



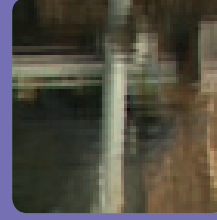
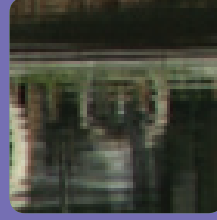
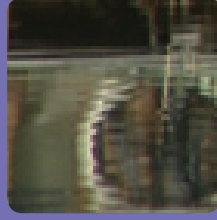
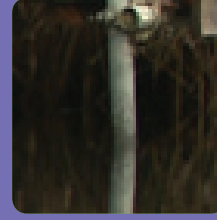
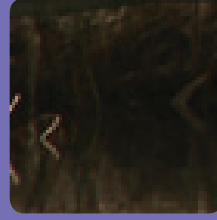
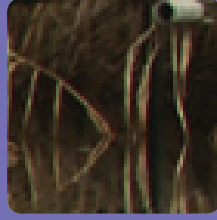
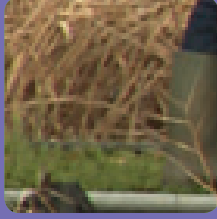
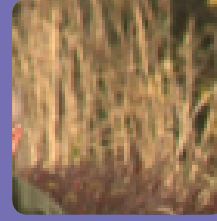
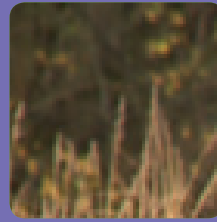
Occupational Therapy Career Handbook 2012-13



Manager Practitioner Lecturer Researcher Consultant Company Director Manager Practitioner Lecturer Researcher

College of
Occupational
Therapists

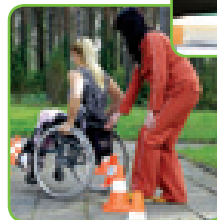






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The occupational therapist role

Occupational therapists are health and social care professionals who help people of all ages – babies, children, adults and older people – to carry out activities or develop skills they need or want to do, but as a result of physical or mental illness, disability or being socially excluded, they are prevented from doing the activities they value. These could include the everyday necessities of daily living, such as preparing a meal, or getting dressed, going to school or work, or simply continuing with a favourite hobby. Occupational therapists will work with individuals to find alternative ways to do those activities to help people live life their way.

The occupational therapist philosophy

Occupational therapy has a unique philosophy that acknowledges the link between what people do and their health and wellbeing. To the profession 'occupation' means all the activities a person undertakes, enjoys and values. More importantly, everything we do – our daily occupations – help to define our identity and role. If an individual is unable to do what is important to them, their health and wellbeing can suffer. Occupational therapists can address this by enabling individuals to find ways to do those activities despite the barriers they may face.

Would you make a good occupational therapist?



If you can answer yes to some of the questions above, then occupational therapy could be the perfect profession for you

What can a career as an occupational therapist offer you?

The occupational therapy role provides variety, flexibility and immense job satisfaction. As a qualified occupational therapist you can choose to work in a variety of different roles throughout your career, such as a clinical practitioner, manager, consultant, lecturer, researcher or you can run your own business. There are also a wide range of specialisms occupational therapists can choose to work in, for example mental health, learning disabilities, neurological care or oncology.



Where occupational therapists work

Occupational therapists work in a variety of settings, including:

- Charities
- Community centres
- GP practices/primary care
- Hospitals
- Housing associations
- Industrial and commercial organisations
- Job centres
- Patients' homes
- Prisons
- Residential and nursing homes
- Schools, colleges and universities
- Social services

Occupational therapists make a real difference



They will:

- Make sure that homes, workplaces and public places are accessible for people with specific needs
- Enable people to learn new or different ways of carrying out activities
- Advise schools to help children overcome writing difficulties and other learning challenges
- Enable older couples to care for one another and remain in their own homes
- Help people to manage their depression or anxiety more effectively to enable them to return to work
- Work with socially excluded groups, for example, the homeless or asylum seekers, providing them with opportunities to engage in meaningful activities
- Ease the transition back into the home after being hospitalised



Marc

Following a road accident, Marc was left physically disabled, with the life that he had prior to the accident changed beyond recognition. Danielle, his occupational therapist, discovered that Marc was a passionate angler, and as a result of her intervention, helped Marc to start fishing again. With support from his carers, Marc goes on fishing trips, enabling him to continue with his favourite pastime.

Matt

Matt Ward is a professional actor who was on the brink of suicide due to depression. He was referred to Davina Blunt, an occupational therapist, who helped him get his life back on track. Mat wouldn't be acting now if it hadn't been for her, and he owes a huge debt to Davina, as his occupational therapist.



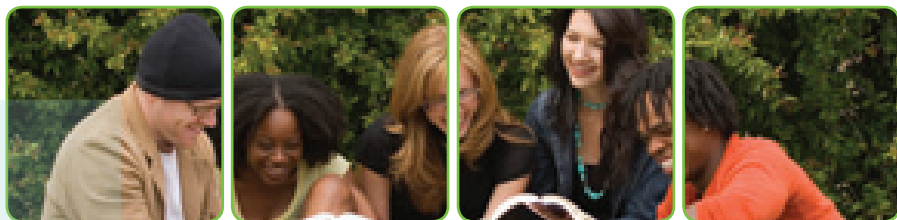
Gary

Gary has Multiple Sclerosis. His condition affects his legs and his mobility. Gary also suffers from fatigue, which makes it difficult for him to carry out daily activities. He is unable to take his children for walks and he has to give up work. Gary was referred to an occupational therapist who helped him and he will now remain independent for years to come.

Dina

Dina was only 2½ years old when she had a stroke, which affected the right side of her body. Her occupational therapist, Clare, helped to increase the movement to Dina's right side by encouraging Dina to move her right arm when she was playing. Clare used play activities such as washing dolls and playing musical instruments. Dina can now move her right arm and continues to enjoy the types of play every little girl wants to do.





How to become an occupational therapist

To qualify as an occupational therapist you need to complete an occupational therapy degree programme at one of 31 universities across the UK.

To be accepted onto an occupational therapy degree programme you should have at least five GCSE passes and at least two, (usually three) A levels. A science subject at 'A' level is sometimes required. Approved Access courses, VCE and Scottish qualifications are acceptable alternatives to 'A' levels. Please check with the individual university for other non academic entry requirements.

Programme types

There are a number of different educational programmes across the UK at undergraduate and post-graduate levels:

Full time BSc (Hons) degree – these are generally three years (four years in Scotland).

Post-graduate programmes – these are normally full time for two years for graduates. These programmes will award a Post-graduate Diploma in Occupational Therapy or an MSc in Occupational Therapy (pre-registration).

In-service BSc (Hons) degree – these four-year programmes are for those students who have the support of their employer to study for the degree qualification and work. The programme usually require 2 days' a week attendance at university.

Part-time BSc (Hons) degree – these usually take four years and require 2 days a week attendance at university, but you do not need to be employed in health or social care.



Subjects studied

The occupational therapy programme combines both practical and academic study. The academic subjects include:

- Biological sciences (anatomy and physiology)
- Behavioural sciences (psychology and sociology)
- Occupational therapy knowledge and skills, including models of practice and problem solving
- Management and leadership
- Therapeutic interventions
- Environmental adaptations
- Research

In addition, a minimum of 1,000 hours (approximately one third of the programme) is required to be spent on practice placements. This is an opportunity to put into practice all the theory and knowledge you have learnt at university. You may find yourself working in physical rehabilitation, learning disabilities, mental health, social care or the voluntary sector and a variety of skills, for example, you may be working alongside an occupational therapist or reviewing how an occupational therapist could apply their philosophy in a setting.

During your practice placement, you will learn how to assess individuals and their community environments, and how to use the principles of adapting activities to help achieve agreed goals and enhance a person's quality of life. This normally occurs under the guidance of a qualified occupational therapist, but even as a student you will also see people on your own.



The College of Occupational Therapists programme accreditation

The College is the UK professional body for occupational therapy staff in the UK and supports its members throughout their professional career. It sets the practice and educational standards for the profession. With over 29,000 members, the College represents the interests of the profession across the UK and internationally.

All of the occupational therapy degree programmes in the UK are currently accredited by the College of Occupational Therapists. Accreditation is a quality standard that indicates that the programme meets the College's requirements. This accreditation is voluntary.

Accreditation by the College of Occupational Therapists provides automatic approval from the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT). Your occupational therapy qualification from an accredited programme will be recognised in over 60 countries, providing a 'passport' for you to work internationally.

Visit www.cot.org.uk for up-to-date information on all the accredited occupational therapy degree programmes.

The Health Professions Council approval programme

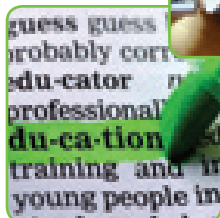
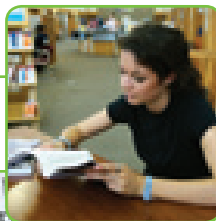
All degree programmes must be approved by the Health Professions Council, the regulatory body for the occupational therapy profession, as meeting their minimum standards. This approval is mandatory to enable graduates to be registered to practise.

Applying for a university place

Applications to three or four year full-time pre-registration occupational therapy programmes should be made through UCAS (Universities and College Admissions Service).

UCAS, Rosehill, New Barn Lane, Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL52 3LZ
Tel: 0871 468 0468 www.ucas.com

Applications to two-year accelerated programmes and four-year part-time/in-service routes should be made direct to the university.



Completing your application

- Do your research – talk to an occupational therapist to improve your understanding of the profession
- Visit the College of Occupational Therapists website to find out more about the profession and the university programmes: www.cot.org.uk
- If appropriate, download the UCAS application and make sure you complete it early
- Check the deadlines and the admission process
- If possible, find referees who know about occupational therapy
- When applying for an occupational therapy programme, either through UCAS or to the university direct, you will be asked to write a personal statement. This is the opportunity to sell your skills. In your personal statement make sure you:
 - Explain why you are interested in occupational therapy as a career
 - Describe any experiences you have of working in, and/or visiting, occupational therapy departments, and what you think you gained from the experience
 - Outline your personal qualities and skills and try to relate these to what may be required as an occupational therapist
 - Provide a brief account of your interests and hobbies

Financial support

Students with UK citizenship (who are resident in the UK) are normally eligible to have their tuition fees funded for full-time and part-time undergraduate pre-registration occupational therapy study. Additional financial support through a means-tested bursary may also be available, but this will vary according to each student's circumstances.

All postgraduate pre-registration places in England and Wales are currently funded (at the time of publication). In-service programmes for occupational therapy support workers, employed by the NHS or social services, are usually funded by the Workforce Development Confederation of Strategic Health Authorities. In some instances, the employing trust may also be willing to provide funding. This will be arranged through your employer.

Please note funding is subject to current political and financial policies and may change at any time.

Funding organisations

Living in England

NHS Student Bursaries
Hesketh House
200–220 Broadway
Fleetwood
Lancashire FY7 8SS
T: 0845 358 6655
F: 01253 774 490
E: enquiries@nhspa.gov.uk
W: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students

Living in Wales

NHS Wales Student Awards Unit
3rd Floor
14 Cathedral Road
Cardiff CF11 9LJ
T: 02920 196 167
W: www.wales.nhs.uk

Living in Scotland

Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS)
Gyleview House
3 Redheugh Rigg
Edinburgh EH12 9HH
T: 0845 111 1711
W: www.saas.gov.uk

Living in Northern Ireland

Department for Employment and Learning
Student Finance Branch
Adelaide House,
39-49 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8FD
T: 028 9025 7777
W: www.delni.gov.uk

What financial support is available to me?

Student loan

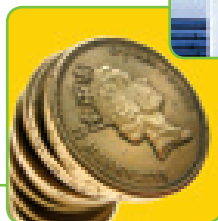
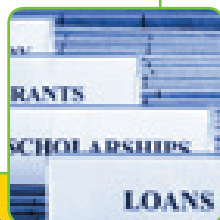
For information regarding eligibility for student loans, you should contact the Student Loans Company Ltd, 100 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 7UD. England: 0845 300 5090; Wales: 0845 602 8845; Northern Ireland: 0845 600 0662; Scotland: 0845 111 1711
www.slc.co.uk.

Career development loan

For information on the Career Development Loan, contact Next Step on freephone: 0800 100 900, or at www.direct.gov.uk

Interest-free overdraft

Many banking organisations offer a variety of interest-free overdraft schemes. Always check the repayment criteria before agreeing to use this facility. Different banks offer different deals so do shop around.



Frequently asked questions

How much do occupational therapists earn?

- A newly qualified occupational therapist can earn in the region of £20,000
- A more experienced occupational therapist can earn over £40,000
- A consultant occupational therapist can earn between £63,000 and £79,000

What are the working hours?

Occupational therapists usually work office hours during Monday to Friday. There are, however, some occupational therapists who work evenings and weekends, particularly if they work in mental health, accident and emergency services, and in private practice.

I haven't studied for a long while. I am an adult learner. Can I apply?

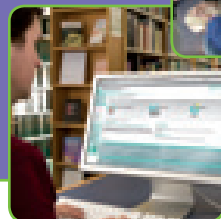
All programmes welcome applications from adult learners. The individual universities will advise on how to prepare for study. Some adult learners prefer or are required to do a foundation degree or access course in a related field, such as health and social care, to help prepare them for the return to academic study. Visit the individual university's website for more information.

Can the College recommend a particular programme?

All university occupational therapy programmes in the UK have to be approved by the Health Professions Council (HPC), the independent regulatory body. This is the minimum requirement for practising as an occupational therapist. All programmes are currently also accredited by the College of Occupational Therapists and the World Federation of Occupational Therapists ensuring that graduates are fit to practise and have the skills to take the profession forward.

Are the entry requirements the same for each university?

Each university has its own entry requirements and they vary from programme to programme. Specific enquiries about entry requirements should be made directly to the university. You will find information about the various programmes and the entry requirements on the university websites.





I am a student with disabilities. How will I be supported?

All universities have special provision for students with disabilities (including unseen disabilities such as a learning difficulty or diabetes). For further information contact the university directly. Students with disabilities may be eligible for a Disabled Student Allowance (DSA). Contact your local education authority, or visit the Directgov website: www.direct.gov.uk for further information, or to download a copy of *Bridging the gap: a guide to the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs in Higher Education)*.

The Health Professions Council has produced guidance for students with a disability. Visit: www.hpc-uk.org

What is the difference between in-service programmes and part-time programmes?


Some programmes are designed to provide access to professional qualifications for people already working in health and social care, and these are termed "in-service". Other programmes enable students to study part-time irrespective of their employment status. Both programmes of study include daily or weekly attendance, and all include full-time periods of practice placements.

How do I arrange a visit to an occupational therapy department?

Contact your local hospital or social services for information on visiting institutions where occupational therapists work. Residential nursing homes, homeless shelters or charities may also employ occupational therapists that could spend time with you discussing their role.


Do the universities check for criminal records?

Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosures will be requested by the university after you have been provisionally accepted, and before your first practice placement.



Will I need to have a health check before starting the programme?

All students will be required to undertake a health check, and you may have to pay for certain inoculations before going on a placement. The university will provide further details.



I already know I want to work with a specific group of service users. Do I still have to complete a practice placement in another practice setting?

Yes, it is the university's responsibility to provide you with a range of practice placement experience. Although you may develop a preference to a particular area of occupational therapy practice during your time as a student, you will be expected to complete placements in a range of different environments.

I am an international student - can I still study occupational therapy in the UK?

International students can find information on the entry requirements of each university in the course listings at www.cot.org.uk. For more information, please contact the university directly.

The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) produces guidance notes for international students wishing to study in the UK. Visit www.ukcisa.org.uk, or write to UKCISA, 9-17 St Albans Place, London N1 0NX or call +44 (0)20 7288 4330.

The British Council provides information for international students wishing to study in the UK. Visit www.britishcouncil.org

International Education Financial Aid (IEFA) provides information on financial aid, scholarships and grant information for international students wishing to study abroad. Visit www.ief.a.org

Are there opportunities to study abroad?

Some universities have international links, giving students the opportunity to study abroad, as part of their degree programme. Contact the university direct for further information.

The European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (Erasmus) offers students the opportunity to study abroad in any European country for between three and 12 months.

Visit www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus

The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) produces useful information for UK students wishing to study abroad. Visit www.ukcisa.org.uk



Programmes accredited by the College of Occupational Therapists

England

		3 year full-time BSc (Hons)	4 year part-time/ in service BSc (Hons)	Accelerated entry BSc (Hons) eg BSc/MSc (refer to entry)
Bournemouth	Bournemouth University	✓		
Bradford	University of Bradford	✓		
Bristol	University of the West of England	✓		
Canterbury (& Chatham)	Canterbury Christ Church University*	✓		
Colchester	University of Essex		✓	MSc
Coventry (& Staffordshire)	Coventry University*	✓	✓	
Derby	University of Derby	✓	✓	MSc
Eastbourne	University of Brighton		✓	PG Dip
Huddersfield	University of Huddersfield	✓		
Lancaster (and Carlisle)	University of Cumbria*	✓	✓	MSc
Leeds	Leeds Metropolitan University			MSc
Liverpool	The University of Liverpool	✓		
London/Uxbridge	Brunel University	✓	✓	MSc
London/Southwark	London South Bank University	✓	✓	PG Dip
Middlesbrough	Teesside University	✓		PG Dip, MSc
Newcastle	Northumbria University	✓		MSc
Northampton	The University of Northampton	✓	✓	
Norwich	University of East Anglia	✓		MSc
Oxford	Oxford Brookes University	✓	✓	
Plymouth	University of Plymouth	✓		
Salford	University of Salford	✓	✓	
Sheffield (and Grantham)	Sheffield Hallam University*	✓		MSc, BSc (Hons)
Southampton	University of Southampton	✓	✓	MSc
York	York St John University	✓	✓	

Northern Ireland

Jordanstown	University of Ulster at Jordanstown	✓		
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Scotland

Aberdeen	The Robert Gordon University	4 years		
Edinburgh	Queen Margaret University	4 years		PG Dip, MSc
Glasgow	Glasgow Caledonian University	4 years		MSc

Wales

Bangor	Bangor University			PG Dip
Cardiff	Cardiff University	✓	✓	PG Dip
Wrexham	Glyndŵr University, Wrexham		✓	

*Programmes awarded by these universities are offered at more than one location

Recognised support worker programmes

Distance learning	Langside College			
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For information on individual programmes, visit our website: www.COT.org.uk



Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this handbook is accurate at the time of publication. The information outlined in the handbook is subject to subsequent changes in political, legislative and funding policies. The College is not responsible for any changes made to the information contained in the handbook, once it has been printed.



Occupational Therapy

Helping people to live life their way

For information on occupational therapy degree programmes at universities located across the UK, please visit our website:

www.COT.org.uk



Manager Practitioner Lecturer Researcher Consultant Company Director Manager Practitioner Lecturer Researcher

College of Occupational Therapists Limited
The professional body for occupational therapy staff

(A subsidiary of the British Association of Occupational Therapists Limited)

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College of
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