

YEAR 1 – PRACTICUM 1

Occupational Therapy Practicum I Fieldwork Objectives

The purpose of this fieldwork placement is for students to gain an understanding of the role of occupational therapy in Aotearoa/NZ, within a supervised practice environment. The focus of this placement is on introducing students to the notion of people as occupational beings and to the occupational therapy process - the CPPF. This is an opportunity for students to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes for this paper and the criteria outlined in the assessment booklet.

★ **NB: Practicum 1 has an observational/assistantship focus.** It allows students to observe an occupational therapist in practice. Additionally students can be asked to assist the supervising therapist with specific tasks that are appropriate to the student's level of knowledge and experience.

Assessment and compulsory activities

a. P1 Fieldwork Assessment

The fieldwork educator or clinical educator will assess their student's competence at the end of the two-week placement using the assessment booklet – Practicum 1. This involves reviewing students engagement within the placement, observing the student's interactions with clients and colleagues as well as evaluating their professional attitude, knowledge and skills.

Guidelines have been provided for assisting students and fieldwork educators to identify learning activities that can demonstrate the student's level of performance under each competency (Guidelines for demonstrating competence). Students have access to reflection models used in Year 1.

b. Written Reflection

Students must complete 1-2 written reflections each week, and submit these to the fieldwork educator. The reflections will not be marked, but they should facilitate the student's learning process and relate to the competencies. It is an additional opportunity for students to showcase their skills across the performance indicators. This may contribute to the final assessment grade.

Fieldwork hours

Students are expected to complete 80 fieldwork hours during Practicum 1 (8 hours for Labour Day will be credited). This also includes 4 hours of self-directed study each week to work on their reflections and/or other tasks provided by the fieldwork educator.

Students are responsible for updating their time sheet (see last page in the assessment booklet). The time sheet must be signed by the fieldwork educator at the end of the placement, and returned to AUT with the graded assessment booklet.

First Year BHSc (OT) curriculum content

Year One BHSc (OT) students will have completed six papers prior to commencing placement. Four of these papers are shared papers within the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences (Human Anatomy & Physiology I, Health & Environment OR Māori Health Development & Environment, Psychology and Lifespan, and Knowledge, Enquiry & Communication).

The remaining two papers are specific to occupational therapy:

1. Personal and Environmental Factors in Occupation

This paper examines the dynamic relationship between the occupation, personal factors and the environment.

2. Experiencing Occupation

This paper develops understanding of occupation through experience and reflection. The meaning and characteristics of a range of occupations will be explored.

Student placement preparation

Prior to placement students will complete placement preparation sessions as part of this paper. This will involve lectures and tutorials specifically focused on preparation for placement. Topics include:

- Introduction to the occupational therapy process.
- Theoretical approaches of occupational therapy practice.
- Clinical and non-clinical aspects of the occupational therapist's role.
- Introduction to reflective practice (reflection / supervision) and learning styles.
- Professional practice skills and behaviours, including self-management, observational skills, verbal and written communication.
- Safe Moving and Handling techniques.
- Introduction to safe ethical practice.
- The relationship between learning and the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand competencies for registration as an occupational therapist.
- Debrief following placement.

For more information about course content please refer to the course descriptors found on the AUT Bachelor of Health Science (Occupational Therapy) web page.

What to expect from a Year 1 student?

Students on their first placement are primarily focused on becoming familiar with the dynamics of the fieldwork setting. Year 1 students tend to focus on applying academic knowledge without simultaneously considering environmental factors. This placement has primarily an observational / assistantship function. We expect students to be actively involved in their learning.

Learning opportunities you might encourage could include:

- Observing and subsequently assisting with an initial assessment.
- Observing an assessment (such as COPM), and recording information and observations.
- Drafting a progress note with the fieldwork educator, (it is helpful to provide the student with a set format).
- Getting students to identify any issues clients may have with their ability to participate in occupations (e.g. identifying the personal and environmental factors underlying a client's difficulty with dressing independently).
- Pre-formulating questions and interviewing colleagues about their role (e.g. physiotherapists, nurses, doctors, support workers, teachers, social workers etc.) and comparing and contrasting this to the role of an occupational therapist.
- Working with the questions / steps of the Canadian Practice Process Framework (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013) in the workbook and identifying how these apply in relation to a client.