

Draft standards of proficiency for occupational therapists

This document sets out the proposed changes to the standards of proficiency for occupational therapists. Proposed deletions are indicated in the text by ~~strike through~~ whilst additions are shown in **bold** in the proposed amendments column. Text in *italics* sets out our reasoning for making certain amends.

Generic standards are indicated by shaded cells. These are standards which apply across all 15 professions. We have moved some standards around to ensure the generic standards are at the top of each section, and so are numbered consistently across all the professions. Feedback relating to these standards should be provided in **Part A: Generic standards** of the survey.

White cells are profession-specific standards. These are unique to each profession, although in many cases these are still consistent across multiple professions. Feedback relating to these standards should be provided in **Part B: Profession-specific standards** of the survey.

Where we have proposed to create a new standard, we have created a new row and assigned this a letter. This is to make it easier to refer back to when providing feedback. Please note the order of some of these standards may be subject to change. Once we have determined what changes we are going to make, we will update the numbering of the standards.

We have endeavoured to make the proposed changes as clear as possible. However, we are aware that this is still a complicated document. We have therefore created a 'clean' version of the standards, available on the consultation page. If you have any questions about the proposed changes, you can email consultation@hcpc-uk.org or call the Policy and Standards team on 020 7840 9815, and a member of the team will be able to talk through this document and the changes. **Please note, due to COVID-19, as the team is working from home, the above phone line is not manned. Instead, you will be prompted to leave a message.**

The current standards of proficiency for occupational therapists are available to download and view for comparison at: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/occupational-therapists/>

No.	Standard	Proposed amendments
Registered occupational therapists must:		
1	be able to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice	
1.1	know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional	know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional or service
1.2	recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources effectively and be able to practise accordingly	recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources effectively and be able to practise accordingly safely and effectively
2	be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession	
2.1	understand the need to act in the best interests of service users at all times	understand the need to act in the best interests of service users promote and protect the service user's interests at all times
2.A		understand the importance of safeguarding and the need to engage in appropriate safeguarding processes where necessary
2.2	understand what is required of them by the Health and Care Professions Council	
2.3	understand the need to respect and uphold the rights, dignity, values, and autonomy of service users including their role in the diagnostic and therapeutic process and in maintaining health and wellbeing	
2.4	recognise that relationships with service users should be based on mutual respect and trust, and be able to maintain high standards of care even in situations of personal incompatibility	
2.5	know about current legislation applicable to the work of their profession	understand the importance of and be able to obtain informed consent

		<i>Moved from 2.7</i>
2.6	understand the effect of legislation on the delivery of care	be able to exercise a professional duty of care <i>Moved from 2.8</i>
2.7	understand the importance of and be able to obtain informed consent	understand know about current legislation applicable to the work of their profession <i>Moved from 2.5</i>
2.8	be able to exercise a professional duty of care	understand the effect of legislation on the delivery of care <i>Moved from 2.6</i>
3	be able to maintain fitness to practise	
3.1	understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct	
3.2	understand the importance of maintaining their own health	understand the importance of maintaining their own mental and physical health and be able to take appropriate action if their health may affect their ability to practise safely and effectively
3.A		understand the role that coping strategies can play in maintaining fitness to practise and the importance of seeking help and support when necessary
3.3	understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career-long learning	understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career-long learning continuous professional development
4	be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement	
4.1	be able to assess a professional situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem	recognise that they are personally responsible for and must be able to justify their decisions <i>Moved from 4.4 to emphasise importance of this standard</i>

4.2	be able to make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease treatment or the use of techniques or procedures, and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately	be able to assess a professional situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem be able to use their skills, knowledge and experience, and the information available to them, to make informed decisions or initiate solutions where necessary <i>Moved from 4.1</i>
4.3	be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative	be able to make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease treatment or the use of techniques or procedures, and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately <i>Moved from 4.2</i>
4.4	recognise that they are personally responsible for and must be able to justify their decisions	be able to make and receive appropriate referrals <i>Moved from 4.5</i>
4.5	be able to make and receive appropriate referrals	be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative <i>Moved from 4.3</i>
4.A		be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving <i>Moved from standard 14</i>
4.B		be able to use research, reasoning and problem solving skills to determine appropriate actions <i>Moved from standard 14</i>
4.6	understand the importance of participation in training, supervision and mentoring	understand the importance of active participation in training, supervision and mentoring <i>Moved from 4.7</i>
5	be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice	
5.1	understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different groups and individuals	understand the need requirement to adapt practice to respond appropriately to meet the needs of all different groups and individuals

5.A		be aware of the impact of their own values and beliefs on practice
5.B		be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by factors such as age, culture, disability , ethnicity, gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, sex, sexual orientation , socio-economic status and spiritual or religious beliefs <i>Moved from standard 8.6 as more relevant under this standard. Missing protected characteristics included, with the exception of marriage and civil partnership which considered could not impact on verbal and non-verbal communication</i>
5.2	understand the specific local context of practice, including the socio-cultural diversity of the community	
5.3	recognise the socio-cultural environmental issues that influence the context within which people live and work	
5.4	recognise the effect of inequality, poverty, exclusion, identity, social difference and diversity on occupational performance	recognise the effect of inequality, poverty, exclusion, identity, social difference and diversity on occupational performance and participation
6	be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner	be able to practise in a non-discriminatory and inclusive manner
6.A		be aware of the characteristics and consequences of barriers to inclusion
7	understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality	
7.1	be aware of the limits of the concept of confidentiality	
7.2	understand the principles of information governance and be aware of the safe and effective use of health and social care information	understand the principles of information governance and be aware of the safe and effective use of health, and social care and other relevant information

7.3	be able to recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users or the wider public	
8	be able to communicate effectively	
8.1	be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to service users, colleagues and others	be able to use demonstrate effective and appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills to communicate with in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to service users, carers , colleagues and others
8.2	be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5 ¹ <i>¹ The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tests competence in the English language. Applicants who have qualified outside of the UK, whose first language is not English and who are not nationals of a country within the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, must provide evidence that they have reached the necessary standard. Please visit our website for more information.</i>	
8.3	understand how communication skills affect assessment and engagement of service users and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of factors such as age, capacity, learning ability and physical ability	understand how communication skills affect assessment and engagement of service users and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of factors such as age, capacity, learning ability and physical ability <i>Captured by the new standards below</i>
8.4	be able to select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users, carers and others	be able to select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users, carers and others <i>Captured by the new standards below</i>

8.5	be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by factors such as age, culture, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and spiritual or religious beliefs	be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by factors such as age, culture, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and spiritual or religious beliefs <i>Moved to standard 5</i>
8.6	understand the need to provide service users or people acting on their behalf with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions	understand the need to provide service users or people acting on their behalf with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions <i>Captured by the new standards below</i>
8.7	understand the need to assist the communication needs of service users such as through the use of an appropriate interpreter, wherever possible	understand the need to assist the communication needs of service users such as through the use of an appropriate interpreter, wherever possible <i>Captured by the new standards below</i>
8.8	recognise the need to use interpersonal skills to encourage the active participation of service users	recognise the need to use interpersonal skills to encourage the active participation of service users <i>Captured by the new standards below</i>
8.A		be able to work with service users or their carers to facilitate the service user's preferred role in decision-making, and provide service users and carers with the information they may need where appropriate
8.B		be able to modify their means of communication to address the individual communication needs and preferences of service users and carers, and remove any barriers to communication where possible
8.C		be able to use information and communication technologies appropriate to their practice <i>Moved from standard 14</i>
8.9	be able to listen to a service user's occupational narrative and analyse the content in order to plan for the future	be able to actively listen to a service user's occupational narrative and analyse the content in order to plan for the future
8.10	be able, through interview and personal discussion, to understand the values, beliefs and interests of service users, their families and carers	be able, through interview and personal discussion, to understand the values, beliefs, culture and interests of service users, their families and carers

9	be able to work appropriately with others	
9.1	be able to work, where appropriate, in partnership with service users, other professionals, support staff and others	be able to work, where appropriate, in partnership with service users, their relatives and carers , other professionals, support staff and others
9.2	understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team	
9.3	understand the need to engage service users and carers in planning and evaluating diagnostics, treatments and interventions to meet their needs and goals	be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team <i>Moved from 9.4</i>
9.A		understand the qualities, behaviours and benefits of leadership and be able to apply them in the context of your practice
9.4	be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team	understand the need to engage service users and carers in planning and evaluating diagnostics, treatments and interventions to meet their needs and goals <i>Moved from 9.3</i>
9.5	understand the need to work with those who provide services in and across different sectors	
9.6	understand the need to adopt an approach which centres on the service user and establish appropriate professional relationships in order to motivate and involve the service user in meaningful occupation	
9.7	understand the value of enabling and empowering service users with the aim of enhancing their access to all services and opportunities which are available to them	
9.8	understand group dynamics and roles, and be able to facilitate group work, in order to maximise support, learning and change within groups and communities	

9.9	understand the need to capitalise, where appropriate, on the dynamics within groups and communities in order to harness the motivation and active involvement of participants	
9.10	be able to work in appropriate partnership with service users in order to evaluate the effectiveness of occupational therapy intervention	
10	be able to maintain records appropriately	
10.1	be able to keep accurate, comprehensive and comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines	
10.2	recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines	
11	be able to reflect on and review practice	
11.1	understand the value of reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection	
11.2	recognise the value of case conferences, supervision and other methods of reflecting on and reviewing practice	recognise the value of case conferences, supervision and other methods of reflecting on and reviewing practice review <i>For consistency across the professions</i>
11.3	be able to recognise the potential of occupational therapy in new and emerging areas of practice	
12	be able to assure the quality of their practice	
12.1	be able to engage in evidence-based practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures	be able to engage in evidence-based practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures
12.2	be able to gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data, that helps to evaluate the responses of service users to their care	be able to gather and use feedback and information, including qualitative and quantitative data, that helps to evaluate the responses of service users to their care

12.3	be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures	be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures <i>Captured by the new standard below</i>
12.4	be able to maintain an effective audit trail and work towards continual improvement	be able to monitor and systematically evaluate the quality of practice, and maintain an effective audit trail to and work towards continual improvement
12.5	be aware of, and be able to participate in, quality assurance programmes, where appropriate	be aware of, and be able to participate in, quality assurance programmes, where appropriate <i>Captured by the new standard below</i>
12.A		be able to participate in audit procedures and quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures
12.6	be able to evaluate intervention plans using recognised outcome measures and revise the plans as necessary in conjunction with the service user	
12.7	recognise the need to monitor and evaluate the quality of practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for quality assurance and improvement programmes	recognise the need to monitor and evaluate the quality of practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for quality assurance and improvement programmes <i>Captured by amendments above</i>
13	understand the key concepts of the knowledge base relevant to their profession	
13.1	understand and be able to apply the theoretical concepts underpinning occupational therapy, specifically the occupational nature of human beings and how they function in everyday activities	understand the structure and function of the human body, together with knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction relevant to their profession <i>Moved from 13.11</i>
13.2	understand the effect of occupational dysfunction and deprivation on individuals, families, groups and communities and recognise the importance of restoring and facilitating opportunities with the aim of achieving occupational wellness	be aware of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process <i>Moved from 13.7</i>

13.3	be able to understand and analyse activity and occupation and their relation to and effect on, health, wellbeing and function	recognise the role(s) of other professions in health and social care and understand how they may relate to the role of occupational therapist <i>Moved from 13.13</i>
13.4	understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention	understand the structure and function of health and social care services in the UK <i>Moved from 13.14</i>
13.5	understand the need to identify and assess occupational, physical, psychological, cultural and environmental needs and problems of service users, their families and carers	understand and be able to apply the theoretical concepts underpinning occupational therapy, specifically the occupational nature of human beings and how they function in everyday activities <i>Moved from 13.1</i>
13.A		be able to apply the theoretical concepts underpinning occupational therapy, including concepts of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - anatomy - physiology - pathology - human development - ergonomics - biomechanics - psychology - sociology - relevant behavioural sciences - occupational science
13.6	be aware of social, environmental and work-related policies and services and their effect on human needs within a diverse society	understand the effect of occupational alienation , dysfunction and deprivation on individuals, families, groups and communities and recognise the importance of restoring and facilitating opportunities with the aim of achieving occupational wellness <i>Moved from 13.2</i>

13.7	be aware of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process	be able to understand and analyse activity and occupation and their relation to and effect on, health, wellbeing and function <i>Moved from 13.3</i>
13.8	recognise the value of the diversity and complexity of human behaviour through the exploration of different physical, psychological, environmental, social, emotional and spiritual perspectives	understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment, and intervention and evaluation <i>Moved from 13.4</i>
13.9	be aware of the origins and development of occupational therapy, including the evolution of the profession towards the current emphasis on autonomy and empowerment of individuals, groups and communities	understand the need to identify and assess occupational, physical, psychological, cognitive , cultural and environmental needs and problems of service users, their families and carers <i>Moved from 13.5</i>
13.10	understand the use of the current philosophical framework for occupational therapy that focuses on service users and the bio-psychosocial model	be aware of physical, attitudinal , social, environmental and work-related policies and services and their effect on people human needs within a diverse society <i>Moved from 13.6</i>
13.11	understand the structure and function of the human body, together with knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction relevant to their profession	recognise the value of the diversity and complexity of human behaviour through the exploration of different physical, psychological, cognitive , environmental, social, emotional and spiritual perspectives <i>Moved from 13.8</i>
13.12	understand the concept of leadership and its application to practice	understand the concept of leadership and its application to practice <i>Addressed by a new standard on leadership under standard 9 (9.A)</i>
13.13	recognise the role of other professions in health and social care	be aware of the origins and development of occupational therapy, including the evolution of the profession towards the current emphasis on autonomy and empowerment of individuals, groups and communities <i>Moved from 13.9</i>
13.14	understand the structure and function of health and social care services in the UK	understand the use of the current philosophical framework models for occupational therapy that focuses on service users and holistic person-centred care the bio-psychosocial model

		<i>Moved from 13.10</i>
13.B		understand the concept of, and be able to support others with, the facilitation of learning
14	be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice	
14.1	be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts	be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments, technologies and or changing contexts
14.2	be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and effectively	be able to gather and use appropriate information <i>Moved from 14.4 , amends for consistency with other professions</i>
14.3	be able to undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment	be able to analyse and critically evaluate the information collected <i>Moved from 14.11</i>
14.4	be able to gather and use appropriate information	be able to select and use appropriate assessment techniques <i>Moved from 14.6</i>
14.5	be able to undertake or arrange investigations as appropriate	be able to undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment <i>Moved from 14.3</i>
14.6	be able to select and use appropriate assessment techniques	be able to undertake or arrange investigations as appropriate <i>Moved from 14.5</i>
14.7	understand the need to consider the assessment of the health, social care, employment and learning needs of service users	be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and effectively <i>Moved from 14.2</i>
14.8	be able to select and use relevant assessment tools to identify occupational performance needs	be aware of a range of research methodologies <i>Moved from 14.23</i>
14.9	be able to select and use standardised and non-standardised assessments appropriately to gather	recognise the value of research to the critical evaluation of practice

	information about the service user's occupational performance, taking account of the environmental context	<i>Moved from 14.22</i>
14.10	be able to use observation to gather information about the functional abilities of service users	be able to critically evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice <i>Moved from 14.24</i>
14.11	be able to analyse and critically evaluate the information collected	understand the need to consider the assessment of the health, social care, employment and learning needs of service users <i>Moved from 14.7</i>
14.12	be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving	be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving <i>Moved to standard 4</i>
14.13	be able to use research, reasoning and problem solving skills to determine appropriate actions	be able to use research, reasoning and problem solving skills to determine appropriate actions <i>Moved to standard 4</i>
14.14	be able to formulate specific and appropriate care or case management plans including the setting of timescales	be able to select and use relevant assessment tools techniques to identify occupational performance and participation needs <i>Moved from 14.8</i>
14.15	understand the need to agree the goals and priorities of intervention in relation to occupational needs in partnership with service users, basing such decisions on assessment results	be able to select and use standardised and non-standardised assessments appropriately to gather information about the service user's occupational performance and participation , taking account of the environmental context <i>Moved from 14.9</i>
14.16	be able to select as appropriate, the specific occupations and activities for use as therapeutic media, taking into account the particular therapeutic needs of service users	be able to use observation to gather information about the functional abilities of service users <i>Moved from 14.10</i>
14.17	be able to understand and use the relevant sciences and established theories, frameworks and concepts of occupational therapy	be able to formulate specific and appropriate care or case management plans including the setting of timescales <i>Moved from 14.14</i>
14.18	be aware of the full range of occupations and activities used in intervention and how these should reflect the individual's occupational needs	understand the need to agree the goals and priorities of intervention in relation to occupational needs in partnership

		with service users, basing such decisions on assessment results <i>Moved from 14.15</i>
14.19	be able to analyse, develop or modify therapeutic media and environments to service users, to build on their abilities and enhance their occupational performance	be able to select as appropriate, the specific occupations and activities for use as therapeutic media, taking into account the particular therapeutic needs of service users <i>Moved from 14.16</i>
14.20	know how to meet the social, psychological and physical health-based occupational needs of service users across a range of practice areas	be able to understand and use the scientific theories, concepts, principles and professional frameworks, relevant sciences and established theories, frameworks and concepts of underpinning occupational therapy practice <i>Moved from 14.17</i>
14.21	be able to use information and communication technologies appropriate to their practice	be able to use information and communication technologies appropriate to their practice <i>Moved to standard 8</i>
14.22	recognise the value of research to the critical evaluation of practice	be aware of the full broad range of occupations and activities that can be used in intervention and how these should reflect the individual's occupational needs and preferences <i>Moved from 14.18</i>
14.23	be aware of a range of research methodologies	be able to analyse, develop or modify therapeutic media and environments to service users, to build on their abilities and enhance their occupational performance and participation <i>Moved from 14.19</i>
14.24	be able to evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice	know how to meet the social, psychological, cognitive and physical health-based occupational needs of service users across a range of practice areas <i>Moved from 14.20</i>
15	understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment	
15.1	understand the need to maintain the safety of both service users and those involved in their care	

15.2	be aware of applicable health and safety legislation, and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these	
15.3	be able to work safely, including being able to select appropriate hazard control and risk management, reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner and in accordance with health and safety legislation	
15.4	be able to select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly	
15.5	be able to establish safe environments for practice, which minimise risks to service users, those treating them and others, including the use of hazard control and particularly infection control	be able to establish safe environments for practice, which minimise risks appropriately manages risk to service users, those treating them and others, including the use of hazard control and particularly infection control
15.6	know and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques	know understand and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques