

Standards of proficiency

Comparison table: Occupational therapists

This table compares the standards of proficiency that came into effect on 1 September 2023 (left) and the standards that were in place before that date (right).

	<u>Current standards (2023)</u>	<u>Previous standards (pre-2023)</u>
	At the point of registration, occupational therapists must be able to:	Registrant occupational therapists must:
1	practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice	be able to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice
1.1	identify the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional or service	know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional
1.2	recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources safely and effectively, including managing the emotional burden that comes with working in a pressured environment	recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources effectively and be able to practise accordingly
1.3	keep their skills and knowledge up to date and understand the importance of continuing professional development throughout their career	
2	practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession	be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession
2.1	maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct	understand the need to act in the best interests of service users at all times
2.2	promote and protect the service user's interests at all times	understand what is required of them by the Health and Care Professions Council

2.3	understand the importance of safeguarding by actively looking for signs of abuse, demonstrating understanding of relevant safeguarding processes and engaging in these processes where necessary	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	understand what is required of them by the Health and Care Professions Council, including, but not limited to, the standards of conduct, performance and ethics	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	respect and uphold the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of service users, including their role in the assessment, diagnostic, treatment and/or therapeutic process	know about current legislation applicable to the work of their profession
2.6	recognise that relationships with service users, carers and others should be based on mutual respect and trust, maintaining high standards of care in all circumstances	understand the effect of legislation on the delivery of care
2.7	understand the importance of and be able to obtain valid consent, which is voluntary and informed, has due regard to capacity, is proportionate to the circumstances and is appropriately documented	understand the importance of and be able to obtain informed consent
2.8	understand the importance of capacity in the context of delivering care and treatment	be able to exercise a professional duty of care
2.9	understand the scope of a professional duty of care, and exercise that duty	
2.10	understand and apply legislation, policies and guidance relevant to their profession and scope of practice	

2.11	recognise the power imbalance that comes with being a healthcare professional, and ensure they do not abuse this for personal gain	
2.12	understand the effect of legislation on the delivery of care	
3	look after their health and wellbeing, seeking appropriate support where necessary	be able to maintain fitness to practise
3.1	identify anxiety and stress in themselves and recognise the potential impact on their practice	understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct
3.2	understand the importance of their own mental and physical health and wellbeing strategies in maintaining fitness to practise	understand the importance of maintaining their own health
3.3	understand how to take appropriate action if their health may affect their ability to practise safely and effectively, including seeking help and support when necessary	understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career-long learning
3.4	develop and adopt clear strategies for physical and mental self-care and self-awareness, to maintain a high standard of professional effectiveness and a safe working environment	
4	practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement	be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement
4.1	recognise that they are personally responsible for, and must be able to justify, their decisions and actions	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

4.2	use their skills, knowledge and experience, and the information available to them, to make informed decisions and/or take action where necessary	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
4.3	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 initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative
4.4	make and receive appropriate referrals, where necessary	recognise that they are personally responsible for and must be able to justify their decisions
4.5	exercise personal initiative	be able to make and receive appropriate referrals
4.6	demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem-solving	understand the importance of participation in training, supervision and mentoring
4.7	use research, reasoning and problem-solving skills when determining appropriate actions	
4.8	understand the need for active participation in training, supervision and mentoring in supporting high standards of practice, and personal and professional conduct, and the importance of demonstrating this in practice	
5	recognise the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice and practise in a non-discriminatory and inclusive manner	be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice

5.1	respond appropriately to the needs of all groups and individuals in practice, recognising that this can be affected by difference of any kind including, but not limited to, protected characteristics, intersectional experiences and cultural differences	understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different groups and individuals
5.2	understand equality legislation and apply it to their practice	understand the specific local context of practice, including the socio-cultural diversity of the community
5.3	recognise the potential impact of their own values, beliefs and personal biases (which may be unconscious) on practice and take personal action to ensure all service users and carers are treated appropriately with respect and dignity	recognise the socio-cultural environmental issues that influence the context within which people live and work
5.4	understand the duty to make reasonable adjustments in practice and be able to make and support reasonable adjustments in their and others' practice	recognise the effect of inequality, poverty, exclusion, identity, social difference and diversity on occupational performance
5.5	recognise the characteristics and consequences of barriers to inclusion, including for socially isolated groups	
5.6	actively challenge these barriers, supporting the implementation of change wherever possible	
5.7	recognise that regard to equality, diversity and inclusion needs to be embedded in the application of all HCPC standards, across all areas of practice	
6	understand the importance of and maintain confidentiality	be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner

6.1	adhere to the professional duty of confidentiality and understand when disclosure may be required	
6.2	understand the principles of information and data governance and be aware of the safe and effective use of health, social care and other relevant information	
6.3	recognise and respond in a timely manner to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users, carers and/or the wider public	
6.4	understand the need to ensure that confidentiality is maintained in all situations in which service users rely on additional communication support (such as interpreters or translators)	
6.5	recognise that the concepts of confidentiality and informed consent extend to all mediums, including illustrative clinical records such as photography, video and audio recordings and digital platforms	
7	communicate effectively	understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality
7.1	use effective and appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills to communicate with service users, carers, colleagues and others	be aware of the limits of the concept of confidentiality
7.2	communicate in English to the required standard for their profession (equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5)	understand the principles of information governance and be aware of the safe and effective use of health and social care information

7.3	understand the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and recognise how these can be affected by difference of any kind, including, but not limited to, protected characteristics, intersectional experiences and cultural differences	be able to recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users or the wider public
7.4	work with service users and/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	
7.5	modify their own means of communication to address the individual communication needs and preferences of service users and carers, and remove any barriers to communication where possible	
7.6	understand the need to support the communication needs of service users and carers, such as through the use of an appropriate interpreter	
7.7	use information, communication and digital technologies appropriate to their practice	
7.8	understand the need to provide service users or people acting on their behalf with the information necessary, in accessible formats, to enable them to make informed decisions	
7.9	actively listen to a service user's occupational narrative and analyse the content in order to plan for the future	

7.10	understand the values, beliefs, culture, behaviours and interests of service users and carers, through interview and personal discussion	
8	work appropriately with others	be able to communicate effectively
8.1	work in partnership with service users, carers, colleagues and others	be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to service users, carers, colleagues and others
8.2	recognise the principles and practices of other health and care professionals and systems and how they interact with their profession	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
8.3	understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships as both an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team	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
8.4	contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team	be able to select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users, carers and others
8.5	identify anxiety and stress in service users, carers and colleagues, adapting their practice and providing support where appropriate	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
8.6	understand the qualities, behaviours and benefits of leadership	understand the need to provide service users or people acting on their behalf with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions

8.7	recognise that leadership is a skill all professionals can demonstrate	understand the need to assist the communication needs of service users such as through the use of an appropriate interpreter, wherever possible
8.8	identify their own leadership qualities, behaviours and approaches, taking into account the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion	recognise the need to use interpersonal skills to encourage the active participation of service users
8.9	demonstrate leadership behaviours appropriate to their practice	be able to listen to a service user's occupational narrative and analyse the content in order to plan for the future
8.10	act as a role model for others	be able, through interview and personal discussion, to understand the values, beliefs and interests of service users, their families and carers
8.11	promote and engage in the learning of others	
8.12	understand the need to engage service users and carers in planning and evaluating assessments, treatments and interventions to meet their needs and goals	
8.13	ensure intervention reviews are informed by changes in service users' circumstances	
8.14	understand the need to work with those who provide services in and across different sectors, in order to best meet service users' needs. Recognise the involvement of public, private and voluntary sector providers in the delivery of health, care and other services which affect occupational performance	

8.15	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	
8.16	understand the value of enabling and empowering service users, with the aim of enhancing their access to all services and opportunities available to them	
8.17	understand group dynamics and roles, and facilitate group work in order to maximise support, learning and change within groups and communities	
8.18	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	
8.19	work in appropriate partnership with service users in order to evaluate the effectiveness of occupational therapy intervention	
9	maintain records appropriately	be able to work appropriately with others
9.1	keep full, clear and accurate records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines	be able to work, where appropriate, in partnership with service users, other professionals, support staff and others
9.2	manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines	understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team

9.3	use digital record keeping tools, where required	understand the need to engage service users and carers in planning and evaluating diagnostics, treatments and interventions to meet their needs and goals
		9.4 be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team
		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	reflect on and review practice	be able to maintain records appropriately

10.1	understand the value of reflective practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection to support continuous improvement	be able to keep accurate, comprehensive and comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
10.2	recognise the value of multi-disciplinary reviews, case conferences and other methods of review	recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
10.3	recognise and evaluate the potential of occupational therapy in new and emerging areas of practice	
11	assure the quality of their practice	be able to reflect on and review practice
11.1	engage in evidence-based practice	understand the value of reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection
11.2	gather and use feedback and information, including qualitative and quantitative data, to evaluate the response of service users to their care	recognise the value of case conferences, supervision and other methods of reflecting on and reviewing practice
11.3	monitor and systematically evaluate the quality of practice, and maintain an effective quality management and quality assurance process working towards continual improvement	be able to recognise the potential of occupational therapy in new and emerging areas of practice
11.4	participate in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance, clinical governance and the use of appropriate outcome measures	
11.5	evaluate care plans or intervention plans using recognised and appropriate outcome measures, in conjunction with the service user where possible, and revise the plans as necessary	

11.6	recognise the value of gathering and using data for quality assurance and improvement programmes	
12	understand and apply the key concepts of the knowledge base relevant to their profession	be able to assure the quality of their practice
12.1	understand the structure and function of the human body, together with knowledge of physical and mental health, disease, disorder and dysfunction relevant to their profession	be able to engage in evidence-based practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures
12.2	demonstrate awareness of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process	be able to gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data, that helps to evaluate the responses of service users to their care
12.3	recognise the role(s) of other professions in health and social care and understand how they may relate to the role of occupational therapist	be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures
12.4	understand the structure and function of health and social care systems and services in the UK	be able to maintain an effective audit trail and work towards continual improvement
12.5	understand the occupational nature of human beings and how they function in everyday activities such as self care, productivity and leisure and their changing needs during the lifecycle	be aware of, and be able to participate in, quality assurance programmes, where appropriate
12.6	understand the inter-relationship between the person, their environment and their chosen occupation, barriers and enablers in this system and how to change each component as part of rehabilitation	be able to evaluate intervention plans using recognised outcome measures and revise the plans as necessary in conjunction with the service user

<p>12.7</p>	<p>apply the theoretical concepts underpinning occupational therapy, including concepts of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - anatomy; - physiology; - pathology; - human development; - ergonomics; - biomechanics; - psychology; - sociology; and - occupational science 	<p>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</p>
<p>12.8</p>	<p>be able to apply the theoretical concepts underpinning occupational therapy to inform the understanding of physical, emotional and mental health</p>	
<p>12.9</p>	<p>understand the effect of occupational alienation, dysfunction, deprivation and injustice, recognising the importance of restoring and facilitating opportunities to achieve occupational wellness</p>	
<p>12.10</p>	<p>understand and analyse activity and occupation and their relation to and effect on health, wellbeing and function, as part of occupational formulation, diagnosis, and therapeutic use of occupation</p>	
<p>12.11</p>	<p>understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation that focus on occupational outcomes</p>	
<p>12.12</p>	<p>understand the need to identify and assess diverse occupational, physical, psychological, cognitive, cultural and environmental needs and problems of service users and carers</p>	

12.13	demonstrate awareness of physical, attitudinal, social, economic, educational, environmental and work-related policies and services and their effect on people within a diverse society	
12.14	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	
12.15	demonstrate awareness 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	
12.16	understand the use of the current philosophical models for occupational therapy that focuses on service users and holistic person-centred care and a person's ability to participate in occupations, taking into account physical, biological, psychological and social factors and the environmental context	
12.17	understand the concept of, and support others with, the facilitation of, teaching and learning including teaching self-management strategies to service users and carers	
13	draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice	understand the key concepts of the knowledge base relevant to their profession

13.1	change their practice as needed to take account of new developments, technologies and changing contexts	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
13.2	gather appropriate information	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
13.3	analyse and critically evaluate the information collected	be able to understand and analyse activity and occupation and their relation to and effect on, health, wellbeing and function
13.4	select and use appropriate assessment techniques and equipment	understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention
13.5	undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment	understand the need to identify and assess occupational, physical, psychological, cultural and environmental needs and problems of service users, their families and carers
13.6	undertake or arrange investigations as appropriate	be aware of social, environmental and work related policies and services and their effect on human needs within a diverse society
13.7	conduct appropriate assessment or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and effectively	be aware of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process
13.8	recognise a range of research methodologies relevant to their role	recognise the value of the diversity and complexity of human behaviour through the exploration of different physical, psychological, environmental, social, emotional and spiritual perspectives

13.9	recognise the value of research to the critical evaluation of practice	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
13.10	critically evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice	understand the use of the current philosophical framework for occupational therapy that focuses on service users and the bio-psychosocial model
13.11	engage service users in research as appropriate	understand the structure and function of the human body, together with knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction relevant to their profession
13.12	understand the need to consider the assessment of the health, social care, employment and learning needs of service users, including the need for risk assessment and positive risk-taking	understand the concept of leadership and its application to practice
13.13	select and use relevant standardised and non-standardised assessment techniques, and observation, to gather information about the service user's functional and occupational abilities, performance and participation, taking account of the cultural and environmental context	recognise the role of other professions in health and social care
13.14	formulate specific and appropriate care or case management plans including the setting of timescales	understand the structure and function of health and social care services in the UK
13.15	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	

13.16	select, as appropriate, the specific occupations and activities for use as therapeutic media, taking into account the particular needs of service users	
13.17	understand and use the scientific theories, concepts, principles and professional frameworks underpinning occupational therapy practice	
13.18	demonstrate awareness of the broad range of occupations and activities that can be used in intervention, and how these should reflect the individual's occupational needs and preferences	
13.19	select or develop therapeutic media and environments, and adapt these as appropriate to meet service users' needs, build on their abilities and enhance their occupational performance and participation	
13.20	understand the need to meet the emotional, social, psychological, cognitive and physical health-based occupational needs of service users, across a range of practice areas and how this can vary across a range of practice areas	
14	establish and maintain a safe practice environment	be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice
14.1	understand the need to maintain the safety of themselves and others, including service users, carers and colleagues	be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts

14.2	demonstrate awareness of relevant health and safety legislation and comply with all local operational procedures and policies	be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and effectively
14.3	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	be able to undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment
14.4	select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly	be able to gather and use appropriate information
14.5	establish safe environments for practice, which appropriately manage risk	be able to undertake or arrange investigations as appropriate
14.6	understand and apply appropriate moving and handling techniques	be able to select and use appropriate assessment techniques
		14.7 understand the need to consider the assessment of the health, social care, employment and learning needs of service users
		14.8 be able to select and use relevant assessment tools to identify occupational performance needs
		14.9 be able to select and use standardised and non-standardised assessments appropriately to gather information about the service user's occupational performance, taking account of the environmental context
		14.10 be able to use observation to gather information about the functional abilities of service users
		14.11 be able to analyse and critically evaluate the information collected
		14.12 be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving

		14.13 be able to use research, reasoning and problem solving skills to determine appropriate actions
		14.14 be able to formulate specific and appropriate care or case management plans including the setting of timescales
		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
		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
		14.17 be able to understand and use the relevant sciences and established theories, frameworks and concepts of occupational therapy
		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
		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
		14.20 know how to meet the social, psychological and physical health-based occupational needs of service users across a range of practice areas
		14.21 be able to use information and communication technologies appropriate to their practice
		14.22 recognise the value of research to the critical evaluation of practice

		14.23 be aware of a range of research methodologies
		14.24 be able to evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice
15	promote health and prevent ill health	understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment
15.1	understand the role of their profession in health promotion, health education and preventing ill health	understand the need to maintain the safety of both service users and those involved in their care
15.2	understand how social, economic and environmental factors (wider determinants of health) can influence a person's health and wellbeing	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	empower and enable individuals (including service users and colleagues) to play a part in managing their own health	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	engage in occupational health, including being aware of immunisation requirements	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
		15.6 know and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques