

Information for stakeholders involved in a re-/accreditation event

Thank you for agreeing to being part of a re-/accreditation event with the Royal College of Occupational Therapists. Whatever your role in the planned event, we hope that you find it informative, constructive and a useful opportunity for you to help shape the next generation of occupational therapists.

What is the role of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists?

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT), as the sole professional body for the profession in the United Kingdom (UK), supports, develops and protects the UK domain knowledge. RCOT's Learning and development standards for pre-registration education describe the profession's expectations that education providers must meet when delivering an occupational therapy pre-registration programme in the UK. The Standards serve to support education providers to design and deliver quality occupational therapy pre-registration programmes within the UK. RCOT's accreditation process uses the Learning and development standards for pre-registration education (2019) to assess whether a pre-registration programme, and the education provider that delivers that programme, provides learners with the knowledge, skills and professional attributes necessary to competently and ethically meet the occupational needs of the community. The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) sets the minimum standards for occupational therapy practice internationally (WFOT 2016) and as an organisational member of WFOT, RCOT holds delegated authority to confer WFOT approval.

RCOT requirements and expectations at an accreditation event

Each individual pre-registration programme is accredited for a maximum of 5 years. Towards the end of each 5-year period, RCOT will request a re-accreditation event is organised by the Programme Team and host education provider in order to conduct a full review and evaluation of the programme.

The education provider supports the Accreditation event by allocating an independent Chair to facilitate the discussions. The role of the Chair includes ensuring everyone represented has an equal opportunity to raise questions and contribute to the discussion, to provide guidance on education provider processes, procedures, rules and regulations and to keep to the planned agenda. The Chair should be independent of the pre-registration programme and should have some experience of the validation and approval processes of professionally regulated programmes. RCOT does not require a secretary to be present or formal minutes of meetings to be provided following the Accreditation Visit.

At an accreditation event, RCOT's Accreditation Panel is required to meet with the following stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder groups required to participate in Accreditation Visit	
Representatives of other	If HCPC and/or the education provider is also

approving organisations	approving or validating the pre-registration programme during the same visit, a pre-meeting will be required to agree on agenda items and identify shared issues for discussion.
Pre-registration programme team	To discuss the pre-registration programme in depth, including the changes being implemented, rationale, philosophy, resources, programme leadership and management. Discussions with the programme team should ideally occur without the presence of any senior management staff, to ensure an environment of open disclosure.
Senior management	To discuss the viability of the pre-registration programme, the support provided, the staffing and resource management, the workload-planning models and overarching educational methodologies e.g. interprofessional learning and online learning.
Existing learners (or learners from similar existing programmes if the education provider is seeking Accreditation for a new pre-registration programme)	To discuss the learner experience at all stages including admissions, practice and university-based studies and engagement in quality mechanisms. Discussions with Learners should occur without the presence of any staff from the education provider including the Chair.
Practice partners including practice-based learning providers and practice educators	To discuss the working relationship with the pre-registration programme team, roles and responsibilities, support provided by the education provider, employment opportunities and involvement in the programme development. Discussions with practice-based learning providers should occur without the presence of any staff from the education provider including the Chair.
Employers and work-based mentors for apprenticeship pre-registration programmes	To discuss with employers the commitment to the pre-registration programme. To discuss with work-based mentors the working relationship with the pre-registration programme team, roles and responsibilities, support provided by the programme team and employer, and involvement in the programme development.
People who access occupational therapy services	To discuss their involvement in the development and implementation of the pre-registration programme.

At the end of the Accreditation event, the RCOT Accreditation Panel will usually provide verbal feedback to the pre-registration programme team on the likely outcome of the Accreditation Process. The formal outcome will be sent in writing to the education provider within 1 week of the

visit.

Potential outcomes include:

- Accreditation to be awarded, subject to conditions and/or recommendations;
- deferred Accreditation.

The Accreditation Panel values a collegiate and supportive approach to each Accreditation Visit and prioritises the opportunity to provide commendations.

Commendations	Conditions	Recommendations
Commendations are awarded to recognise a particular area of best practice that is considered exemplary.	A condition is defined as an obligation that must be met before the pre-registration programme can be Accredited. A condition is set where a standard or criterion from RCOT's Learning and development standards for pre-registration education has not been met or there is insufficient evidence of it being met.	A recommendation is defined as professional or academic advice that is intended to stimulate debate in order to encourage further enhancements to a pre-registration programme. The education provider is obligated to respond to the recommendation and to justify its response; however, it is not obliged to implement the advice. Recommendations are normally offered when it is felt that a particular standard or criterion from RCOT's Learning and development standards for pre-registration education has been met at, or just above, the threshold level.

Where Accreditation is granted subject to conditions, the Accreditation Panel and the pre-registration programme team will come to an agreement on a date by which the conditions must be met.