

Brief Practice Educator Guidance for UWE Occupational Therapy Apprentices

BSc (Hons) Applied Occupational Therapy
Curriculum 2021

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Information to Support Practice Education

Thank you for taking a UWE OT apprentice on placement. This document has been prepared to provide practice educators with basic information needed to supervise apprentices on practice placements. It has been prepared in conjunction with the practice educator guidance and students' placement portfolio, which contain all placement documentation and procedures needed by both apprentices and Practice Educators (PE's). The guidance, placement portfolio along with relevant placement documentation e.g. the final report template is available to PE's on the practice support net (PSNET):

<http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/students/practicesupportnet>

(Follow 'Programme Guidance' to get to the OT Apprenticeship specific information)

Practice Educator Briefings

There is an hour long recorded PE Briefing for OT Apprentices available on the PSNET or via the link on the Practice Support Net. We ask that as a minimum all PE's view the recording prior to taking an apprentice on placement. This will ensure practice educators are up to date and have the necessary information and guidance to support students. Prior to each placement block, we will also hold a live Q and A session on Microsoft Teams. The dates and the booking form for this are also available on the PSNET.

Placements are arranged and allocated by the apprentice's employer and quality assurance processes (including placement audit checks) are completed by the UWE Placement Team prior to the apprentices starting their placement with you.

If you have any questions, feedback or are not sure who to contact do get in touch with us:

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Who are the UWE OT Apprentices?

Occupational Therapy apprentices are usually working as occupational therapy assistants or therapy support workers and are being supported by their employer to complete a four year Degree Level Apprenticeship in partnership with the University of the West of England that will culminate in them qualifying and being able to register with the HCPC as Occupational Therapist. The program meets the relevant learning and development standard for occupational therapy education and is approved by the HCPC and RCOT and inspected by Ofsted. Apprentices engage in:

- In-work learning, working towards evidencing Knowledge Skills and Behaviours (KSB's) that are part of the OT degree Apprentice standard.
- Off the job learning: two days a week in term time and complete very similar academic modules to full time undergraduate OT students
- Placement Learning- As with fulltime students apprentices complete a minimum of 1000 hours of practice learning ideally in a setting outside of their usual place of work.

Tutor Support for Students and Practice Educators

Just prior to going out on placement, each apprentice is allocated a UWE Placement Support Tutor to review his or her learning contract and conduct a midway tutorial. The midway tutorial is an opportunity for the apprentice to discuss their strengths and weaknesses related to the learning needs in their learning contract with the practice educator (PE) and a UWE staff member. It is an opportunity for the PE to feedback on the apprentice's progress. The placement support tutor is also a point of contact for the PE.

Do ask your apprentice for the contact details and do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

Placement Structure

- Pre-placement preparation sessions at UWE – apprentices are advised of the UWE tutor who will be carrying out the midway tutorial
- By end of week 2 of placement the apprentices will have liaised with their PE and made contact with their allocated UWE tutor to arrange a date for the midway tutorial (Please note that the onus is on the apprentices to make these arrangements)
- Beginning of week 3 of placement – apprentices email their learning contract to UWE tutor.
- UWE tutor to review the learning contract and feedback to apprentice prior to midway tutorial. It is reviewed for consistency with learning outcomes, achievability and fairness, and any comments or suggestions to modify it will be communicated to both the apprentices and the practice educator. The midway tutor will aim to respond within 5 working days.
- Week 4/5/6 of placement – midway tutorial to take place over Teams or Telephone UWE tutors and apprentices have been provided with loose agendas for the discussion in the midway tutorial.
- Ideally, the apprentices and the PE should be able to speak to the UWE tutor separately, in confidence. Follow-up Teams meetings can be arranged if there are matters outstanding.
- On completion of the placement the PE ensures the learning contract is signed off, the hour's record and the final report is written.
- If you have any concerns about your apprentices progress please get in touch as soon as possible. Do also have a look at the failure protocol on the PSNET

Access Needs

Apprentices who have disclosed access needs will have an access plan detailing recommendations for reasonable adjustments. This access plan is the apprentice's property. The apprentices are encouraged to share this with their Practice Educators so that reasonable adjustments can be discussed and implemented. Please do ask the apprentice if they have any access or support needs at your initial meeting, this will support them in learning how to manage their needs in a professional setting. If the apprentice chooses not to disclose there is no expectation to implement reasonable adjustments. Apprentices with specific learning

disabilities such as dyslexia will not have a personalised access plan, but will be expected to discuss general reasonable adjustments that will support them in practice. There is useful guidance for PE's and Apprentices available on the Practice Support Net and here: [Guidance for students with specific learning difficulties \(DOC\)](#)

Placement Competencies

Apprentices undertake three practice placements during their training at UWE. These will be in a variety of health and social care settings different to their usual place of work and ideally outside of their employer organisation. Your apprentice will be undertaking one of the following modules and working towards achievement of the associated placement competencies.

Occupational Therapy Practice 1 (OTP1)

This is a nine-week placement and occurs in first term of the second year following completion of academic modules covering contributing disciplines and occupational science. The academic component of module that immediately precedes this placement covers basic skills and knowledge for placement readiness. Furthermore, apprentices have all completed basic life support, manual handling training and the following Skills for Health on-line learning packages:

- Equality Diversity and Human Rights
- Information Governance
- Health Safety and Welfare
- Infection Prevention and Control
- Conflict Resolution
- Safeguarding Adults
- Safeguarding Children

Apprentices will also be inducted into how to write their learning contracts and samples are available on the PSNET

This is the first placement on the programme and is assessed by a learning contract that assesses students' abilities in practice in relation to the placement competencies listed below:

1. Present a professional approach in relation to behaviours such as but not limited to: time management, preparation, organisation, personal presentation, communication, reliability, team working and attitude.
2. Demonstrate safe and effective professional practice demonstrating awareness of the ethical and legal issues when working in a health or social care setting.
3. Understand the roles of the interprofessional (multidisciplinary) team.
4. Take account of the physical and psychological impact of ill health.
5. Demonstrate basic skills in using a client-centred approach.
6. Demonstrate safe and effective use of occupational therapy skills.
7. Analyse an occupation used in professional practice setting.
8. Complete a basic and appropriate assessment of a service user's occupational needs.
9. Demonstrate basic professional reasoning and problem-solving skills.
10. Demonstrate appropriate verbal and written communication skills with all colleagues, service users their carers, and other services.

Occupational Therapy Practice 2 (OTP2)

This is a 10 week placement and occurs in the second term of year three and gives students the opportunity to consider in detail, the impact and challenge of impairment and disability on the service user's occupations and how this disruption affects the service user. The module provides the students with the opportunity to apply level 5 uniprofessional and inter-professional learning to occupational therapy practice and continue to develop occupational therapy skills in a variety of settings. The influence of professional power and user control will be highlighted, within the context of the social model of disability. This is the second professional practice module is assessed via a learning contract (Component A) which assesses students' abilities in practice in relation to the placement competencies listed below:

1. Demonstrate safe and effective professional practice, including all forms of professional behaviours when working in a health, social care or role-emerging setting.
2. Reflect upon social, organisational and managerial contexts and their impact upon professional practice.
3. Discuss the impact of health and social conditions for service users in the given setting.

4. Demonstrate a client-centred approach throughout the OT process.
5. Evaluate different approaches and interventions used in occupational therapy utilising appropriate evidence.
6. Identify assessment tools used and discuss their effectiveness in assessing occupational performance.
7. Conduct assessments of service-users and document these in line with the placements system.
8. Demonstrate the ability to utilise data from assessment to construct an intervention plan for a service user.
9. Utilise appropriate verbal and written communication skills with all colleagues, service users and their carers, and other services.
10. Reflect upon own professional practice and identify areas for further development.

Occupational Therapy Practice 3 (OTP3)

This is an eleven week placement and occurs in the first term of the fourth year and enables the student to fully appreciate the unique contribution of occupational therapy and consolidate their occupational therapy skills. The content includes evidence-based practice and management of change.

The student is expected to critically evaluate their own practice and modify it as necessary, critically evaluating all aspects of service delivery and its social context. The student is also expected to manage a caseload appropriate for a student at the beginning of their level six studies, with a view to prepare them for practice as a qualified occupational therapist.

This is the final professional practice module and the assessments for this module are a learning contract (Component A) which assesses students' abilities in practice in relation to the placement competencies listed below:

1. Demonstrate safe and effective professional practice, including all forms of appropriate communication and organisational skills, when working in a health or social care or role-emerging setting.
2. Demonstrate competence in working with the organisational policies, procedures and administrative frameworks in practice.

3. Demonstrate ability to function effectively as a team member in an interprofessional team.
4. Appraise the interagency links both within and external to the practice setting.
5. Critically evaluate service delivery and the role of management / legislation / technology /organisational change and leadership, in the practice setting.
6. Identify the core skills used by occupational therapists, and critically analyse how they contribute to the promotion of occupational therapy services in this setting.
7. Manage own caseload within the parameters of available resources, demonstrating a client centred approach, independent judgement and fluency of skill in all aspects.
8. Engage appropriately with the evidence base to support practice.
9. Appraise evidence of intervention outcomes in this setting.
10. Accept and respond to constructive feedback on own performance.
11. Critically evaluate own practice to identify aspects requiring modification and to identify personal development needs.

Practice Assessment

The assessment is based on the Learning Contract negotiated and constructed in collaboration between the Practice Educator, the student and the midway tutor. It must incorporate the module placement competencies and any personal goals outstanding from a previous placement or identified during the current placement.

- The 'criteria for evaluation' in the learning contract provide the apprentice and the practice educator (PE) with the benchmarks for success or failure of the student to achieve the placement competencies. It is this criteria alone which should be used to pass or fail the student.

Further details on assessment are provided in the students' Placement Portfolio (an e version of this is available on Practice Support net).

Assessment of placement learning

Students are assessed via their personalised learning contracts and have to demonstrate achievement of *all* the placement competencies in order to pass the placement.

If the PE has concerns about any aspect of a student's performance, the PE must contact the placement support tutor as early as possible and ensure that the failure protocol is understood and followed. This is available on the Practice Support Net (PSNET) (follow guidance by programme) <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/students/practicesupportnet> .

Certificates of Excellence

Placements are graded as pass or fail. The 'Final Report' is an opportunity for PEs to give feed-forward advice in terms of the apprentice's strengths and areas to develop in practice. In order to acknowledge and celebrate excellence in practice, Practice Educators can also nominate their apprentices for a certificate of excellence.

If the apprentice has passed the placement but from the PEs experience, feedback from colleagues and service users deems the Apprentice to have demonstrated excellence in relation to three distinct areas the PE can nominate the apprentice for a certificate of excellence.

Nomination forms are available on the [PSNET](#) and this need to be submitted following the guidance on the form by the deadline, which is usually 2 weeks after the last day of the placement. On the form, the PE must identify x 3 distinct examples of excellence in practice that relate to the placement competencies for the placement:

Once received, the nomination forms will be scrutinised and moderated by members of the UWE OT placement team and further information sought if necessary. Following this, a decision will be made to aware or not award a certificate of excellence. The apprentice and the PE will be informed.

This certificate will not influence the overall degree classification achieved by the apprentice but will provide additional evidence of achievements on placement. The nomination will be a professional judgement made by the Practice Educator based on experience and consultation with colleagues and service users.

There is a Structured Oral and Practical Exam (SOPE) before the first placement and a written assignment related to level three placements – the results of these contribute towards the student's degree classification. Academic staff mark these assignments.

Placement Hours

Practice experience is gained through the three practice modules. Students will be placed in a wide variety of settings where they can achieve the module placement competencies and meet the RCOT standards for practice education. These placements are not chosen by the apprentices but are managed through the apprentices employers and moderated by the UWE OT placement team and Practice placement Office (PPO).

Students complete a minimum of thirty weeks of practice (no less than 30 hours per week but ideally full time depending on the apprentices contract of employment), and are supervised in practice by HCPC registered Practice Educators. All PE are expected to have completed a UWE PE Briefing (recording is available on the PSNET). Start and finish times are to be arranged at the discretion of the Practice Educator and, subject to the demands of patient care and departmental organisation, in negotiation with the apprentice. The hours per week of student practice should include time for reflection and study including 4 hours per week of placement related study time.

Further and extensive details on the how the placements work are provided in the students' Placement Portfolio (available on Practice Support net).

Completion Documentation

At the end of the placement, the following needs to be agreed and signed off by the Practice Educator:

- Hours Sheet
- Learning Contract
- Practice Educator's report

Templates and guidance for the above can be found in the 'Completion Documentation' section of the Placement Portfolio.

Templates can also be downloaded directly from the Practice Support Net (follow guidance by programme). <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/students/practicesupportnet>

It is the student's responsibility to formally submit their completed and signed learning contract, their signed final report and their signed hour's record by the published deadline. *Failure to hand in this by the expected date will result in the placement being marked as a non-submission.* The PE should retain copies of this documentation.

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