**Occupational Therapists in Occupational Health**

**The right person for the job is important, but the right job description is essential**

Occupational therapists can make a significant contribution within occupational health services. The Specialist Section - Work have reviewed many job descriptions and the list below provides a range of the skills occupational therapists can bring, to serve as a ‘pick and mix’ selection, to assist in the creation of job descriptions for occupational therapists in occupational health settings, which can be tailored to fit the demands of the role required and compose bespoke job descriptions for specific settings/services.

Occupational therapists have the unique ability to be able to break down an activity/job into its fundamental components that are required to perform the activity e.g. physical - gross motor and fine motor skills, cognition, perception, sensory, psychological/ work behaviour, motivation etc.

Occupational therapists are highly skilled health care professionals who are the only health care profession dual trained comprehensively at an undergraduate level in both physical and psychological/mental health conditions. This core occupational therapy skill allows the occupational therapist to be able to ascertain the real narrative of the work performance and understanding of the environmental demands, ensuring that the correct intervention is implemented to keep the employee in work or to return to work.

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| **Job Purpose:** | * Assist in the provision of an occupational health service to meet employees’ needs.
* Provide professional services and advice to management and employees on all matters relating to occupational health, particularly the prevention of illness and the maintenance and improvement of health and wellbeing.
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| **Key Responsibilities, Tasks:** | * Assess the employee holistically i.e. Physical and mental health capabilities alongside the work environment and role. To use standardised and non-standardised specialist clinical assessment in accordance with employees’ physical and psychological conditions to identify any issues that are affecting workplace performance and ensuring appropriate pathways of intervention are recommended.
* Undertake workplace assessment of employees including those with diverse or complex presentations of physical health and/or psychological health using advanced clinical reasoning skills and ergonomic/environmental and psychosocial assessment techniques to determine implications upon work performance and productivity.
* Identify and review employee’s job demands.
* Prepare written reports to review fitness for work, of the match between the individual’s abilities and the job role/tasks.
* Providing advice and recommendations, such as reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 including return to work plans, to support the employee whilst in work or returning to work.
* Contribute to the development, promotion, monitoring and review of policies and initiatives for managing health at work.
* Work collaboratively with Human Resources services, Senior Management and Line Managers, Health and Safety / Facilities Teams and other OH services, to provide a quality service that meets the needs of Referrers and Employees.
* Demonstrate a high level of confidence and knowledge in the field of work when attend meetings as requested/invited, working with Line managers, HR advisors and Occupational Health staff, advising and treating as required.
* Ensure timely and effective communication with employees, Managers, Occupational Health, Human Resources and any other professionals involved in an employee’s care, with appropriate consent.
* Requirement to work in different locations, settings as applicable, including telephone assessments and face to face assessments, including input at the workplace location.
* Attend any other meetings relevant to the delivery of an effective Occupational Health Service.
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| **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:** | * Implement evidence based assessment and intervention with regards to physical, cognitive, perceptual, psychological, sensory and social functioning.
* Evaluate recommendations according to health care needs and job role / performance competencies or requirements using a comprehensive range of intervention options.
* Functional (Worksite) Assessments – e.g. suggesting alternative methods / adjusted duties.
* Upper limb assessment, adjustments.
* Mental Health Assessment, adjustments.
* Sensory Assessments, adjustments.
* Seating and posture analysis, including wheelchairs.
* Ergonomic Assessments, adjustments, driving/office/factory/home.
* Equipment/tool recommendations and supplier info.
* Environmental Analysis e.g. accessibility and comfort factors.
* Prevention/Risk Assessments e.g. DSE Workstations, stress risk assessments, manual handling risk assessments, flexible working.
* Complex problem solving and prioritisation of tasks experience.
* Demonstrate high level written and spoken communication skills with individuals especially where the content may be sensitive or distressing.
* Utilise the AHP Health and Work Report format where applicable.
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| **Experience and Qualifications** | * B.Sc. Degree in Occupational Therapy or equivalent, approved by the HCPC. The undergraduate degree includes both theoretical and practical training such as placements within NHS/Statutory Services.
* Registration with the regulating body, the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC).
* Demonstrate clinical experience in mental health and/or physical health.
* Adhere to professional standards for Occupational Therapy Practice, as detailed by the HCPC and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT), legal and professional responsibilities.
* Good understanding of relevant consent and confidentiality legislation/GDPR.
* Understanding of current occupational health issues and an ability to keep abreast of current initiatives and best practice.
* Working understanding of relevant employment law in an occupational health context e.g. Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustment application.
* Analysis of Occupational performance/participation, with health and medical aspects. (Biopsychosocial and environmental factors (Physical, sensory/communication/interaction, cognitive/executive function, neuro- diversity and mental health)
* Confident with assessing activity analysis/job demand analysis (JDA) physical/cognitive/psychological aspects of a role.
* Multi-disciplinary professional team working experience.
* Ability to manage a case load, whether a larger caseload or smaller but more complex cases.
* Ability to write evidence based reports and advice around reasonable adjustments, incl. return to work plans, including use of the Allied Health Professional (AHP) Health and Work Report where applicable.
* Ability to tailor advice, both verbal and written, to the target audience, e.g. GPs, employers/ managers, HR, Insurance groups etc.
* Sensitivity to a diverse range of clients and evidence of responding to their different needs
* Able to provide a service to a diverse range of people to promote good relations and equality.
* Experience of developing positive relationships with relevant stakeholders (managers, unions, employees etc.)
* Good understanding of equality issues and how they affect the workplace.
* Experience of handling conflict and managing sensitive issues to achieve positive outcomes.
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| **Desirable skills, experience and qualifications** | * Master’s level modules or equivalent – ergonomics, workplace behaviour, workforce stress, vocational rehabilitation, disability management etc.
* Member of Specialist Section Work as part of the Royal College of Occupational Therapy (RCOT).
* Member of Society of Occupational Medicine (SOM), Chartered Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors (CIEHF) and the Vocational Rehabilitation Association (VRA). Case Management Society UK (CMSUK), as applicable.
* Significant experience within an occupational health setting.
* Standardised physical assessment; Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE) trained, incl. effort and reliability testing, e.g. Matheson System, and standardised tests availability e.g. for individuals in employment, considering alternative employment or for pre-employment screening assessments.
* Standardised Cognitive assessment, including Neuro-psychological, Neuro-diversity tools.
* Post graduate training/experience in other work related areas, such as Ergonomics, Job Demand Analysis etc.
* Post graduate training/experience in condition or rehabilitation management, such as pain, fatigue, stress/anxiety management, neuro-rehabilitation and/or other long term conditions and musculo-skeletal issues including upper limb conditions.
* Health and wellbeing prevention and promotion in the workplace knowledge.
* Complex case management experience.
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**Royal College of Occupational Therapists Specialist Section – Work (RCOT SS Work):**

[https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/specialist-sections/work-rcot-ss or](https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/specialist-sections/work-rcot-ss) rcotsswork@gmail.com

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