



COUNCIL FOR THE PROFESSIONS
COMPLEMENTARY TO MEDICINE

Benchmarking document

Occupational Therapy

The Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine is issuing this Benchmarking Document for Occupational Therapy in the performance of its functions as defined by Article 27 of the Health Care Professions Act, Chapter 464 of the Laws of Malta and in terms of Article 28 Health Care Professions Act, Chapter 464 of the Laws of Malta and Subsidiary Legislation 454.16 Professions Complimentary to Medicine (Licence to Practice) Regulations.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Description and Scope of Practice	2
Occupational Description.....	2
Scope of Practice.....	3
Level of Qualification	4
Language Proficiency	5
Evaluation of Application	5
Minimum Curriculum Requirements	6
Practice and Training	8
ANNEXE A	10
Language Proficiency Requirements by The Council for The Professions Complementary to Medicine	10

Introduction

This document outlines Malta's Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine (CPCM) standards of proficiency for occupational therapy. The CPCM regulates on the professional entry level standards for occupational therapy in Malta. These standards are the threshold standards we consider necessary to protect members of the public. They set out and reflect the training, knowledge and practice of occupational therapists to complete their training, so that they are able to apply to register with the occupational therapy register with CPCM.

These standards are adopted by the CPCM to evaluate and assess applications to be registered to practice occupational therapy within the jurisdiction of Malta. They also serve as guidance to the CPCM on how to address substantive differences from these standards.

Description and Scope of Practice

Occupational Description

Occupational therapy is the use of purposeful activity and intervention to achieve functional outcomes. "Achieving functional outcomes" means to maximise the independence and the maintenance of health of any individual whose functions are limited by physical injury or illness, a cognitive impairment, a psychological dysfunction, a mental illness, a developmental or learning disability, or an adverse environmental condition.

Scope of Practice

Occupational therapy services are based on assessment methods, including the use of skilled observation or the administration and interpretation of standardised or non-standardised tests and measurements to identify areas for occupational therapy services.

Occupational therapy services include, but are not limited to, the assessment, treatment and education of, or consultation with, the individual, family or other persons; interventions directed towards developing daily living skills, work readiness or work performance, plays skills or leisure capacities, or enhancing educational performance skills; or providing for the development of sensory-motor, perceptual or neuromuscular functioning, or range of motion, or emotional, motivational, cognitive, or psychosocial components of performance.

Occupational therapy services may require assessment of the need for and use of interventions such as the design, development, adaptation, application or training in the use of assistive technology devices; the design, fabrication, or rehabilitative technology such as selected orthotic, or prosthetic devices; the application of physical agent modalities as an adjunct to or in preparation for purposeful activity; the use of ergonomic principles; the adaptation of environments and processes to enhance functional performance; or the promotion of health and wellbeing

Level of Qualification

The CPCM expects that the threshold entry routes to the Occupational Therapy Register will be a Bachelor's degree with honours in Occupational Therapy (MQF/EQF Level 6 as recognised by MQRIC). It is recommended that the duration of the programme is over a minimum of 4 years. The level for Occupational Therapy is based on what the CPCM believes is needed for individuals who successfully complete the programme to meet all the standards of proficiency.

Any changes that may occur in the curriculum of the Bachelor's Degree in Occupational Therapy under the auspices of the University of Malta should involve all the stake holders. The stake holders include the Faculty of Health Sciences – Occupational Therapy, the Professional Lead - Occupational Therapy, the Malta Association of Occupational Therapists and the CPCM – OT representative. The Bachelor's degree course and curriculum in Occupational Therapy is recognised the World Federation of Occupational since 1994. The said course must meet the standards of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists and is reviewed from time to time to maintain its accreditation with this body.

The applicant needs to:

- Provide a detailed transcript of Theoretical and Practical Training and Studies in hours associated with the Orthoptics Qualification and in relation with the syllabus performed by the accredited institution. This has to be endorsed in the original format by the Institution's Head/Registrar of the University/College.
- Provide the course description, including study unit details.

Language Proficiency

The CPCM requires those applicants who wish to enter the Occupational Therapy register, to provide proof of language proficiency as defined in Annex A.

Communication in Maltese or English is a core professional skill for occupational therapists in Malta. Occupational therapists work directly with patients in all the clinics in Malta thus an operational command of one of the official languages is a must.

Maltese Language

The Maltese Language course is run regularly by the Medical School entitled Medical Maltese.

More details on the Council's level of Proficiency in the English Language can be found at Annexe A at the end of this document.

Evaluation of Application

On evaluation of the application the Council may choose to do one of the following:

- Grant registration;
- Ask for further clarification when required;
- Ask for the applicant to attend an interview;
- Reject the application if the qualification is not adequate and in line with this benchmark; and
- Be asked to carry out a period of supervised practice or undergo an aptitude test.

Minimum Curriculum Requirements

The minimum curriculum standards ensure that the registrants' curriculum on completion of an occupational therapy programme meet the standards of 240 ECTS or 6000 hours of learning and practical placements of a minimum of 4 years for local studies.

These standards are accepted and set as the professional skills and knowledge requires to be fit to practice in Malta and register with CPCM. However, there are countries such as England and Wales which have their undergraduate course of a three-year duration whilst in the US and Canada the entry level programmes in occupational therapy are offered at MSc with a duration of two years.

The curriculum that the applicant followed should include the themes, elements and standards listed in Table 1 below.

General Units	Anatomy
	Physiology and haematology
	Disease Prevention and Control
	Introduction to first aid
	Disability Issues for Health Professional
	Health Promotion and Health Education
	Pharmacology
	Kinesiology
	Pathology
	Psychopathology
	Medical speciality: medical, orthopaedics and paediatrics
	Acute and Sub acute medical care
Psychology	Overview of Psychology
	Developmental Psychology – Child and Adolescent
	Psychology of Learning for health Carers
	Psychology of helping

Table 1: Minimum learned expectations for Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy	Orientation to Occupational Therapy
	Human Occupation Across Lifespan
	Theoretical and conceptual knowledge in Occupational Therapy
	Occupational Therapy Skills and Media
	Occupational performance areas and context
	Occupational Therapy Practice in Geriatrics
	Aspects of Person-Environment Fit in relation to occupational Performance
	Universal Design: Access for all
	Assistive Technology
	Emerging Practice
Psychosocial	Introduction to psychosocial dysfunction
	Conditions in psychosocial dysfunction
	Psychosocial aspects of physical disability
Physical	Introduction to physical dysfunction
	Conditions of Human Physical dysfunction
	Biomechanical Intervention in Upper Limb Rehabilitation
Paediatrics	Advanced Application of Theory in paediatric Practice
Professional Skills	Academic Reading and Writing
	Clinical Skills (physical and psychosocial)
	Professional issues, behaviour and leadership for occupational therapists
	Framing practice through an Occupation –based perspective
Clinical Practicum	1,200 hours of clinical practice covering various physical and psychosocial interventions of all ages

Table 1: Minimum learned expectations for Occupational Therapy

Evidence Based Practice	Research Methods
	Dissertation

Practice and Training

This standard concerns occupational therapy placements referred to as clinically supervised practice in diverse occupational therapy clinical settings. These are an essential and integral part of the programme that must include both children, adult and geriatric placements covering both physical and mental health settings. The clinical training should include exposure to assessment, treatment, interventions and goal setting covering physical and psychosocial aspects in all ages. This should add up to a maximum of 1,200 hours of supervised practice.

Once on the Occupational Therapy Register, one must meet the standards of proficiency which relate to the areas of their profession. When registered one is expected to keep to our standards of conduct, performance and ethics and standards for continuing professional development.

Other CPCM documents to be considered in conjunction with this Benchmarking Document:

1. Codes of Professional and Ethical Conduct

<https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/regcounc/cpcm/Documents/Codes%20of%20Professional%20and%20Ethical%20Conduct%20-%20March%202019.pdf>

2. Code of Practice (Occupational Therapy)

<https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/regcounc/cpcm/Documents/Occupational%20Therapy%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf>

This document has been prepared by the CPCM Occupational Therapy subcommittee in consultation with the Maltese Association of Occupational Therapists, the Occupational Therapy Department, University of Malta as well as the Occupational Therapy Lead Professional – March 2020

ANNEXE A

Language Proficiency Requirements by The Council for The Professions Complementary to Medicine

The Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine requires applicants to meet the Council's level of Proficiency in the English or the Maltese Language.

All professionals seeking registration are requested to present either one of the following:

1. A Maltese language certificate; **OR**
 - (i) An Ordinary Level MATSEC certificate (MQF level 3); OR
<https://myexams.gov.mt/matsec-examinations/>
 - (ii) An Advanced/Intermediate Level MATSEC certificate (MQF level 4); OR
<https://myexams.gov.mt/matsec-examinations/>
 - (iii) A Medical Maltese Proficiency Certificate.
<https://www.um.edu.mt/arts/malti/korsijiet/medicalmaltesecourse>
2. The applicant can provide evidence that his/her professional qualification(s) (on the basis of which he/she is applying for registration) was/were acquired through the medium of English or Maltese and that practice placements in that/those qualification(s) were undertaken and supervised through the medium of English or Maltese; **OR**

3. The applicant can provide evidence that s/he has **lived in and practised** his/her profession through the medium of English or Maltese in a country that has English or Maltese recognised as the official language of that country for a period of **not less than 2 years in the past five-year period; OR**
4. Any other proof of English or Maltese language Proficiency.

Additionally, should the applicant choose to opt for other forms of proving language proficiency, the applicant can opt for either one of the following Secure English Language Tests.

Should the applicant opt for this, the below is the list of Examining Boards recognized by the Council and the minimum required standards accepted by the Council in terms of the table below (or equivalent);

Examining Board	TOEFL Internet-Based (iBT)	IELTS (Academic)	Cambridge	Occupational English Test (OET)
Required Level	95	6.5	Advanced Certificate	B
Remarks	A writing score of at least 24 is required.	Required with a minimum of 6.0 in all elements.	A pass at a grade C or better is required.	A grade B or better is required in all components.

Any other Secure English Language Tests which are equivalent to those mentioned in the table above will also be considered.