught. Instead, RCOT has outlined the expectations the profession has for the relevant mechanisms and processes required to deliver quality pre-registration education. This allows each education provider to adopt a unique approach, to take advantage of their particular strengths and to develop a pre-registration programme that meets the needs of their learners. In this way, occupational therapy pre-registration programmes and graduates are not homogenous but rather reflect the richness and diversity of the profession, the contexts in which they practise and the people who access occupational therapy services. Common to all pre-registration programmes, however, must be an acquisition of the core values, beliefs, professional attributes, knowledge and skills fundamental to occupational therapy.

How do we prepare the next generation of occupational therapists?

RCOT, reflecting the position of the profession, expects education providers to develop an occupational therapy pre-registration programme that attracts learners capable of academic achievement and prepares them for the complexity of emerging practice (WFOT 2016). There is no doubt that the occupational therapy workforce and occupational needs of communities have changed rapidly in recent years and the profession must be anticipatory of, not responsive to, growing challenges. The existing demands on the health, wellbeing, social and integrated care workforce, coupled with the unsustainable costs, means that occupational therapists need to be utilised more efficiently. Within the occupational therapy workforce, this requires embracing other roles such as those in workforce planning or advisory capacities, in addition to existing frontline practice and service delivery roles. Traditional skills related to direct person-focused care at the individual level need to be adapted so occupational therapists can expand their influence on the design, implementation and evaluation of population health interventions and workforce planning (WFOT 2016, Council of Deans of Health 2017). Such a shift demands different educational preparation and capabilities, such as stronger research (McCormack et al 2019), administrative and managerial skills, supported by leadership skills, adaptability and political awareness (WFOT 2016). To undertake effective workforce transformation, flexibility and personal resilience are critical and must also be developed in pre-registration programmes.

Learners need to be prepared to engage in and contribute to discussions influencing the current and future role of occupational therapists, for example discussions about medicines mechanisms, scopes of practice and service redesign. Valuing the role of occupational therapists within the interdisciplinary team is critical because of the expanding contexts in which intersectoral models of care are being implemented. Dedication to collaborative teamwork is important; however, the skills to mobilise a team around a person, to adapt and improve the system and environment in which care is given or people undertake occupations, are also essential.

As specified by WFOT, learners are required to complete 1000 hours of successful practice-based learning in their occupational therapy pre-registration programmes. Historically, practice-based learning has occurred in role-established settings, such as hospitals and community health services; however, alternative and non-traditional settings are now integral to the learner's experience. To meet RCOT's Standards, education providers are required to develop partnerships with a range of practice-based learning providers, such as:

- public, independent, private and third sector settings;

- urban, rural, local or international settings;

- non-frontline settings, for exposure to strategic and leadership roles (Kolyva et al 2018) and/or within research departments or organisations (Baltruks and Callaghan 2018, McCormack et al 2019);

- organisations for people who are under-employed, disempowered, dispossessed or socially excluded;

- organisations caring for people of different ages, from different socioeconomic and cultural contexts, with recently acquired and long-standing occupational needs and with different levels of physical and psychosocial functioning;

- settings using individual, group, community and population approaches;

- settings where there are no occupational therapists currently employed.

Exposure to a wide range of practice-based learning settings will produce a workforce capable and eager to work across many areas and one that understands the range of contexts in which the occupational therapy role may be valued. Opportunities for learners to experience practice-based learning in settings where no occupational therapy roles have previously existed are important to develop learners with strong professional identities who can lead change. Education providers and practice-based learning providers must collaborate to address specific challenges related to such settings, which may require additional support and structured guidance (Dancza et al 2019). Offering such a range of opportunities should not be approached with the sole intention of addressing any shortage of traditional practice-based learning opportunities and it is acknowledged that the range of opportunities may be limited by the relationships with practice-based learning providers, the ageing population and the ability of learners to travel.

RCOT, education providers, practice-based learning providers and many other stakeholders have a role in supporting and influencing the future of the occupational therapy profession, through the focus and quality of pre-registration education.

How are new pre-registration education pathways considered?

As the profession continues to evolve, so do the pathways into the profession. The Degree Apprenticeship is the latest alternative entry route to be developed. The main

defining characteristic of this educational model is that the development of the apprenticeship standard and the associated end-point assessment plan was led by employers and co-designed by a consortium of employers, educators, and professional and regulatory bodies. The distribution of an apprentice's time is split between that undertaken 'on the job' in the workplace and that which occurs in a formal learning environment associated with fulfilling the requirements of the award, likely to be represented as an approximate 80/20 split between the two settings. There must be clarity about when an individual learner will be considered an 'employee' and when they will be considered a 'learner'. There is also a requirement that the 1000 hours of practice-based learning must be successfully completed outside the setting in which they are employed (Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education 2018).

Education providers remain the awarding bodies for the higher education qualification required for the completion of the Degree Apprenticeship and therefore have responsibility to ensure RCOT accredited apprenticeship pre-registration programmes adhere to the Standards. These Standards are inclusive of all pathways; however, specific requirements relevant to Degree Apprenticeships have been highlighted, including evidence that employers are committed to meeting the same expectations as education providers regarding sufficient resourcing to guarantee quality in the education and learning opportunities provided.

At least 12 months prior to the first scheduled end-point assessment, the education provider is required to submit evidence of their entry onto the Register of End-point Assessment Organisations, or that they have appointed an end-point assessor from amongst those who have successfully been entered onto the Register. These additional requirements will ensure that Degree Apprenticeships are delivered to the same robust standard as other pathways into the profession.

How were the Standards developed?

RCOT has reflected the occupational therapy profession's expectations about the educational standards for pre-registration programmes in a variety of formats for about 90 years. In late 2018, RCOT commenced a review of the existing *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education* (COT 2014a), dedicating significant resources and time to ensuring the process was undertaken thoroughly and the result reflected the consensus of the occupational therapy profession. A steering group was established to oversee and guide the project throughout its establishment and implementation.

The review was initiated with a detailed analysis of the existing Standards and discussion with key stakeholders about their strengths and the elements requiring a more comprehensive review. In line with feedback received, the content was restructured to align with the *Standards of education and training* (HCPC 2017) and to more closely reflect the internationally recognised *Minimum standards for the education of occupational therapists* (WFOT 2016). In parallel, a collaborative and evidence-based consultation methodology (International Association for Public Participation 2018) was adopted to ensure input from practitioners, educators, practice educators, learners, people who use occupational therapy services, researchers and the wider RCOT networks.

Consultation Phase 1 (December 2018–January 2019)

The initial consultation phase involved incorporating the expertise of RCOT staff experienced in education, accreditation and professional practice to develop and finalise the first draft of the new Standards.

Consultation Phase 2 (March–April 2019)

Consultation Phase 2 was focused on reviewing the first draft in detail and discussing the general format, structure, language, definitions and approach. The discussion was conducted as an online asynchronous focus group over three weeks, with the draft being circulated at the start and discussion questions posed at the beginning of each week. This consultation method was reviewed and approved through RCOT's research ethics and governance procedure [Reference number PE30/2019] (RCOT 2017a).

The online asynchronous focus group involved the input of a select group of key external stakeholders representing all four nations. A wider network of close to 100 stakeholders was invited, with 31 individuals consenting to participate and then contributing in a meaningful way to the discussion. In total, there were over 570 individual elements of feedback offered during the online asynchronous focus group. Each element was coded and analysed, using a qualitative data management tool, allowing for areas of consensus to be noted and areas for further discussion to be highlighted. Where there was consensus, the change was implemented. Where the rationale for making the suggested change was less clear, it was discussed further with RCOT staff and the steering group, before a decision was made. Following this, a second draft of the new Standards was finalised.

Consultation Phase 3 (May–June 2019)

The final consultation phase involved circulating the second draft of the new Standards via an online survey to RCOT's membership and networks for wider feedback from the profession and other stakeholders. This consultation method was reviewed and approved through RCOT's research ethics and governance procedure [Reference number PE31/2019] (RCOT 2017a).

Along with questions about clarity, the online survey invited specific feedback on whether the new Standards adequately prepared learners to work in a wide range of settings and to meet the changing needs of the population. Responses were received from 25 individuals, with 92 per cent agreeing that the new Standards prepared learners for a wide range of settings and 100 per cent agreeing that the new Standards will ensure learners are prepared to meet the occupational needs of the community. Suggestions to improve clarity were incorporated and a final review was conducted by members of the steering group.

Following the three-phase consultation, the content of the new Standards was finalised and confirmed for publication by the steering group. In parallel, RCOT's Accreditation Process was reviewed and updated, to ensure alignment with the new Standards. Further information about RCOT's Accreditation Process can be found at
www.rcot.co.uk/accreditation-process

Primarily, the new Standards serve to support education providers to design and deliver quality occupational therapy pre-registration programmes within the UK. The contents have been refined with stakeholder input, to ensure Professional Leads – Strategic Level and Programme Leads – Operational Level, have the foundation and

evidence they need to be able to advocate for appropriate resourcing and support within their institutions.

In addition to being primarily outcomes-focused, the most significant changes differentiating the new Standards from the previous version include:

■ alignment with the *Standards of education and training* (HCPC 2017);

■ strengthened expectations of the role of the education provider in promoting a more inclusive and participatory society;

■ inclusion of the apprenticeship pre-registration programme pathway;

■ role clarification for Professional Lead – Strategic Level and Programme Lead – Operational Level;

■ specification of a ratio of educators to learners;

■ a requirement that educators are qualified at a level higher than, or equivalent to, the one they are teaching;

■ inclusion of simulated practice-based learning and self-directed study as eligible for inclusion in the 1000 practice-based learning hours requirement;

■ removal of the requirement that a Tutor must be an occupational therapist;

■ enhanced information on the management of underperforming learners;

■ reinforcement of elements considered vital in future-proofing the profession, such as research skills and digital literacy capabilities.

The guidance and evidence describes the specific documentation required by RCOT during the Accreditation Process. It is possible that one source of evidence may demonstrate multiple criteria, therefore there is intentional repetition within the Guidance and evidence column.

Consistent with RCOT's continuous quality-enhancement approach, the new Standards will be reviewed, and updated after five years.

Definitions and terminology

Admissions Tutor	An occupational therapist employed by the education provider who has the overall responsibility for the admission of suitable applicants to the pre-registration programme. The Admissions Tutor must be involved in interviewing and/or assessing applicants.
Aegrotat award	An award without classification that may be given when a learner is unable to take their examination because of illness or death, and where it has been deemed that the candidate would have otherwise passed. An aegrotat award will not lead to eligibility to apply for registration as an occupational therapist with the HCPC or professional membership with RCOT.
Andragogic	A theory of adult learning, defined by several key principles including that adult learners are independent, self-directed, goal-oriented, internally motivated and learn most effectively when the education is applicable to practice (Gewurtz et al 2016).
Applicant	A potential learner seeking enrolment in an occupational therapy pre-registration programme.
Apprenticeship pre-registration programme	An alternative entry route into the occupational therapy profession, where learners can achieve a full Bachelor's or Master's Degree as part of their apprenticeship. Education providers remain the awarding bodies and therefore have responsibility to deliver education that meets the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education*. The distribution of time for a learner enrolled in an apprenticeship pre-registration programme will be split between learning undertaken in the workplace ('on the job') and learning that occurs in a formal learning environment, likely to be an 80/20 split. An apprenticeship pre-registration programme is one that is recognised by the Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education as an *Integrated Degree – Level 6* (Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education 2018) and has been approved by the HCPC and accredited by RCOT.
Autonomous practice	A fundamental element of the occupational therapy standards of proficiency, this is the ability to assess a professional situation and address it appropriately with the relevant occupational therapy knowledge and experience. It is also inclusive of the ability to make reasoned decisions, to be able to justify these decisions and accept personal responsibility for all actions (HCPC 2013).
Award	The occupational therapy qualification conferred on a learner following the successful completion of a pre-registration programme.

CPD – continuing professional development	The way in which an individual continues to learn and develop throughout their career, including during their pre-registration programme. CPD is essential and evolves skills, knowledge, professional identity and professional conduct so that individuals stay up to date and practise safely and effectively (Broughton and Harris 2019).
Curriculum	Specific document describing the learning outcomes, educational methods and assessments for each component of the pre-registration programme.
CV – curriculum vitae	Documentation describing the qualifications, expertise and experience of individuals.
Education provider	The awarding body that delivers or oversees an occupational therapy pre-registration programme. Education providers may also be known as 'higher education institutions' (HEIs) or 'universities'.
Educator	An individual with the relevant specialist knowledge and expertise, employed or engaged by an education provider to teach the pre-registration programme. Educators teaching occupational therapy-specific knowledge and skills must be occupational therapists. Educators may also be known as 'academics', 'tutors' or 'lecturers'.
Employer	A public, independent, private or third sector organisation that employs people to undertake a specific role with legal and contractually acceptable terms and conditions. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, the employer is an organisation that employs an individual to undertake a specific job that includes training or skills development as part of the role. In such cases, employers must employ the individual until the completion of their training and end-point assessment.
End-point assessment	An independent assessment at the end of the apprenticeship pre-registration programme, to assess whether the learner has achieved competence and is eligible to be conferred an award leading to eligibility to apply to register as an occupational therapist with the HCPC. Rigorous, robust and independent end-point assessment is essential to give employers confidence that apprentices are competent and capable to enter the occupational therapy profession.
	It is the employer's decision to put a learner forward for end-point assessment, once they are confident that the learner is ready. The employer may, at their discretion, consult with the learner and/or education provider(s). Independence of the end-point assessment will be assured through: the examination board, which will include the external examiner, being responsible for the final decision on the award of the qualification that confirms the apprentice has met the education outcomes required for registration with the HCPC; and the end-point assessment organisation (HCPC Approved

| | Education Provider) which will conduct the end-point assessment (IfA 2021b).

At least 12 months prior to the first scheduled end-point assessment, the education provider is required to submit, to RCOT, evidence of their entry onto the Register of End-point Assessment Organisations. |
|---|---|
| Ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession | The term used to describe the *Code of ethics and professional conduct* (COT 2015a). The *Code of ethics and professional conduct* will be reviewed shortly after publication of the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education* and may be known by a new title. |
| Foundation programme | Foundation programmes specifically related to the occupational therapy profession offer awards intended to provide basic knowledge in a subject to prepare a learner to undertake an occupational therapy pre-registration programme.

Generic foundation programmes are non-occupational therapy-specific awards and do not offer any recognition of prior learning for a pre-registration programme. |
GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation	General Data Protection Regulation was introduced in 2018 to provide one set of data protection rules for all companies operating in the European Union, wherever they are based. Stronger rules on data protection mean people have more control over their personal data and businesses benefit from a level playing field.
Graduate	An individual who has successfully met the pre-registration programme requirements of their education provider and has been conferred the associated award.
HCPC – Health and Care Professions Council	The regulating body in the United Kingdom established to protect the public by regulating a range of health and care professions, including occupational therapy.
Individual scheme of study	The documentation that defines any variation in a learner's progression through the pre-registration programme, that is, any deviation from the standard progression route through a pre-registration programme that an individual learner is approved to take. The variation must be clearly mapped and discussed with the learner.

The eligibility criteria for when an individual scheme of study will be considered and implemented are documented by the education provider. For learners eligible for an individual scheme of study, it should be established at the earliest possible point and any alterations and adjustments that will be made to the pre-registration programme to accommodate the needs of the learner should be defined. Any alterations and adjustments must still meet the requirements of the education provider and the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education*. An individual scheme of study must be agreed to by the learner, educator(s) and Programme Lead – |

	Operational Level. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, it must also be agreed to by the employer. There must be an appropriate review process defined when the individual scheme of study is established and this should be adhered to by the education provider. Examples of where an individual scheme of study may be considered include accommodating maternity leave or a phased return to study following a significant period of illness. An individual scheme of study may also be known as an 'individualised pathway'.
Interprofessional learning	Learners from different professions actively participating to learn with, from and about each other. The anticipated outcome of interprofessional learning is the development of a working culture of effective collaboration and integration of care across agencies, sectors and professions within and beyond the health, wellbeing, social and integrative care systems.
Learner	An individual enrolled in an occupational therapy pre-registration programme, regardless of which entry route into the profession the learner is enrolled in. Learners may also be known as 'students' or, in the case of apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, 'apprentices'.
Lifelong learning	Formal and informal learning opportunities that allow an individual to continuously develop and improve the knowledge and skills they need for employment and personal fulfilment (Broughton and Harris 2019).
Long-arm supervision	Increasingly, there is diversity in the range of settings offered for practice-based learning. Some settings may not have existing established occupational therapy roles and therefore it may not be possible for a learner to have the support from an occupational therapist employed by the practice-based learning provider, in the role of practice educator. In such cases, supervision and assessment of occupational therapy-specific skills during practice-based learning must be provided by an occupational therapist outside the practice-based learning provider. This is known as long-arm supervision and commonly the occupational therapist providing the long-arm supervision will be employed by the education provider as an educator. Increasingly, however, models of long-arm supervision are being explored that provide the opportunity for learners to be supervised by occupational therapists employed in other settings.
	Support and advice are provided through a mix of face-to-face meetings and distance communication, via the telephone, video calls, email, or other means, depending on the learner's preferences. Visiting the learner in their practice-based learning setting is recommended, particularly for settings where occupational therapy roles are still emerging.

People who access occupational therapy services	Anyone who accesses or is affected by occupational therapy services, including patients, carers, clients, families or communities. The term is also inclusive of colleagues and peers of the occupational therapist or occupational therapy learner who are being impacted by their knowledge, skills or professional conduct (Broughton and Harris 2019).
Practice-based learning	Occupational therapy education delivered in a variety of settings that allows learners to apply and practise their newly-acquired knowledge and skills in a safe environment. Practice-based learning has traditionally occurred in role-established settings, such as hospitals and community health services; however, alternative and non-traditional settings are also integral to pre-registration programmes. The inclusion of practice-based learning settings in which there is no existing occupational therapy role is important to develop learners with leadership skills who are capable of working in diverse settings.
Practice-based learning provider	The service, organisation or business hosting learners during their practice-based learning. Practice-based learning providers may also be known as 'practice placement providers'.
Practice educator	An occupational therapist who supervises, facilitates learning, assesses and supports a learner during the required 1000 hours of successfully completed practice-based learning. Most commonly, the practice educator has existing employment with the practice-based learning provider and engages in the role of practice educator as a component of their substantive position. Where practice-based learning is occurring in a setting without existing occupational therapy roles, the practice educator will not be an occupational therapist. Instead, the role may be fulfilled by another member of staff employed by the practice-based learning provider who offers education and support specific to the setting. In such cases, supervision and assessment of occupational therapy-specific skills must be provided through long-arm supervision by an occupational therapist. Practice educators may also be known as 'practice placement tutors'.
Pre-registration programme	Occupational therapy programme of study, approved by the HCPC leading to eligibility to apply for registration as an occupational therapist with the HCPC. Where the pre-registration programme is accredited by RCOT, learners are eligible to join RCOT as student members and, once qualified as occupational therapists, upgrade to professional membership. The term is inclusive of all pathways into the profession, including apprenticeship pre-registration pathways.
Pre-registration programme team	The staff employed by the education provider to develop, deliver and/or evaluate the pre-registration programme. The pre-registration programme team includes those teaching the pre-registration programme as well as the administrative and support staff involved.

Professional Lead – Strategic Level	The role within the education provider responsible for leading the suite of occupational therapy pre-registration programmes. The Professional Lead – Strategic Level: ■ is an occupational therapist; ■ has a broad range of professional experience, including a previous substantive academic appointment within an education provider; ■ will strategically lead the development and implementation of contemporary, creative and innovative pre-registration programmes; ■ is given the authority by the education provider to maintain the pre-registration programme's alignment with the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education*; ■ allocates an occupational therapist, employed by the education provider, to hold overall responsibility for the development of practice-based learning opportunities across a range of practice-based learning settings; ■ liaises with the education provider's senior management team to ensure their engagement with, and support for, the Standards; ■ recognises the changing needs of the profession and adapts the pre-registration programme to address these needs; ■ recognises the changing needs of the people who access occupational therapy services and adapts the pre-registration programme to address these needs; ■ possesses capabilities under Level 7 of the Leadership pillar in *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b); ■ is a member of RCOT; ■ facilitates and supports the active involvement of colleagues and learners with RCOT. It is possible for the same individual to be the Professional Lead – Strategic Level and the Programme Lead – Operational Level simultaneously, although it is likely that the workloads of the respective roles would prohibit this arrangement and therefore it is more commonly the case that the roles are held by different individuals.
Professional standards for practice	The term used to describe the *Professional standards for occupational therapy practice* (COT 2017). The *Professional standards for occupational therapy practice* will be reviewed shortly after publication of the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education* and may be known by a new title.
Programme documentation	Evidence provided by the education provider as part of RCOT's Accreditation Process, including the written submission and discussions with stakeholders at Accreditation Visit. Further information can be found at: *www.rcot.co.uk/accreditation-process*

Programme Lead – Operational Level	The role within the education provider responsible for leading the occupational therapy pre-registration programme. The Programme Lead – Operational Level:
	■ is an occupational therapist;
	■ is responsible for ensuring that the *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education* are met;
	■ is directly responsible for developing the pre-registration programme;
	■ is responsible for co-ordinating the planning and administration of the pre-registration programme;
	■ is a member of RCOT;
	■ facilitates and supports the active involvement of colleagues and learners with RCOT.
	The Programme Lead – Operational Level role may be a rotational post, providing an opportunity for career advancement and skill expansion for different individuals. It is possible for the same individual to be the Programme Lead – Operational Level and the Professional Lead – Strategic Level simultaneously, although it is likely that the workloads of the respective roles would prohibit this arrangement and therefore it is more commonly the case that the roles are held by different individuals.
Research	The detailed study of a subject in order to discover new information or reach a new understanding.
Safeguarding	The established process within an education provider to protect learners and people who access occupational therapy services from experiencing harm, including bullying and harassment.
Scholarship	The development of one's own knowledge.
Self-directed study during practice-based learning	The defined period of self-directed learning undertaken as a component of practice-based learning which contributes to the required 1000 hours of successfully completed practice-based learning. The maximum amount of self-directed study that may contribute to the required 1000 practice-based learning hours is 3.5 hours every week, or the equivalent pro-rata amount for non-full-time practice-based learning activities.
Simulated practice-based learning	Artificially constructed environments designed to represent realistic scenarios that provide opportunities for learners to practise clinical and decision-making skills within a safe environment. It allows for repetition, feedback, evaluation and reflection, with examples including video based learning, role-playing interactions, scenarios where learners or others act as the person receiving occupational therapy services, scenarios using professionally trained actors, and the use of high-fidelity manikins (Reed 2014). The method chosen should be determined by the learning outcomes (Toserud et al 2013) and be used effectively and proportionately to support learning and assessment (Nursing & Midwifery Council 2018). If considered a component of the 1000 practice-based

	learning hours, simulated learning must be assessed, must not exceed a maximum of 40 hours (Imms et al 2018) and must take place with individuals in the role of people accessing occupational therapy services.
Step-off award	A lower award is offered in recognition of the attainment of academic credit that is less than that required for the final award. Each education provider will have its own set of regulations about when, or if, this applies to the pre-registration programmes they deliver and it should not be assumed that step-off awards are granted by every education provider. An example of a step-off award is when the lower award of a Postgraduate Diploma is offered where the academic achievement for a Master's award has not been reached. A lower award must clearly state the academic and practice-based learning achievement required and whether the lower award confers eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC.
Suite of occupational therapy pre-registration programmes	A collection of occupational therapy pre-registration programmes offered by an education provider, with a range of awards or pathways leading to eligibility to register with the HCPC as an occupational therapist.
Supervision	A professional relationship and activity which ensures good standards of practice and facilitates development. There are many different models of supervision, however it generally: ■ involves a professional relationship; ■ is a process; ■ is active and dynamic, with defined objectives; ■ involves a range of activities; ■ relates to standards, effectiveness and competence; ■ relates to the acquisition and development of knowledge, skills and professional conduct; ■ incorporates personal, professional and organisational elements; ■ may involve simulation; ■ involves reflection on practice (COT 2015b).
Tutor	The term used to describe the role of an educator in supporting the learner's professional development or in providing general academic advice and mentoring. Learners are allocated a personal Tutor for the duration of their enrolment. The Tutor must be an academic member of the pre-registration programme team. Although the Tutor does not need to be an occupational therapist, programme documentation must describe the information provided to learners regarding how to access a member of the pre-registration programme team who is an occupational therapist, if required.

	For learners in apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, the Tutor must be external to their employing organisation. Tutors may also be known as 'academic advisors' or 'personal tutors'.
Work-based mentor	An experienced, appropriately-qualified occupational therapist who delivers or oversees a learning strategy in the workplace, which results in the development of skills, knowledge and professional conduct. This term is only used in the context of apprenticeship pre-registration programmes and is aligned closely with the profession-specific education delivered by the education provider.

Learning and development standards for pre-registration education

Domain 1 – Level of award for entry to the profession		
Standards and criteria		**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 1.1	The threshold entry route to the **HCPC** Register and the occupational therapy profession is a Bachelor's Degree with Honours.	
Criteria	1.1.1	Graduates eligible to apply for registration as an occupational therapist with the HCPC and for professional membership with RCOT are those who have completed a pre-registration programme at one of the following award levels: • Bachelor's Degree with Honours • Post-graduate Diploma • Master's Degree.	Programme documentation states the award conferred on graduates of the pre-registration programme is one of the following: • Bachelor's Degree with Honours • Post-graduate Diploma • Master's Degree.

Domain 2 – Pre-registration programme admissions		
Standards and criteria		**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 2.1	The admissions process must give both the **applicant** and the **education provider** the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a **pre-registration programme**.	
Criteria	2.1.1	Applicants have sufficient information about the role, responsibilities, professional conduct and expectations of being an occupational therapist and use this information to make an informed choice about enrolling in the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation includes the information provided to applicants, which describes the role, responsibilities, professional conduct and expectations of occupational therapists. Information provided to applicants also addresses the pre-registration programme's learning and assessment requirements.
	2.1.2	Applicants have sufficient information about the academic, practice-based learning and assessment requirements to be able to make an informed choice about enrolling in the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation includes the details provided to applicants about practice-based learning expectations, such as the range of settings in which they may undertake their learning and the geographical reach of potential practice-based learning providers.
Standard 2.2	The selection and entry criteria must include appropriate academic and professional entry standards.	
Criteria	2.2.1	The professional standards for practice and the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession are reflected in the admission entry standards.	Programme documentation describes how the professional standards for practice and the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession are reflected in the admission entry standards. Education providers must regularly review academic and professional standards and provide reasoning for their individual entry requirements.
	2.2.2	Both existing employees and newly recruited employees offered a place in an apprenticeship pre-registration programme meet the needs, expectations and criteria of the employer, education provider and the profession.	For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation defines the relationship between the employer

Domain 2 – Pre-registration programme admissions			
Standards and criteria			**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria	2.2.3	A foundation programme designed as an entry route to an occupational therapy pre-registration programme must be a coherent programme of study in its own right and clearly demonstrate alignment with the learning outcomes of the occupational therapy pre-registration programme.	and the education provider in assessing applications. Programme documentation related to admissions describes how existing employees and newly recruited employees are assessed to determine whether they meet the needs, expectations and criteria of the employer, the education provider and the profession.

Where foundation programmes are offered, programme documentation describes the progression route from a foundation programme through to a pre-registration programme and demonstrates alignment with the learning outcomes.

Programme documentation related to admissions describes how the standard application process applies to applicants who have completed a generic foundation programme. |
	2.2.4	Where a generic foundation programme is used as an entry route to an occupational therapy pre-registration programme, the applicant must undergo the standard admissions process and will be subject to the standard recognition of prior learning requirements for that programme.	
Standard 2.3		**The admissions process must ensure that applicants have a good command of English.**	
Criteria	2.3.1	Applicants are provided with information regarding the English language skills required by learners in the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation related to admissions describes how the education provider ensures learners have sufficient information about the expected level of written and spoken English language skills at the point of entry to the pre-registration programme. Information provided to applicants about available pre-sessional English language support is described in the programme documentation.
Standard 2.4		**The admissions process must assess the suitability of applicants, including criminal conviction checks.**	
Criteria	2.4.1	Applicants offered a place in the pre-registration programme hold the personal and professional attributes suitable for practice as an occupational therapist.	Programme documentation related to admissions describes how the education provider assesses the applicants as being suitable for the occupational therapy profession, with the occupational therapy Admissions Tutor having overall responsibility. Applicants who have previously been enrolled in an occupational therapy pre-registration programme or any other health professional education programme must submit a self-declaration confirming no previous fitness to practise concerns.

The process for requesting and confirming criminal record checks on all applicants is described in the programme documentation. |
| Standard 2.5 | | **The admissions process must ensure that applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.** | |
| Criteria | 2.5.1 | Applicants offered a place in the pre-registration programme are advised of the health requirements of the pre-registration programme. | Programme documentation related to admissions describes the health requirements that learners have to meet, including occupational health clearance and immunisations. |

Domain 2 – Pre-registration programme admissions

Standards and criteria			Guidance and evidence
Standard 2.6		**There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.**	
Criteria	2.6.1	Recognition of prior learning should be offered to all learners and must be fair, transparent and involve reasonable academic judgement.	Programme documentation related to the recognition of prior learning must be clear and reasonable and facilitate each application being considered on an individual basis by the occupational therapy Admissions Tutor.
	2.6.2	Applicants must be supported by the education provider through the application process for recognition of prior learning.	For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, assessment of recognition of prior learning applications must be undertaken through a collaborative process between the education provider and the employer.
	2.6.3	A maximum of one third of the total pre-registration programme may be considered for recognition of prior learning.	Programme documentation related to recognition of prior learning must include the arrangements made by the education provider to support applicants through this process.

Programme documentation defines the maximum amount of the pre-registration programme that may be considered through recognition of prior learning. The maximum amount is less than or equal to one third of the total pre-registration programme, and may include practice-based learning.

The hours of practice-based learning that may be considered for recognition of prior learning:
- must not exceed the hours of practice-based learning scheduled for the first year of the receiving education provider's pre-registration programme;
- must have been assessed;
- must have been successfully completed.

The process for assessing the achievement of learning outcomes from the recognised practice-based learning is described.

In circumstances where a learner is transferring between occupational therapy pre-registration programmes delivered by different education providers, more than one third may be considered for recognition of prior learning. In such cases, the learner must:
- meet the admission requirements of the receiving education provider;
- demonstrate that the teaching, learning and assessment strategy of the releasing pre-registration programme is commensurate with the stage of the pre-registration programme they are seeking admission to;
- ensure the releasing education provider details any issues regarding professional misconduct or fitness for the profession, in

			Domain 2 – Pre-registration programme admissions	
			Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria				order for the receiving education provider to make an informed decision. Programme documentation related to the recognition of prior learning outlines the responsibilities of learners, as well as both the receiving and releasing education providers, in circumstances where learners are transferring between occupational therapy pre-registration programmes.
Standard 2.7			**The education provider must ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.**	
Criteria	2.7.1		Potential unconscious biases in the selection process and the assessment of applicants is mitigated by training and support provided by the education provider for all staff involved in admissions.	Initial and ongoing CPD and lifelong learning for all staff involved in admissions are inclusive of the knowledge and skills required to value diversity and to work without discrimination. Programme documentation related to participation and completion of the pre-registration programme explicitly describes how individuals defined by any of the protected characteristics – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (Great Britain. Parliament 2010) – are supported throughout their engagement with the education provider.
	2.7.2		If an applicant chooses to disclose a disability or specific learning need during their application process, the education provider responds appropriately and offers reasonable adjustments if the applicant is otherwise eligible for enrolment.	Programme documentation related to admissions describes how admissions policies and procedures were developed with the involvement of learners and people who access occupational therapy services. The flexibility of the education provider in supporting learners with disabilities or specific learning needs is described.

			Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership	
			Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 3.1			**The pre-registration programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.**	
Criteria	3.1.1		Learners are offered a pre-registration programme that has the commitment of the education provider to be sufficiently resourced throughout the accredited period.	Programme documentation includes the commitment of the education provider's senior management to sufficiently resource the pre-registration programme, to ensure there is quality in the education and learning opportunities throughout the accredited period. Programme documentation includes confirmation of approval against the *Standards of education and training* (HCPC 2017) and evidence that the curriculum is aligned with the professional standards for practice and the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession.
	3.1.2		Learners are fit for the occupational therapy profession at the point of graduation.	

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership		
Standards and criteria		**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 3.2	The pre-registration programme must be effectively managed.	
Criteria	3.2.1 Learners are provided with a pre-registration programme that has appropriate and sufficient resources, staffing and support to meet the learning outcomes.	Programme documentation describes the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the education provider and the learner. Programme documentation related to staffing includes the education provider's workload-planning model that identifies the teaching, research, CPD, administrative and other activities that educators are contracted to undertake. The approach to managing staffing, including staffing shortages, substantive and interim positions and visiting educators, is also described.
	3.2.2 Learners undertaking an apprenticeship pre-registration programme are offered the same quality of education and equal opportunities for learning as those enrolled in other pre-registration programmes.	Programme documentation related to resource management demonstrates how the available resources, including library resources, online learning, teaching materials, specialist equipment and funding, are able to meet the needs of learners and educators. Programme documentation also justifies the available teaching space, venues for specialist learning activities, storage space and the availability of office space for educators, administration and support staff.
	3.2.3 The roles, responsibilities and expectations of the education provider and learner (and employer, in the case of apprenticeship pre-registration programmes) are upheld.	Programme documentation related to staffing describes how practice educators will be facilitated to develop the skills needed to support learners during practice-based learning.
		For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation includes a contract template describing:
		• the organisational responsibilities of the employer, education provider and practice-based learning provider;
		• the roles and responsibilities of the learner, work-based mentor, educator and practice educator;
		• the status of learner, as opposed to employee, and the contexts in which this differentiation is important;
		• the commitment by employers to meet the same expectations as education providers regarding sufficient resourcing to ensure there is quality in the education and learning opportunities provided;
		• when and how the policies of employers and education providers will operate and which will take precedence in any given circumstance.
		The contract should reflect an agreement between the learner, employer and education provider. An additional contract may be required to demonstrate arrangements for the end-point assessment.

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership			
Standards and criteria			**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria			For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation describes how employee rights (for example, annual leave and bank holidays) and pressure points in the workplace are taken into account when scheduling practice-based learning.
Standard 3.3		**The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the pre-registration programme is appropriately qualified and experienced.**	
Criteria	3.3.1	The occupational therapy-specific suite of pre-registration programmes is led by an occupational therapist in the role of Professional Lead – Strategic Level.	Programme documentation related to staffing describes the role of the Professional Lead – Strategic Level and demonstrates how the individual in this role is appropriately qualified and experienced. RCOT reserves the right to raise objections to any appointment to this role.

Programme documentation related to staffing describes the role of the Programme Lead – Operational Level and demonstrates how the individual in this role is appropriately qualified and experienced. The initial and ongoing support (for example, mentoring) offered to aid the induction process of the Programme Lead – Operational Level is described. |
| | 3.3.2 | Each pre-registration programme offered by the education provider is led by an occupational therapist in the role of Programme Lead – Operational Level. | |
| **Standard 3.4** | | **The pre-registration programme must have regular and effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place.** | |
| Criteria | 3.4.1 | Quality monitoring and enhancement processes demonstrate rigour and integrity, to enable continuous improvement of the pre-registration programme. | Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement describes how the pre-registration programme is reviewed continually and revised at least every 5 years. An application to RCOT for an earlier review or an extension to the normal 5-year cycle may be considered.

Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement describes the process for the collection and analysis of feedback from educators, practice educators, learners, people who access occupational therapy services, external examiners and current and potential employers of occupational therapists. Feedback should also include information about the performance of pre-registration programme graduates. Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement describes how the feedback collected is used to inform the ongoing development of the pre-registration programme.

Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement describes the process for continual improvement of facilities and resources and how this is aligned with planned curriculum reviews. It also describes how reviews of educational methods are timely and rigorous. |
| | 3.4.2 | Quality monitoring and enhancement processes are aligned with ongoing RCOT Accreditation Process requirements. | |

Learning and development standards for pre-registration education

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria	Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement describes the process for preparing reports required by RCOT's Accreditation Process, for ongoing accreditation. The process for notifying RCOT of major and minor changes to the pre-registration programme is described in the programme documentation. Where an accredited pre-registration programme is not recruited to in the expected timeline, RCOT accreditation will remain in place for 2 years.
Standard 3.5	**There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice-based learning providers.**
3.5.1 — Criteria — All staff involved in academic and practice-based learning work collaboratively to ensure mutually beneficial and quality experiences for all involved.	Programme documentation outlines the stakeholder engagement approach of the education provider, including how relationships with a range of practice-based learning providers are established and fostered. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation includes a contract template describing: • the organisational responsibilities of the employer, education provider and practice-based learning provider; • the roles and responsibilities of the learner, work-based mentor, educator and practice educator; • the status of learner, as opposed to employee, and the contexts in which this differentiation is important; • the commitment by employers to meet the same expectations as education providers regarding sufficient resourcing to ensure there is quality in the education and learning opportunities provided; • when and how the policies of employers and education providers will operate and which will take precedence in any given circumstance. The contract should reflect an agreement between the learner, employer and education provider. An additional contract may be required to demonstrate arrangements for the end-point assessment. Programme documentation related to staffing describes how educators and practice educators are facilitated to develop the skills needed to support learners enrolled in pre-registration programmes.

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 3.6 **There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.**	

Criteria	3.6.1	There is a sufficient range of practice-based learning providers within the education provider's network to ensure learners have practice-based learning opportunities across the full breadth of the profession.	Programme documentation describes how learners apply their knowledge, skills and values across a wide range of practice-based learning opportunities. Learners experience a wide range of practice-based learning opportunities, such as: • public, independent, private and third sector settings; • urban, rural, local or international settings; • non-frontline settings, for exposure to strategic and leadership roles and/or within research; departments or organisations; • organisations for people who are under-employed, disempowered, dispossessed or socially excluded; • organisations caring for people of different ages, from different socioeconomic and cultural contexts, with recently acquired and long-standing occupational needs and with different levels of physical and psychosocial functioning; • settings using individual, group, community and population approaches; • settings where there are no occupational therapists currently employed. Programme documentation describes the strategy for managing and co-ordinating practice-based learning elements of the pre-registration programme. Programme documentation outlines the stakeholder engagement approach of the education provider, including how relationships with a wide range of practice-based learning providers are established and fostered. Programme documentation related to staffing describes the role of the individual responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of practice-based learning and the requirement that the individual is an occupational therapist. Programme documentation outlines the expertise, qualifications and current HCPC registration status of the individual responsible. Programme documentation describes how there are a suitable number of occupational therapists co-ordinating practice-based learning and in practice educator roles.
	3.6.2	Practice-based learning is sufficiently resourced and supported.	
	3.6.3	There are effective working relationships between the education provider and practice-based learning providers to ensure learners meet the practice-based learning requirements.	

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership

Standards and criteria			Guidance and evidence
Standard 3.7		**People who access occupational therapy services must be involved in the pre-registration programme.**	
Criteria	3.7.1	People who access occupational therapy services are involved in the deliberative and decision-making processes related to admissions criteria, curriculum design, content and practice-based learning across the development, implementation and review process.	Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement defines the role of people who access occupational therapy services in the deliberative and decision-making processes of the pre-registration programme. Methods for recruiting people who access occupational therapy services to inform the pre-registration programme must be appropriate and clearly defined. Support provided by the education provider for people who access occupational therapy services to engage meaningfully in deliberative and decision-making processes is described.
Standard 3.8		**Learners must be involved in the pre-registration programme.**	
Criteria	3.8.1	Learner representatives are involved in the deliberative and decision-making processes related to admissions criteria, curriculum design, content and practice-based learning across the development, implementation and review process.	Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement defines the role of learner representatives and graduates in the deliberative and decision-making processes of the pre-registration programme, guided by the ongoing feedback mechanism offered through regular evaluations.
	3.8.2	Graduates are invited to participate in the deliberative and decision-making processes related to admissions criteria, curriculum design, content and practice-based learning across the development, implementation and review process.	
Standard 3.9		**There must be an adequate number of appropriately-qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective pre-registration programme.**	
Criteria	3.9.1	The learners are adequately supported by qualified and experienced educators, practice educators, administration and support staff to undertake all elements of the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation related to staffing outlines the approach for ensuring there are appropriately-qualified educators, practice educators, administration and support staff involved in the delivery of all elements of the pre-registration programme.
	3.9.2	The number of learners is in proportion with the number of educators.	Programme documentation related to staffing includes the education provider's workload-planning model, which identifies the teaching, research, CPD, administrative and other activities that educators are contracted to undertake. The approach to managing staffing, including staffing shortages, substantive and interim positions and visiting educators, is also described.
	3.9.3	The professional backgrounds and experience of educators and practice educators are congruent with the philosophy and purpose of the pre-registration programme.	
	3.9.4	Educators demonstrate active engagement in scholarship and/or research that directly influences the pre-registration programme and the profession.	Programme documentation related to staffing demonstrates the educator-to-learner ratio is one full-time equivalent educator for every 15–20 full-time equivalent learners. When calculating full-time equivalent for educators, only time spent directly teaching or supporting the pre-registration programme should be included and the majority of these

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria	educators must be occupational therapists. Where an increase in the number of learners or a significant decrease in the number of educators occurs, or is anticipated, it is reported to RCOT as a major change and a clear strategy for developing or supporting the pre-registration programme team and associated resources is provided. Programme documentation related to staffing describes: • how educators are required to hold qualifications at a level higher than, or equivalent to, the one they are teaching and are able to demonstrate quality and currency in their area of teaching; • the formal qualifications of all educators and evidence of their expertise in the areas they teach; • the roles and responsibilities for all educators; • the workload-planning model in place outlining how the pre-registration programme team distributes their contribution to the pre-registration programme across teaching, research, CPD, administrative and other functions; • any other occupational therapy programmes within the suite offered and how the educators are distributed across all programmes, maintaining the educator-to-learner ratio; • the professional backgrounds of educators and, where possible, practice educators and how their experience aligns with the philosophy and purpose of the pre-registration programme; • how the scholarship and research being undertaken by educators are contributing to the pre-registration programme and the profession.
Standard 3.10	**Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.**
Criteria — 3.10.1	Elements of the curriculum under the Professional Practice pillar within *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b) and all practice-based learning are overseen or supported by occupational therapists with appropriate expertise and qualifications.	Programme documentation related to staffing outlines the expertise, qualifications and current HCPC registration status of all educators teaching the elements of the curriculum under the Professional Practice pillar within *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b). Programme documentation related to staffing outlines the expertise and qualifications of all educators teaching the elements of the curriculum under the Facilitation of Learning, Leadership, and Evidence, Research and Development pillars within *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b).
3.10.2	Elements of the curriculum under the Facilitation of Learning, Leadership, and Evidence, Research and Development pillars within *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b) are taught by educators with appropriate expertise and qualifications.	
3.10.3	The educators and practice educators use their knowledge of the local contexts of practice to support learners.	

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership			
Standards and criteria			**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria	3.10.4	The educators and practice educators use their knowledge of global occupational therapy, health, disability, societal and educational theories and practice to support learners.	Programme documentation related to staffing outlines the expectations of the expertise, qualifications and current HCPC registration status of practice educators. For education conducted outside the UK, HCPC registration status may not be relevant; however, the equivalent is required. Programme documentation describes how the educators and practice educators use their knowledge of local contexts of practice to inform their teaching. This should include knowledge and understanding of relevant local occupations, social structures, cultural beliefs and practices, health needs, and occupational opportunities. Programme documentation describes how the educators and practice educators use their knowledge of global occupational therapy, health, disability, societal and educational theories and practice to inform their teaching. Methods of strengthening this knowledge include engaging with visiting educators and the professional literature (national and international), attending international conferences and professional networking beyond the local context. Programme documentation outlines the stakeholder engagement approach of the education provider, including establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with health, care, disability, educational and legislative institutions that influence occupational therapy practice and education.
Standard 3.11		**An effective strategy must be in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their roles in the pre-registration programme.**	
Criteria	3.11.1	Educators are supported to engage in teaching, scholarship and/or research in a way that acknowledges and allows for the administrative functions associated with the role.	Programme documentation related to staffing describes the education provider's workload-planning model that identifies the teaching, research, CPD, administrative and other activities that educators are contracted to undertake. Time and activities related to skill development for the purposes of continually improving the pre-registration programme should also be described. Programme documentation related to staffing incorporates the principles of CPD and lifelong learning (Broughton and Harris 2019) and *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b) into the professional development planning for educators. The CVs of educators demonstrate engagement with CPD and lifelong learning through a range of activities, including
	3.11.2	CPD and lifelong learning activities that educators engage in, directly impact on the design and delivery of a contemporary and evidence-based curriculum.	

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership			
Standards and criteria			**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria			research where appropriate. Programme documentation outlines how educators, learners, the pre-registration programme and/or the education provider benefit from the CPD and lifelong learning undertaken.
Standard 3.12	**The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the pre-registration programme and must be accessible to all learners and educators.**		
Criteria	3.12.1	The resources fit well with the philosophy and purpose of the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation related to resource management:
	3.12.2	Facilities, equipment and resources are accessible, well-maintained, fit for purpose and support the achievement of the learning outcomes.	• is aligned with the defined philosophy and purpose of the pre-registration programme; • demonstrates how the available resources, including library resources, online learning, teaching materials, specialist equipment and funding, are able to meet the needs of learners and educators;
	3.12.3	Learning materials, resources and activities are accessible for learners and educators with varying needs and capabilities.	• justifies the available teaching space, venues for specialist learning activities, storage space and the availability of office space for educators, administration and support staff; • describes how equipment and materials for occupational therapy interventions that are available for teaching purposes fit with the local technology, economy, values and geography; • demonstrates that the varying needs and capabilities of educators and learners have been considered. It should also describe how any potential issues have been identified and the approach the education provider has taken to address these issues or develop strategies to mitigate their impact. Initial and ongoing CPD and lifelong learning for all staff are inclusive of the knowledge and skills required to value diversity and to work without discrimination.
Standard 3.13	**There must be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.**		
Criteria	3.13.1	Each learner must be allocated a Tutor who has responsibility for providing general academic advice, as well as mentoring and supporting the professional development of the learner.	Programme documentation describes the processes for allocating a Tutor and how the role effectively supports the needs of the learner, including the development of their profession-specific identity. The Tutor must be an academic member of the pre-registration programme team. Although the Tutor does not need to be an occupational therapist, programme documentation must describe the information provided to learners regarding how to access a member of the pre-registration programme team who is an occupational therapist, if required.
	3.13.2	Learners are aware of, and have access to, support services provided by appropriately-qualified professionals.	

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria			Programme documentation describes the services available for learners offering the support they may require to successfully complete the pre-registration programme. This may include personal, mental health, physical health, supportive learning, financial or pastoral services. Education providers may provide these services directly or by facilitating their access for learners.
Standard 3.14	**There must be equality and diversity policies implemented and monitored in relation to learners.**	
Criteria	3.14.1	Equality and diversity principles are clear, transparent and demonstrated throughout the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation related to participation and completion of the pre-registration programme explicitly describes how individuals defined by any of the protected characteristics – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation (Great Britain. Parliament 2010) – are supported throughout their engagement with the education provider.

Programme documentation related to staffing describes how the CPD and lifelong learning available for educators and practice educators are inclusive of equality and diversity principles, with the aim of strengthening the skills needed to develop a more inclusive and participatory profession. |
	3.14.2	Educators and practice educators demonstrate the skills and commitment to promote change towards a more inclusive and participatory society.	
Standard 3.15	**There must be a thorough and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints.**	
Criteria	3.15.1	Learners are provided with sufficient information about the process to follow for any complaints related to the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation related to the grievance and complaints process describes how this information is communicated to learners and defines an appropriate timeline for response by the education provider.
	3.15.2	A timely and appropriate response is provided to learners following a complaint.	
Standard 3.16	**There must be thorough and effective processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.**	
Criteria	3.16.1	The learning strategy and methods assure fitness for the profession.	Programme documentation describes how the pre-registration programme is aligned with the professional standards for practice and the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession. Programme documentation describes how the education provider supports and enables progression of professionally suitable learners. Programme documentation includes the process for investigation of alleged fitness to practise concerns and for the potential termination of a learner's enrolment on these grounds.

Programme documentation outlines the stakeholder engagement approach of the |
| | 3.16.2 | Future employers are confident that graduates are fit for the profession and for employment. | |
| | 3.16.3 | Learners maintain the personal and professional attributes suitable for practice as an occupational therapist. | |

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership			
Standards and criteria			**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria			education provider, including the ongoing engagement with current and potential employers of occupational therapists. Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement describes the process for the collection and analysis of feedback from educators, practice educators, learners, people who access occupational therapy services, external examiners and current and potential employers of occupational therapists. Feedback should also include information about the performance of pre-registration programme graduates. Programme documentation describes how the education provider ensures all learners continue to be suitable for the occupational therapy profession, throughout their enrolment. Programme documentation includes the process for learners to notify their education provider if they have any changes in their criminal record. Criteria for the education provider to notify the HCPC about a learner's criminal record at the point of application for professional registration are described. Programme documentation includes the education provider's policies and procedures regarding academic suspension. Programme documentation describes how discussions about whether a learner is deemed suitable for the profession, and therefore eligible to continue their enrolment, must be entered into as soon as it becomes evident that there is a potential issue. Appropriate and proportionate processes are in place and applied by the education provider throughout a learner's enrolment in the pre-registration programme.
Standard 3.17	**There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of people who access occupational therapy services.**		
Criteria	3.17.1	Learners are empowered and supported to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of people who access occupational therapy services.	Programme documentation related to practice-based learning describes how learners are empowered and supported to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of people who access occupational therapy services. Safeguarding measures for learners and people who access occupational therapy services are evidenced in the programme documentation. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, learners are also empowered and supported to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of people accessing the occupational therapy services of their employer.

Domain 3 – Pre-registration programme governance, management and leadership

Standards and criteria			Guidance and evidence
Standard 3.18		The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved pre-registration programme leads to eligibility for admission to the HCPC Register.	
Criteria	3.18.1	Learners are provided with sufficient information explaining how step-off or other exit awards offered by their education provider may not result in eligibility to apply for registration as an occupational therapist.	In the programme documentation, step-off or other exit awards resulting in eligibility to apply for registration as an occupational therapist with the HCPC must be clearly differentiated from those that provide an award that does not lead to eligibility to apply to register as an occupational therapist. There must be no reference to the title of occupational therapist in aegrotat, step-off or other exit awards that do not provide eligibility for registration as an occupational therapist. Potential aegrotat, step-off or other exit awards must be considered by the education provider in advance and be stated in the programme documentation.
	3.18.2	Learners are provided with information about the eligibility requirements of RCOT professional membership.	Programme documentation describes the information provided to learners about the role of RCOT and the eligibility requirements and benefits of RCOT professional membership.

Domain 4 – Pre-registration programme design and delivery

Standards and criteria			Guidance and evidence
Standard 4.1		The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the HCPC Register.	
Criteria	4.1.1	The learning outcomes prepare learners to meet the professional standards for practice by the end of the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation describes how the learning outcomes are aligned with the professional standards for practice and how learners will be assessed as meeting the learning outcomes.
	4.1.2	The pre-registration programme is of a sufficient duration to ensure it prepares learners to be fit for the profession.	For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation includes the mapping of the apprenticeship pre-registration programme and end-point assessment to the *Apprenticeship standard – occupational therapist (integrated degree)* (Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education 2021a).
			Programme documentation describes the learning and assessment activities scheduled throughout the pre-registration programme.
			The duration of the pre-registration programme must be 90 scheduled weeks of learning, at a minimum.
			An individual period of learning is generally expected to be completed within the normal length of the pre-registration programme plus two years, and in accordance with university regulations. Learners requiring additional

Domain 4 – Pre-registration programme design and delivery		
Standards and criteria		**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria		time beyond the normal length of their programme should be provided with an individual scheme of study to enable successful completion of the programme requirements. Programme documentation acknowledges the importance of a process for defining any variation in a learner's progression through the pre-registration programme. The eligibility criteria for when an individual scheme of study is considered and implemented are also outlined in the programme documentation. Programme documentation identifies that discussions about whether a learner is deemed suitable for the profession, and therefore eligible to continue their enrolment, must be entered into as soon as it becomes evident there is a potential issue. Appropriate and proportionate processes are in place and applied by the education provider throughout a learner's enrolment in the pre-registration programme.
Standard 4.2	**The learning outcomes must ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.**	
Criteria	4.2.1	The learning outcomes prepare learners to meet the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession.	Programme documentation describes how the learning outcomes are aligned with the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession. Programme documentation demonstrates how learners will be assessed as meeting the learning outcomes. Programme documentation defines the responsibilities, roles and expectations of learners across all elements of the pre-registration programme and clearly indicates the consequences of not fulfilling these.
Standard 4.3	**The pre-registration programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base of the profession.**	
Criteria	4.3.1	The core principles of occupational therapy and occupation-centred practice are integrated into every part of the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation demonstrates that a minimum of 60 per cent of the pre-registration programme is focused on occupation and occupational therapy and how the core principles of occupational therapy and occupation-centred practice are embedded throughout. The curriculum describes how learners are prepared to embrace risk and enable choice (RCOT 2018). Programme documentation describes how recommendations for educating learners in public health and prevention concepts have been considered (Council of Deans of Health 2017).
	4.3.2	Learners develop the skills and knowledge necessary to respond to occupational issues which arise due to social and health disparities, diversity and human rights issues for populations, communities and individuals.	
	4.3.3	Learners are committed to processes of change and develop their skills in promoting change towards a more inclusive and participatory society.	
	4.3.4	The pre-registration programme prepares learners to:	Programme documentation describes how the skills and knowledge to respond to

Domain 4 – Pre-registration programme design and delivery	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Criteria</td><td></td><td>• maintain occupation at the centre of practice;
• deliver safe, effective, person-centred and ethical practice;
• use professional judgement, reasoning and decision-making.</td><td rowspan="2">occupational issues which arise due to social and health disparities, diversity and human rights issues will be developed by learners.

Programme documentation describes the philosophy and purpose statements which include a commitment to educate learners to promote change towards a more inclusive and participatory society.

Programme documentation describes how the curriculum is aligned with each of the four Pillars of Practice within *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b):
• Professional Practice
• Facilitation of Learning</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.3.5</td><td>The pre-registration programme prepares learners to:
• teach, mentor, supervise and/or assess others;
• facilitate practice-based learning;
• create and evaluate learning environments, tools and materials.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.3.6</td><td>The pre-registration programme prepares learners to:
• identify, monitor and enhance their own knowledge and skills;
• guide, direct and/or facilitate teamwork;
• design, implement and manage professional and/or organisational change.</td><td rowspan="2">• Leadership
• Evidence, Research and Development.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.3.7</td><td>The pre-registration programme prepares learners to:
• influence broader socio-economic and political agendas;
• use and translate evidence to inform practice;
• design, implement, evaluate and disseminate research.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Standard 4.4</td><td colspan="3">**The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.**</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Criteria</td><td>4.4.1</td><td>Learners are prepared to enter the profession with the skills and knowledge reflected in the evidence base, to meet the current and future needs of people who access occupational therapy services.</td><td rowspan="5">Programme documentation describes how the pre-registration programme is agile and able to respond to changes and innovation in current practice. Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement outlines how the curriculum is reviewed and changes to practice are reflected.

Programme documentation demonstrates how the recommendations for educating learners to engage in and support a digitally enabled health system have been considered (National Health Service 2019), and contextualised to all other systems in which occupational therapists work.

Programme documentation describes how learners develop their knowledge about current and predicted health and wellbeing needs and associated occupations, within the context of local, national and international communities.

Programme documentation incorporates the five guiding principles for sustainability in occupational therapy practice, education and scholarship (WFOT 2018).</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.4.2</td><td>Learners develop their knowledge of current and predicted health and wellbeing needs and associated occupations relevant to local, national and international communities.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.4.3</td><td>Learners are capable of incorporating current and emerging data on social, economic, organisational, environmental and health disparities into the design and prioritisation of occupational therapy services.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.4.4</td><td>Learners are able to identify professional and political influences on the occupational therapy profession and are prepared to shape the future directions of the workforce.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.4.5</td><td>Learners are supported to be entrepreneurial, innovative and enterprising, particularly in their approach to service innovation.</td></tr>
</table>

		Domain 4 – Pre-registration programme design and delivery	
		Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria			Programme documentation describes how learners are prepared to engage in and contribute to discussions influencing the current and future role of occupational therapists, for example medicines mechanisms, scopes of practice and service redesign. Programme documentation describes how learners are prepared to be entrepreneurial, innovative and enterprising, particularly in service innovation.
Standard 4.5		Integration of theory, evidence and practice must be central to the pre-registration programme.	
Criteria	4.5.1	The integrity of the curriculum is reflected in the integration of theory, evidence and practice throughout the pre-registration programme and across academic and practice-based learning elements.	Programme documentation describes how theory, evidence and practice are integrated throughout the curriculum, regardless of the educational method used. Programme documentation defines how learners develop and apply skills related to the use of research evidence in practice.
	4.5.2	Learners are skilled in finding, appraising and using research evidence to underpin their practice.	
Standard 4.6		The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.	
Criteria	4.6.1	Learning and teaching methods are evidence-informed, drawing on appropriate educational theories to ensure effective mapping to the curriculum models.	Programme documentation describes how the learning and teaching methods are evidence-informed and demonstrates how educational theories underpin all learning. Programme documentation justifies the range of educational techniques and technologies utilised by the education provider, including online and distance-learning where appropriate. Programme documentation describes how any local learning and teaching methods are valued and incorporated. Programme documentation describes how the education provider prepares learners through an induction process prior to each transition point (for example, a new academic year), by setting the associated expectations. Programme documentation describes how the learning and teaching methods are articulated for learners, for the purposes of transparency.
	4.6.2	Learning and teaching methods utilise a range of techniques and technologies to address the andragogic needs of the learner.	
	4.6.3	Learners are prepared for each transition point in the pre-registration programme and all associated expectations.	
	4.6.4	The learning and teaching methods are transparent to the learner.	
Standard 4.7		The delivery of the pre-registration programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.	
Criteria	4.7.1	The learning and teaching methods prepare learners for autonomous practice.	Programme documentation describes how the learning and teaching methods prepare learners for autonomous practice and develops their understanding of scope of practice. Programme documentation describes how reflective thinking is fostered.
	4.7.2	The learning and teaching methods support learners to value the impact of reflective thinking.	
	4.7.3	The learning and teaching methods are designed to develop critical thinking and decision-making skills.	

Domain 4 – Pre-registration programme design and delivery			
Standards and criteria			**Guidance and evidence**
Critieria	4.7.4	The learning and teaching methods foster the development of independent learning.	Programme documentation describes how the learning and teaching methods develop critical thinking and decision-making skills. Programme documentation describes how the curriculum is aligned with the principles of CPD and lifelong learning (Broughton and Harris 2019) and utilises *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b) as a resource. Programme documentation explains how learners are enabled to document achievements and formulate a future development plan.
Standard 4.8		**The delivery of the pre-registration programme must support and develop evidence-based practice.**	
Criteria	4.8.1	Learners develop both quantitative and qualitative research skills and are prepared to apply research skills to support engagement in, and with, research and improvements in practice.	Programme documentation includes an explicit statement describing the aims and objectives of research education and demonstrates how this is embedded throughout the pre-registration programme to develop an evidence-based practitioner. The curriculum describes the acquisition of both quantitative and qualitative research skills and must support methods appropriate to research in occupational therapy. The curriculum is designed to develop graduate confidence in the application of research skills to support engagement in and with research. Programme documentation describes how the acquisition of research-related knowledge and skills is applied through a research, inquiry, evaluation or innovation project. Programme documentation describes how learners acquire a research-based inquiry approach that encourages them to take part in the research practices of occupational therapy and enables them to engage actively and creatively with research questions and practice issues. Programme documentation describes how learners are prepared to be able to select and justify study designs, methods and ethics appropriate to research in occupational therapy. Programme documentation describes how learners acquire the skills to evaluate the impact of occupational therapy interventions. Programme documentation describes how learners develop the skills to be able to meaningfully engage with people who access occupational therapy services in the design and conduct of research.
	4.8.2	Learners apply knowledge and skills they have gained in the pre-registration programme to a research, inquiry, evaluation or innovation project.	
	4.8.3	Learners develop their knowledge in research ethics and governance principles and can apply them in practice.	
	4.8.4	Learners can collect and analyse data and use outcome measures to evaluate the impact of occupational therapy.	
	4.8.5	Learners develop their skills in meaningfully engaging with people who access occupational therapy services in the design and conduct of research.	
Standard 4.9		**The pre-registration programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, from and about professionals and learners in other relevant professions.**	
	4.9.1	Interprofessional learning involving different professions within and beyond the health,	Programme documentation describes how learners have interprofessional learning

Domain 4 – Pre-registration programme design and delivery		
Standards and criteria		**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria		wellbeing, social and integrated care systems is embedded in both academic and practice-based learning elements to develop the knowledge, skills and professional conduct necessary for collaborative practice.	experiences with other health, wellbeing, social and integrated care professions as well as other relevant professions, such as police or teachers, where possible. Professions beyond the health, wellbeing, social and integrated care systems should also be considered, for example, learning from, or with, engineering and computer science professionals, as recommended for developing the health workforce to practise in a digitally enabled system (NHS 2019).

Programme documentation describes the core principles of interprofessional learning and how they are aligned with the core principles of occupational therapy. There must be a clear rationale for inclusion of interprofessional learning in the pre-registration programme. Any interprofessional learning identified as contributing to the award must contribute to the learning outcomes of that pre-registration programme.

Programme documentation demonstrates that the process of developing the interprofessional learning was collaborative, involved equal contribution and valued each contribution equally.

Programme documentation describes the proportion of the pre-registration programme that involves interprofessional learning and the stated proportion is no greater than one third of the whole pre-registration programme. |
	4.9.2	Interprofessional learning must be a productive and relevant educational experience for all learners.	
	4.9.3	All professions involved in interprofessional learning have equally contributed to both defining the scope of the interprofessional learning and developing the educational materials.	
	4.9.4	Interprofessional learning will constitute no more than one third of the pre-registration programme.	
Standard 4.10		**The pre-registration programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from people who access occupational therapy services, and from learners.**	
Criteria	4.10.1	The protection of learners and people who access occupational therapy services is a guiding principle of the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation related to practice-based learning describes the process for obtaining consent from people who access occupational therapy services prior to engagement with learners. The process for obtaining consent from people who access occupational therapy services for their involvement in pre-registration programme development, implementation and review is also documented. Programme documentation describes the process for obtaining consent from learners who take part in learning or assessment activities where they act as people accessing occupational therapy services.

Safeguarding measures for learners and people who access occupational therapy services are evidenced in the programme documentation.

Programme documentation related to staffing describes how the CPD and lifelong learning available for educators and practice educators are inclusive of the skills and knowledge to ensure safeguarding of learners and people accessing occupational therapy services. |

Domain 4 – Pre-registration programme design and delivery	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 4.11	The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the pre-registration programme where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

| Criteria | 4.11.1 | All assessments within the pre-registration programme leading to eligibility to apply to register as an occupational therapist with the HCPC must be successfully completed. | Programme documentation describes all the assessments that contribute to the award, including both academic and practice-based learning components. Programme documentation explicitly states that all assessments contributing to the award must be successfully completed by the learner in order for them to be eligible to apply to register with the HCPC as an occupational therapist and to be eligible for professional membership with RCOT.

Programme documentation acknowledges the importance of a process for defining any variation in a learner's progression through the pre-registration programme. The eligibility criteria for when an individual scheme of study is considered and implemented are also outlined in the programme documentation.

Programme documentation describes the steps the education provider takes to establish an individual scheme of study, ensuring it is in place at the earliest possible point. For learners enrolled in an apprenticeship pre-registration programme, consideration of the role of the employer in the implementation of an individual scheme of study is also documented. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 4.11.2 | In exceptional circumstances, education providers establish an individual scheme of study with any learner who may not have been able to complete, or has failed, a mandatory assessment, but is eligible to undertake a further attempt and progress with the pre-registration programme. | |

Domain 5 – Practice-based learning	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 5.1	Practice-based learning must be integral to the pre-registration programme.

| Criteria | 5.1.1 | Practice-based learning facilitates the learner's formation of their identity as an occupational therapist and develops learners to meet the professional standards for practice and the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession. | Programme documentation describes how practice-based learning is central to the educational process. Practice-based learning includes curriculum content and is an educational method, but is acknowledged separately because specific standards and criteria apply. Practice-based learning must be appropriately integrated throughout the curriculum, ideally within every year.

Programme documentation describes how practice-based learning develops the learner's formation of their identity as an occupational therapist. Programme documentation describes how practice-based learning is aligned with the professional standards for practice and the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession. |
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Domain 5 – Practice-based learning	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 5.2	**The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.**

Criteria			
	5.2.1	A sufficient number of practice-based learning hours are required to be completed to produce work-ready graduates.	Programme documentation related to practice-based learning describes how learners are required to successfully complete a minimum of 1000 hours of assessed practice-based learning. Across the whole pre-registration programme, this can include any or all of the following: • hours recognised as prior learning; • a maximum of 40 hours of simulated practice-based learning; • a maximum of 3.5 hours of self-directed study relevant to practice-based learning every week, or the equivalent pro-rata amount for non-full-time practice-based learning activities. The hours of practice-based learning that may be considered for recognition of prior learning: • must not exceed the hours of practice-based learning scheduled for the first year of the receiving education provider's pre-registration programme; • must have been assessed; • must have been successfully completed. The process for assessing the achievement of learning outcomes from the recognised practice-based learning is described. Programme documentation includes the arrangements made by the education provider to support applicants through this process. Programme documentation describes how practice-based learning is full time or, where there is a rationale provided, at least 0.5 full-time equivalent. Programme documentation outlines the stakeholder engagement approach of the education provider, including how relationships with a wide range of practice-based learning providers are established and fostered. Programme documentation describes how there are a suitable number of occupational therapists co-ordinating practice-based learning and in practice educator roles. Programme documentation describes how learners apply their knowledge, skills and values across a wide range of practice-based learning opportunities. All practice-based learning opportunities include interventions that focus on the person, the occupation, and the environment. Programme documentation describes how the practice-based learning outcomes are informed by national and international evidence and expectations of service provision.
	5.2.2	Through practice-based learning, the learner is provided with the opportunity to experience or implement the occupational therapy process and gain wider knowledge of service provision.	
	5.2.3	There is a logical progression and structure to practice-based learning, to ensure integration of theory into practice.	
	5.2.4	For learners in apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, practice-based learning must be undertaken outside the learner's own work setting, ideally outside their employer's organisation.	

Domain 5 – Practice-based learning	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria	Learners experience a wide range of practice-based learning opportunities, such as: • public, independent, private and third sector settings; • urban, rural, local or international settings; • non-frontline settings, for exposure to strategic and leadership roles and/or within research departments or organisations; • organisations for people who are under-employed, disempowered, dispossessed or socially excluded; • organisations caring for people of different ages, from different socioeconomic and cultural contexts, with recently acquired and long-standing occupational needs and with different levels of physical and psychosocial functioning; • settings using individual, group, community and population approaches; • settings where there are no occupational therapists currently employed. Programme documentation includes samples of the learning agreements between a learner and practice educator. Learning agreements should specify progressive learning outcomes for practice-based learning and must be agreed to by an educator who is an occupational therapist. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation includes a contract template describing: • the organisational responsibilities of the employer, education provider and practice-based learning provider; • the roles and responsibilities of the learner, work-based mentor, educator and practice educator; • the status of learner, as opposed to employee, and the contexts in which this differentiation is important; • the commitment by employers to meet the same expectations as education providers regarding sufficient resourcing to ensure there is quality in the education and learning opportunities provided; • when and how the policies of employers and education providers will operate and which will take precedence in any given circumstance. The contract should reflect an agreement between the learner, employer and education provider. An additional contract may be required to demonstrate arrangements for the end-point assessment. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation describes how employee rights (for example,

Learning and development standards for pre-registration education

Domain 5 – Practice-based learning		
Standards and criteria		**Guidance and evidence**
		annual leave and bank holidays) and pressure points in the workplace are taken into account when scheduling practice-based learning.
Standard 5.3	**The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.**	
Criteria	5.3.1	Quality practice-based learning is offered to learners, to facilitate continuity and consolidation of the learning experience.	Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement describes the process for the collection and analysis of feedback related to practice-based learning from educators, practice educators, learners, people who access occupational therapy services, external examiners, and current and potential employers of occupational therapists. Feedback should also include information about the performance of pre-registration programme graduates.

Programme documentation related to quality monitoring and enhancement describes how the feedback collected is used to inform the ongoing development of the pre-registration programme, including how education providers can best prepare, develop and support practice educators.

Programme documentation includes policies and procedures for managing situations where a learner's education is being negatively affected by the practice-based learning setting. |
| **Standard 5.4** | **Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and people who access occupational therapy services.** | |
| Criteria | 5.4.1 | Flexible and appropriate models of supervision are used that enable learners to develop the ability to practise safely and effectively. | Programme documentation describes how practice-based learning is managed differently across the range of settings where practice-based learning occurs. This may include, for example, long-arm supervision models where practice-based learning is occurring in an organisation that is unfamiliar with the roles of occupational therapists. To accommodate this, the role of practice educator should include responsibility for facilitating occupational therapy-specific learning through long-arm supervision, rather than support being provided by practice-based learning provider staff unfamiliar with occupational therapy principles.

Programme documentation describes the strategy for managing and co-ordinating practice-based learning elements of the pre-registration programme. This includes the approach to contacting learners and supporting their practice-based learning needs. Evidence of how this is implemented should also be provided.

Programme documentation outlines the stakeholder engagement approach of the |
	5.4.2	All learners undertaking practice-based learning have equivalent support from practice educators, regardless of the setting.	
	5.4.3	The education provider has administrative support in place for the organisation and management of practice-based learning, which includes support for both learners and practice educators.	
	5.4.4	Learners, educators, practice educators (and employers and work-based mentors in the case of apprenticeship pre-registration programmes) are supported by the education provider at all times but particularly in circumstances where learners are failing to reach the required learning outcomes or demonstrate fitness for the profession.	

Domain 5 – Practice-based learning	
Standards and criteria	**Guidance and evidence**
Criteria	education provider, including how relationships with a wide range of practice-based learning providers are established and fostered. Programme documentation describes how there are a suitable number of occupational therapists co-ordinating practice-based learning and in practice educator roles. Programme documentation describes the roles and responsibilities of educators, practice educators (and employers and work-based mentors in the case of apprenticeship pre-registration programmes) in managing learners who are failing to reach the required learning outcomes. The process for investigation of alleged fitness to practise concerns and for the potential termination of a learner's enrolment on these grounds is also described. In cases where there are concerns about a learner's ability to progress in the pre-registration programme, the process used to inform relevant stakeholders and make a decision about the learner's progression are outlined in the programme documentation. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation describes the approach taken by the education provider and employer to jointly make a decision about the learner's progression and the efforts to preserve the ongoing relationship between the learner and their employer in such circumstances. Programme documentation describes the support provided by the employer and education provider to learners who are failing to reach the required learning outcomes. Programme documentation acknowledges the importance of a process for defining any variation in a learner's progression through the pre-registration programme. The eligibility criteria for when an individual scheme of study will be considered and implemented are also documented. Programme documentation describes the steps the education provider takes to establish an individual scheme of study, ensuring it is in place at the earliest possible point. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, consideration of the role of the employer in the implementation of an individual scheme of study is also documented.

Domain 5 – Practice-based learning		
Standards and criteria		**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 5.5		**There must be an adequate number of appropriately-qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.**
Criteria	5.5.1	An occupational therapist employed by the education provider has overall responsibility for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of practice-based learning within the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation describes the role of the individual responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of practice-based learning and the requirement that the individual is an occupational therapist. Programme documentation related to staffing outlines the expertise, qualifications and current HCPC registration status of the individual responsible.
	5.5.2	The number of qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning is in proportion to the number of learners.	Programme documentation describes how there are a suitable number of occupational therapists co-ordinating practice-based learning and in practice educator roles.
Standard 5.6		**Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.**
Criteria	5.6.1	Practice educators are adequately prepared and supported to facilitate practice-based learning.	Programme documentation describes how the education provider supports practice-based learning providers to identify, recruit, prepare, support and retain practice educators. Programme documentation related to staffing describes how practice educators are facilitated to develop the skills needed to support learners.
	5.6.2	Education providers facilitate and streamline the process for practice educators to teach and assess learners during practice-based learning.	
Standard 5.7		**Practice educators must undertake regular education that is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the pre-registration programme.**
Criteria	5.7.1	The education provider works in partnership with practice-based learning providers to support the CPD and lifelong learning of practice educators.	Programme documentation outlines the relationship between the education provider and the practice-based learning provider and describes how they work in partnership to support the CPD and lifelong learning of practice educators. Programme documentation related to staffing incorporates the principles of CPD and lifelong learning (Broughton and Harris 2019) and *The Career Development Framework* (RCOT 2017b) into the professional development planning for practice educators. Programme documentation outlines how learners benefit from the CPD and lifelong learning undertaken by the practice educators.
	5.7.2	CPD and lifelong learning activities that practice educators engage in directly impact on the design and delivery of a contemporary practice-based learning experience.	
Standard 5.8		**Learners and practice educators must have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.**
Criteria	5.8.1	There is a clear induction to all practice-based learning that prepares learners and defines the roles and responsibilities of the practice-based learning provider, education provider, practice educators and learners.	Programme documentation clearly describes the roles and responsibilities of the practice-based learning provider, the education provider, practice educators and learners during practice-based learning. Learners and practice educators are provided with this information and are adequately prepared and supported to fulfil their respective roles and responsibilities.

Domain 5 – Practice-based learning

Standards and criteria			Guidance and evidence
Criteria	5.8.2	Learners have completed the training required by the specific practice-based learning provider, prior to commencing in their setting.	Practice-based learning providers may require that learners have completed specific training, such as manual handling, GDPR, resuscitation, infection control or food safety and hygiene. In such cases, programme documentation describes how the education provider supports learners to complete the required training, within reason, before commencing their practice-based learning. Education providers may offer the training directly or facilitate access to training for their learners. A local policy for ensuring this training has been undertaken would include defining the responsibilities for training provision, managing the administrative function and following up learners who have not completed the relevant training.
	5.8.3	To ensure a depth of learning, practice educators provide a range of strategies and resources to support learners to embrace how to practise in the specific practice-based learning setting.	Programme documentation describes the range of strategies and resources to support learners in practice-based learning settings and how these may be tailored to suit the specific context of the setting.

Domain 6 – Assessment

Standards and criteria			Guidance and evidence
Standard 6.1		**The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the pre-registration programme meet the professional standards for practice.**	
Criteria	6.1.1	The assessment strategy and methods ensures graduates meet the professional standards for practice, by the end of the pre-registration programme.	Programme documentation describes how the pre-registration programme learning outcomes are aligned with the professional standards for practice. Programme documentation demonstrates how learners will be assessed as meeting the learning outcomes. Programme documentation includes the process for identifying and managing learners who are less likely to successfully complete the pre-registration programme as early as possible. Programme documentation related to learner progression describes the steps the education provider takes to establish an individual scheme of study, ensuring it is in place at the earliest possible point. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, arrangements for the end-point assessment must be documented. An additional contract may be required for the external examiner to demonstrate arrangements and responsibilities for the end-point assessment.

Domain 6 – Assessment		
Standards and criteria		**Guidance and evidence**
Standard 6.2	Assessment throughout the pre-registration programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.	
Criteria	6.2.1	The assessment strategy and methods assure graduates meet the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession.	Programme documentation describes how the pre-registration programme learning outcomes are aligned to the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the profession. Programme documentation includes the process for investigation of alleged fitness to practise concerns and for the potential termination of a learner's enrolment on these grounds. In cases where there are concerns about a learner's ability to progress in the pre-registration programme, the process used to inform relevant stakeholders, where applicable, and make a decision about the learner's progression are outlined in the programme documentation. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation describes the approach taken by the education provider and employer to jointly make a decision about the learner's progression and the efforts to preserve the ongoing relationship between the learner and their employer in such circumstances.
Standard 6.3	Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.	
Criteria	6.3.1	The assessment strategy and methods are an objective, fair and reliable measure of achievement.	Programme documentation demonstrates how the assessment strategy and methods ensure objectivity and reliability in the measurement of achievement.
	6.3.2	The assessment strategy and methods are transparent to the learner.	Programme documentation describes how the assessment strategy and methods are articulated for learners, for the purposes of transparency.
Standard 6.4	Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the pre-registration programme.	
Criteria	6.4.1	Learners who fail a practice-based learning component on substantiated grounds of fitness to practise concerns must be denied a retrieval attempt.	Programme documentation includes the process for managing learners who are unable to meet the required learning outcomes and/ or learners who are not fit to practise. Programme documentation includes the process for investigation of alleged fitness to practise concerns and for the potential termination of a learner's enrolment on these grounds. If the fitness to practise concerns were related to a learner's own health and then their health improved enough to be deemed fit to practise, then a second attempt may be offered.
	6.4.2	Completed hours of a failed practice-based learning component do not count towards the overall minimum requirement of 1000 practice-based learning hours.	
	6.4.3	Learners are withdrawn from a pre-registration programme if they fail their second attempt at any practice-based learning component.	

Domain 6 – Assessment

Standards and criteria			Guidance and evidence
Criteria	6.4.4	Learners are prevented from progressing in the pre-registration programme if they fail their first attempt at consecutive practice-based learning components.	Programme documentation describes the requirement that only those hours undertaken during successfully completed practice-based learning count towards a learner's overall minimum requirement of 1000 practice-based learning hours. Programme documentation states that, if a learner fails the second attempt at a practice-based learning component, they have failed the requirements of the pre-registration programme and must be withdrawn. The process for implementing this requirement is also described. Programme documentation states that if a learner fails the first attempt at consecutive practice-based learning components, they have failed the requirements of the pre-registration programme and must be withdrawn. The process for implementing this requirement is also described.
Standard 6.5		**The assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.**	
Criteria	6.5.1	The assessment methods utilise a range of techniques and technologies to address the andragogic needs of the learners.	Programme documentation describes the assessment methods used and how they address the andragogic needs of learners. Assessment includes direct observation during practice-based learning. Programme documentation describes how the assessment methods are congruent with the educational aims and learning outcomes.
	6.5.2	The assessment methods support the development of knowledge, skills and professional conduct and are congruent with the educational aims and learning outcomes of the pre-registration programme.	
Standard 6.6		**There must be an effective process in place for learners to make academic appeals.**	
Criteria	6.6.1	Learners are provided with sufficient information about the process to follow when making an academic appeal.	Programme documentation outlines the academic appeals process and describes how this information is communicated to learners. Programme documentation defines an appropriate timeline for responses to academic appeals by the education provider.
	6.6.2	A timely and appropriate response is provided to learners following academic appeal.	
Standard 6.7		**The education provider must ensure that at least one external examiner for the pre-registration programme is appropriately qualified and experienced.**	
Criteria	6.7.1	An external examiner must have oversight of, and access to, all components of the award.	External examiners must be occupational therapists and must have a thorough understanding and experience of assessment principles and methods in higher education. Programme documentation related to staffing outlines the expectations of the expertise, qualifications and current HCPC registration status of external examiners. The appointment of suitable external examiners is the responsibility of the education provider. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, arrangements and responsibilities associated with the end point assessment must be included within the external examiner contract.

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Learning and development standards for pre-registration education

Revised Edition 2019

Royal College of Occupational Therapists

The *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education* describe the expectations of the profession that education providers must meet when delivering a pre-registration occupational therapy programme in the United Kingdom. The Royal College of Occupational Therapists manages an Accreditation Process, using these Standards to assess whether a pre-registration programme, and the education provider that delivers the pre-registration programme, provides learners with the knowledge, skills and professional attributes necessary to competently and ethically meet the occupational needs of the community. Further information about the Accreditation Process can be found at **www.rcot.co.uk/accreditation-process**

This publication can be used both practically and as a reference tool for education providers, practice educators, learners, people who access occupational therapy services and any other stakeholders with an interest in the standards set by the professional body.

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