

1000 hours of practice education - Informed by tradition or evidence?

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WFOT Minimum Standards for the Education of Occupational Therapists Revised 2016.

Practice education is central to the educational process. It contains curriculum content and is an educational method.

- Sufficient hours to ensure integration of theory to practice
- Minimum of 1000 hours implementing an occupational therapy process
- Guided by learning objectives and supervised by an occupational therapist



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Historical Context



<https://i.pinimg.com/236x/b3/b6/6e/b3b66e2b5f7c6cad2f69c24bb9bec0b5--occupational-therapy-natasha-okeeffe.jpg>

1958 Standards for Establishing Education Programmes

(WFOT 1958, p55-65)

- 3.1 Each student should have a minimum of 1000 hours supervised experience working with patients in occupational therapy service (based on 35 hours per week for 30 weeks)
- 3.2 At least 50% of clinical practice should be full-time
- 3.8 Recommended ratio of supervisor to student is 1:1

Document amended: 1963, 1966, 1971, 1985, 1990, 1993

Document revised: 2002, 2016

What is the Evidence for the 1000 hours requirement?

Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy



1000 fieldwork hours: Analysis of multi-site evidence

Holmes, Jeffrey D; Bossers, Ann M; Polatajko, Helene J; Drynan, Donna P; Gallagher, MaryBeth; et al. **The Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy**; **Ottawa** Vol. 77, Iss. 3, (Jun 2010): 135-43.

Australian Occupational Therapy
Journal



Australian Occupational Therapy Journal (2017) 64, 159–169

doi: 10.1111/1440-1630.12337

Research Article

Practice education: A snapshot from Australian university programmes

Louise Gustafsson,¹ Ted Brown,² Carol McKinstry³ and Anne-Maree Caine¹

Methods

Aim of Study:

To explore opinion on the rationale, background, benefits and challenges of the 1000 hours requirement

Method:

Face to face semi-structured interviews with 11 international education experts using internet-based communication

Recruitment:

Snowballing using OT social media sites, WFOT and National roles, and publications history

Ethical Approval:

University of Worcester Human Ethics Committee

Results

11 international education academics with experience of curriculum design and accreditation processes

Netherlands, USA, UK, Bulgaria, Tunisia, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Croatia, Portugal, Spain



What we were told:

For me this number of hours is enough. We don't get the opportunities to work in all the areas and we focus on some of them. (P1)

The 1000 hours has been taken for granted. It is good to question this, because it is taken for granted. (P6)

I am not sure whether we benefit from having a specific standard or whether we have a range of hours (P11)

students spend too many hours in hospitals at the moment and not in all of the other places that OTs are working. But no I don't have a sense that it is too much. (P4)

What we were told:

If the country were to decide for itself probably we would get a smaller number. (P1)

whenever we dropped clinical hours there were concerns from our clinical partners to justify that (P2)

In competencies you can express very well that they need to demonstrate, so it is not necessary the 1000 hours (P3)

I think we need some kind of flexibility but with evidence (P5)

Conclusion – the conversation needs to continue

- Hours is a nominal figure and we know that time doesn't equate to competence
- In the next revision of the WFOT minimum standards we hope the 1000 hours will be reconsidered in light of a growing evidence base on graduate competence.

Minimum Standards for the
Education of Occupational
Therapists
Revised 2016



WFOT World Federation of
Occupational Therapists

References

Gustafsson, L. Brown, T, McKinstry C, Caine A (2017). Practice education: A snapshot from Australian university programmes. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 64 (2), 159–169, doi.org/10.1111/1440-1630.12337

Holmes, J. D., Bossers, A. M., Polatajko, H. J., Drynan, D. P., Gallagher, M. B., O'Sullivan, C. M., ..., Denney, J. L. (2010). 1000 fieldwork hours: Analysis of multi-site evidence. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 77, 135-143. doi: 10.2182/cjot.2010.77.3.2

WFOT (2016) Minimum Standards for the Education of Occupational Therapists

WFOT (1958) Establishment of a programme for the education of Occupational Therapists.



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