



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

## **Discipline of Occupational Therapy**

### **Timelines and Expectations for Practice Education: Junior Sophister (3<sup>rd</sup> Year) 12 week Placement**

#### **Guidelines for the Practice Educator**

This list of competencies is not exhaustive, it is intended as a guide to give some clarity on expectations of performance and some trigger questions or comments that may be useful to elicit these. All skills once developed must continue to be demonstrated and used throughout the placement in order to achieve/maintain competency.

Information relating to caseload numbers and types of intervention with clients are generalised here. These may need to be considered in individual sites and tailored specifically as they will vary depending on type of setting, clients and intensity of intervention.

Skills are broken down into competency areas as detailed on the Practice Education Assessment Form, namely

- Professional Behaviours
- Professional Development
- Communication
- Occupation
- Occupational Therapy Process

For each competency area details are given for knowledge, skills and attitudes to be demonstrated in order to achieve and display competent behaviour.

Some trigger questions/statements for the Practice Educator to use are also provided, the aim of these is to help Practice Educators elicit information and encourage thinking and problem solving skills from the student.

## **WEEK 1 – 2**

### **Occupation**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Observe sessions and be able to articulate (written or verbal), what activities were used and how they were meaningful.
- Complete reading on occupations for your client group e.g. childhood occupations, teenage occupations.
- Be able to articulate what these occupations are.
- Demonstrate broader view of client i.e. their role in the family unit, their dependence on a family unit e.g. for children.
- Complete detailed analysis of activities.
- Be able to articulate the difference between activity and occupation.

#### **Trigger questions/statements**

- What are typical occupations for this client at their age/stage of life? What may we need to consider?
- Tell me 3 things you know about this persons occupations.
- What did the client say or do that led you to believe these are meaningful for the client.
- When analysing an activity what performance areas/ skills can you identify e.g. dressing: comprehension of the task, what the garment is and what to do with it, ability to orientate clothes, dynamic sitting balance, ability to grasp and hold clothing.
- At what point does an activity become an occupation? What things do you have to consider, e.g. client level of engagement.

### **Communication**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Actively verbalise thoughts and opinions on observations/reading.
- Ask questions.
- Actively communicate with the Practice Educator.
- Use recognised department note writing format to record sessions/observations e.g. SOAP notes
- Introduce yourself to clients in a clear professional manner
- Have met all members of the multidisciplinary team by end of this period
- Answer phone in department in a professional manner, clearly identifying the Occupational Therapy department and who you are.

#### **Trigger questions/statements**

- NB let the student know that throughout placement, thinking something does not let you know they know it. Help them to understand that it's ok to get things wrong, they are here to learn and that saying something out loud or writing it down helps them to process it further and allows you to guide them to the next level or clear up any confusion on a particular topic.
- Describe what happened in that session.
- Tell me something you observed about the client, why did they do/ say that?

- Think of something I did, why do you think I did/ said that?

## **Occupational Therapy Process**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Have detailed clear knowledge of conceptual models.
- Be aware of frames of reference used in this setting, be familiar with principles of same.
- Complete detailed reading on relevant frames of reference.
- Record written observations on therapy sessions and discuss these.
- Develop knowledge of assessments in department and what these are specifically used for.

### **Trigger questions/statements**

- Ask the student to draw out or explain the main points of the model
- Ask the student to explain the principles of a frame of reference., how does it guide intervention for this client group?

## **Professional Behaviours**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Never discuss clients outside of the clinical setting.
- Do not have conversations about clients on the corridors or in the canteen.
- Never remove information relating to clients from the clinic.
- Assist in set up of a room for a session and clearing of the room, including sterilising toys.
- Present self in appropriate clothing, wear name badge, make sure you are clean and with hair well groomed and tidy.
- Present with a positive manner, eager and enthusiastic, showing a willingness to learn.
- Present written information in a timely and professional manner. Use correct grammar, all hand written documents should be legible and tidy.
- Become familiar with reading resources within department.
- Become familiar with all equipment in the department and its use, do not waste material resources.
- Read all local department policies and procedures.
- Follow infection control guidelines.
- Manage own diary, structuring day and client appointments.

### **Trigger questions/statements**

- Do not divulge personal information such as personal telephone number, address, etc..
- Revise and be familiar with typical conditions that present in this setting and with relevant models and frames of reference.

## **Professional Development**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Source and complete reading requirements and any other necessary information.
- Engage in formal and in-formal supervision, ask questions, give information/observations, ask for feedback, and respond to feedback.
- Begin to set learning contract goals with assistance.
- Ask questions, make observations.
- Keep copies of learning contract/ pre-supervision forms/ lists of tutorials etc., for professional development folder. Don't hesitate to state clearly to a student what your expectations of them are in terms of asking questions and trying to problem solve.

### **Trigger questions/statements**

- Don't hesitate to state clearly to a student what your expectations of them are in terms of asking questions and trying to problem solve.
- When you see something ask yourself 'why?' and try to come up with one or two possible reasons. Now ask your question giving your possible solutions/reasons also.

## **WEEK 3-4**

### **Occupation**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Show an understanding of what you can use the activities for.
- Collaborate with the client to choose appropriate activities for each client of a particular age, stage and ability.
- Show an understanding of and an ability to adapt or modify an activity.
- Show an understanding of use of an activity and the steps to bring this to an occupation.
- Engage a client in meaningful occupation.

#### **Trigger questions/statements**

- Ask the student why they chose a particular activity:
  - Client interest/ motivation?
  - How does it build skills to support participation in a relevant occupation?
- Ask the student to identify an activity they have used or observed and list three ways it might be adapted.
- Ask the student to explain how session activities relate and translate into the client's real life outside of the clinical setting.

### **Communication**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Bring up any questions or problems you may have.
- Actively communicate within the supervisory relationship, communicating observations, concerns, learning and coming to supervision sessions prepared.
- Actively communicate with all members of the department.
- Verbalise observations/ information gathered on a child in a structured logical manner.
- Accept feedback positively and follow through on advice given.
- Interact with clients appropriately, enhancing not interfering with session.
- Continue developing note writing skills, e.g. if using SOAP notes now structuring notes correctly.
- Partake/assist in the facilitation of a group or in a group setting.
- Student should ask for clarification if they do not understand something or are not clear on what is expected of them.
- Structure reports under supervision e.g. home visit reports.

#### **Trigger questions/statements**

- If the student is not asking questions independently encourage them by asking specific questions of them to help to build confidence and ability to verbalise thoughts and begin to process:
  - What reading have you completed? What two things can you apply to interventions/clients here?
  - Tell me three observations you made of the client in this session?"
- If a student is not doing something you agreed ask them if they are clear on what they are supposed to do. Get them to explain this to you in their own words, ask

them how they are actually going to do it, the actual behaviour they are going to show e.g.

- I am going to ask you a question after the session
- I am going to write notes on the session and give them to you
- I am going to start the report following the template and then bring it to you to discuss

## **Occupational Therapy Process**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Demonstrate use of conceptual model to develop an overall picture of a child and family/ client.
- Gather information on a child accurately from OT file or medical chart.
- Identify priority assessments and read these in detail, observe use.
- Carry out assessments and score under supervision (at least two different assessments).
- Observe session and write notes reflecting observation and analysis of these.
- Discuss sessions and reflect on therapists' choice of activity and what skills they were working on.
- Carry out part of sessions under supervision.
- Gather information from a client on current abilities and difficulties.
- Be familiar with group protocols.
- Prepare for group intervention, using existing goals plan sessions, in collaboration.

### **Trigger questions/statements**

- Ask the student to talk through the client's narrative using the chosen conceptual model, ask them
  - What does it highlight/ prioritise?
  - Does it help you identify areas you need to know more about?
  - How does it guide you in what to do next?
  - Get the student to write this out if it helps.
- What did that activity allow me to work on with the client? What goal was I working towards?
- Role play how to ask open questions, follow leads and redirect conversation if needed

## **Professional Behaviours**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Safely store equipment/toys back in their place.
- Follow through on all tasks in a timely fashion or to a designated deadline.
- Respect clients' attitudes and skills.
- Respect clients' choices and priorities and work with them.
- Be aware of local, national and department policies, procedures, legislation and strategic plans, e.g. the Mental Health act, the Disability act, the EPSEN act and, how they relate to Occupational Therapists working.
- Manage own stress and anxiety. Be calm, if circumstances and demands change approach this in a calm logical manner. Prepare as best you can.
- The pace of a clinical environment can be changeable, adapt and respond to the demands of a given day e.g. on a busy clinic day when moving quickly from one

appointment to another, keep up, list non-urgent questions for a later time, if unexpected gaps occur in a clinical diary know what else you need to do and use the time.

- Become familiar with specific skills of human and use different staff for advice as appropriate.
- Be prepared for meetings and sessions. Have equipment/room/necessary materials ready and set up.
- Have written work completed and given to your Practice Educator in a timely manner.
- Actively use all resources within the department.
- Establish Critically Appraised Topic question by end of timeframe.

#### **Trigger questions/statements**

- It is ok to ask a student if they are alright. Communicate to them that it is also ok to say if something has upset or scared them.

### **Professional Development**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Continue to ask questions showing evidence of having reflected on them by suggesting potential answers or solutions.
- Complete full learning contract with support.
- Attend supervision with relevant documentation completed e.g. pre-supervision form, updated learning contract.
- Verbally identify what areas you feel you have good knowledge and skill in, areas where gaps may be present or areas you are finding challenging.

#### **Trigger questions/statements**

- It is ok to say some things are hard, we expect that. It is very important to be able to identify what you are challenged by as well as what you are good at.

## **WEEK 5-6**

### **Occupation**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Modify or adapt an activity as necessary to maintain motivation and participation.
- Use activities to promote goal attainment.
- Under supervision work with the client to choose appropriate activities for a session that are meaningful to the client, promote health and well-being, by addressing goals, participation and occupational engagement.
- Collaborate with the client to identify supports that enable participation in occupation in home/ community settings.

#### **Trigger questions/statements**

- What did the client do or say that highlighted decreased motivation or participation? What did you do?
- What can you anticipate for the next session? How could you plan for this?
- Explain how your activities were achieving your goals? How could you modify or develop these further?

### **Communication**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Interact and engage with clients, effectively communicate interventions etc. e.g. to clients with identified cognitive difficulties, to parents/children, adapt communication accordingly.
- Continue developing note writing skills now needing fewer corrections on structure and writing directly into Occupational Therapist file by end of this period.
- Demonstrate analysis of and reflection on observations.
- Identify specific need to liaise with other multidisciplinary team members independently and follow through on this.
- Clearly communicate in a group setting, e.g. team meeting.
- Facilitate or co-facilitate parts of a group.
- Present clearly written session plans to Practice Educator in a timely manner before session.

#### **Trigger questions/statements**

- Did the client fully understand what you said to them? How do you know, what did they do or say?
- How could you do it differently next time to ensure full comprehension?
- What change in behaviour/ function did you observe with a specific intervention? Compare before and after.
- How could you further modify the activity, environment or your input to enable function or skill development to a greater level?

## **Occupational Therapy Process**



### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Actively feedback with Practice Educator after sessions reflecting on your own performance, what went right or needs to be changed
- Present observations on the client in a clear logical manner establishing ongoing priorities and goals
- Review file and identify areas requiring assessment (for at least two clients).
- Identify specific assessments required, for at least 2 clients explaining reasoning.
- Carry out assessments, independently if done under supervision last week, under supervision if not yet carried out.
- Through client interview and using assessment results establish priorities for intervention and goals, with assistance from supervisor.
- Plan sessions (at least 2 clients).
- Set goals with 2 clients.
- Display ability to actively engage clients in activities.
- Facilitate group session with Practice Educator or other Occupational Therapist.

### **Trigger questions/statements**

- What are the main areas of difficulty highlighted, what do you consider to be the priorities and why?
- Explain why you chose one assessment as compared with another option.

## **Professional Behaviours**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Plan set up of a room for a session to minimise risk.
- Carry out activities and interventions in a planned way within your capabilities.
- Clearly document sessions/ interventions/ assessments.
- Develop good therapeutic relationships with clients, do not become over-familiar.
- Manage time effectively, know exactly what tasks you need to complete and have an idea of how long this will take.
- Independently source information for Critically Appraised Topic.

## **Professional Development**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Continue to develop and use learning contract independently to guide goals/learning and show progress. Present at every supervision and keep updating.
- Identify own strengths and limitations in carrying forward session, goal setting and intervention.
- Identify how you are going to work towards building skills in weaker areas (using the learning contract and supervision).

### **Trigger questions/statements**

- Ensure the student is clear on specific areas highlighted at halfway assessment as requiring focused work and that clear learning objectives are set for these. Remember it is also important that students can see their achievements to date and understand that competency in all skills is not expected at half way.

## **WEEK 7-8**

## **Occupation**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Independently with the client choose appropriate occupational activities for a session that are meaningful to the client, promote health and well-being, by addressing goals, participation and occupational engagement.
- Through verbal and written work demonstrate an ability to analyse and grade activities and their use as a therapeutic intervention.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the impact of the environment on a client.

## **Communication**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Actively liaise with multidisciplinary team members.
- Participate in joint sessions, being clear on attaining your goals.
- Independently facilitate parts of a group, working collaboratively with other therapists involved.
- Continue to independently write well structured notes in files.
- Write clearly structured reports and letters.

## **Occupational Therapy Process**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Ongoing intervention and session plans with at least 3 clients from previous week showing ability to modify plans and clinically reason.
- Begin to work to a more independent level with at least another 2 clients, setting goals and priorities independently.
- Begin to work to a more independent level with groups, setting up activities and running part of group independently.
- Continue to independently write accurate notes in files.
- Write reports or home programme with support and feedback from Practice Educator, which accurately reflect the clinical situation and make clear recommendations.
- Be able to articulate caseload demands and identify priorities.
- Plan and carry out interventions that address specific client goals.

## **Professional Behaviours**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Demonstrate ability to prioritise tasks and manage time effectively and efficiently.
- Complete Critically Appraised Topic by end of this time frame.

## **Professional Development**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Display an ability to develop skills in identified areas of need.
- Actively drive forward own development by identifying and using learning opportunities available.

## **WEEK 9-10**

## **Occupation**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Demonstrate an ability to develop activities for goal attainment that can be incorporated into the family home routine and daily occupations, and other environments relevant to the child.
- Demonstrate understanding of occupations through the case study.
- Set up the environment in such a way as to enable the client or minimise the impact of disability.

## **Communication**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Work collaboratively with other multidisciplinary team members e.g. in joint sessions with physiotherapy or Speech and Language Therapy, or joint planning and decision making.
- Write clear, accurate and well structured reports independently.

## **Occupational Therapy Process**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Increased clinical reasoning and reflection on practice
- Independent working with at least 5 clients feeding back to PE
- Coordinating sessions and administration (notes, reports)
- Managing priorities effectively
- Evaluate and critique outcomes of interventions
- Write reports, letters and home programmes with less correction
- Effectively manage caseload of up at least 5 individual clients and 1/ 2 groups.
- Make onward referrals to other multidisciplinary team members or agencies as required.
- Recognise that intervention has many formats e.g. a conversation with a care-giver/parent, identifying social supports for a person, linking the client with community supports, writing a report to support an application, running a training session for parents/teachers/carers.
- Increased clinical reasoning and reflection on practice.
- Modify interventions as necessary to ensure positive movement towards goal attainment.
- Effectively manage caseload of 1- 4 individual clients and 1 - 2 groups.
- Begin to prepare clients for discharge/termination of their therapeutic relationship.
- What small concrete changes will occur/have occurred for the client (skills, social supports, change in attitudes of others).

## **Professional Behaviours**

### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Demonstrate evidence of time management and scheduling for completion of all clinical and administration tasks, and full handover to Practice Educator by end of placement.

**Trigger questions/statements**

- A lot can be achieved in the last three weeks. It is important to stay focused and keep energy up and actively look for and use learning opportunities in order to ensure you get as much out of this placement as possible and build as much skill as you can by the end.

**Professional Development****Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Complete and present Critically Appraised Topic.
- Provide hard and paper copy of any projects, Critically Appraised Topic and articles, case study to the Practice Tutor or Practice Educator by the end of this time period.

## **WEEK 11-12**

### **Occupation**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Plan future activities with clients and others e.g. home programmes or expectations for next few months after discharge from the students caseload.

### **Communication**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Continue to demonstrate and consolidate all previous skills.

### **Occupational Therapy Process**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Manage time effectively to complete reports and notes, provide full handover of clients to Practice Educator by end of working time, i.e. full discharge of clients from student caseload to Practice Educator.

### **Professional Behaviours**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Conclude therapeutic relationship with clients, manage discharge of clients appropriately.
- Present a C.A.T. illustrating an ability to integrate relevant current literature and research to support or critique interventions.

### **Professional Development**

#### **Specifics of knowledge/skills/attitude to be demonstrated**

- Show evidence of up to date professional development folder to your Practice Educator i.e. with copies of all pre-supervision forms/ learning contract/ assessment form.
- Provide hard and paper copy of any projects, Critically Appraised Topic and articles, case study to the Practice Tutor or Practice Educator by the end of this time period.