

# Becoming a practice educator: contacting my local education provider

## Reflective Scenario

### About this learning resource

This reflective scenario is designed to help you explore becoming a practice educator. It takes you through a structured process that supports you to clarify your thoughts, deepen your understanding and plan your next steps.

This resource relates to Principle 1 of the [AHP principles of practice-based learning](#) (CSP 2023):

**Practice-based learning opportunities are co-produced**

This resource supports the Facilitation of Learning pillar of our [Career Development Framework](#). It is for occupational therapists working at all career levels.

You can use this resource in a way that suits you. You might work through it on your own, use it in supervision or explore it as part of a group. You could also take a blended approach – starting with your own reflection and then coming together to share ideas and learn from others.

As you work through the reflective scenario, remember there are no right or wrong answers. The aim is to support you to reflect, learn and apply your learning in your own professional context. For this reason, we haven't provided set answers.

Take your time. You don't need to complete everything in one go, and you may find it helpful to revisit sections more than once. Work at a pace that supports your learning.



**Developed with Kay Bolton, Director of Clinical Education; Cygnet**

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## Scenario

You are an occupational therapist who has not facilitated practice-based learning for pre-registration students and apprentices before. At a recent meeting one of your colleagues speaks enthusiastically about taking their first learner and how valuable the experience was.

You decide you would like to try being a practice educator. You ask yourself "Where do I start?"

## Initial thoughts

**Capture your initial thoughts on this scenario. What is your first reaction? Do you have ideas about what you should do? Remember, there are no right or wrong answers, just record what occurs to you.**

## Reflective questions

Consider the following questions and record your answers.

Refer to the resources listed at the end of the document if you need to.

You might want to come back to these questions more than once before going on to the next stage.

Remember that the list is not exhaustive.

### Preliminary questions

Does your organisation already support pre-registration learners?

If your answer is no:

- Who are my local occupational therapy education providers?
- Who, at these universities are my points of contact for practice-based learning?

If your answer is yes:

- Who is the placement co-ordinator/university link for occupational therapy learners within my organisation?
- Has an audit, learning agreement and contract been completed with the education provider for my place of work? If so, is it up to date?

Continued...

### Further questions

1. Who in my team or the organisation can support me to offer practice-based learning?
2. What training and experience do I need to facilitate a quality practice-based learning experience, and how will I access this?
3. What learning opportunities can I provide for a pre-registration learner?
4. What placement supervision models would be most suitable to facilitate the opportunities I can offer?
5. How can our team create a positive, equitable and inclusive learning environment for a learner?
6. How much time do I need to factor into my working week to support a learner?
7. What resources will I need? (e.g. rooms/space, learner information pack, mobile phone, keys, log in, feedback form)
8. What policies and procedures does the learner need to know?
9. What risk issues does the learner need to be aware of?

### My answers

### Revisiting your initial thoughts

**Now look at your initial response in relation to your answers to the reflective questions.  
What gaps have you identified?  
Have your thoughts changed on what you feel are the priorities?  
What have you learned through reflection about your practice?**

## Action planning

**What are your next steps?**

## Plan your learning

**As a result of your reflection, have you identified any knowledge gaps? How will you go on to develop your knowledge and skills? When will you do it? What support will you need?**

**See end pages for suggestions on further information and support.**

**Use this section if you have further thoughts/actions or to take discussion notes.**

## Review your learning

Set a date when you will come back to this resource and think about the impact it has had on your practice.

Set enough time to allow you to engage in any further learning you have identified that you want to take, and to give you time to apply your reflections into your practice.

Add this learning to your [CPD portfolio](#).

**Date that I will review my learning:**

**Further learning I engaged in to deepen my skills and knowledge on this professional topic:**

**Situations and ways in which I have applied my learning in practice:**

## Further information and support

### Sources of support

Link up with your local education provider. The Programme Lead or Practice Placement You will be supported by the university to understand the learning needs of their pre-registration students and apprentices, and how your opportunity can meet programme requirements.

Our [website](#) provides information about where programmes are offered. If you are unsure which education provider(s) to contact please email [hello@rcot.co.uk](mailto:hello@rcot.co.uk) and we will be able to put you in touch.

Our [practice-based learning pages](#) support you to embed the AHP principles of practice-based learning into your placement offer.

## Further information:

Barnes-Brown V (2025) Blended learning placements: a case study of an innovative occupational therapy practice placement model. [Online] *Journal of Practice Teaching and Learning*, 2025, 1-9(2025). doi: 10.3828/dap.2025.7 Accessed on 08.07.26.

College of Occupational Therapists (2015) *Supervision: guidance for occupational therapists and their managers*. London: COT. Available at: <https://www.rcot.co.uk/explore-resources/standards-guidelines/supervision> Accessed on 08.07.26.

Deaves A, Matson R, Rushe E, Edwards D, Trainor K, Seddon J (2024) Exploring alternative practice placement models in occupational therapy and physiotherapy: perspectives and experiences of learners and practice educators: a qualitative systematic review. [Online] *BMC Medical Education*, 24, 1325(2024). doi: 10.1186/s12909-024-06323-z Accessed on 08.07.26.

Fitzgerald M, Antich B, Grimwood E (2025) Increasing clinical placements for occupational therapy in a social services setting: Innovations for practice. [Online] *The Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice*, 23(3), Article 26. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/ijahsp/vol23/iss3/26/> Accessed on 08.07.26.

Health and Care Professions Council (2023) Standards of proficiency for occupational therapists. London: HCPC. Available at: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/occupational-therapists/> Accessed on 08.07.26.

NHS Education for Scotland (2024) AHP practice education. Scotland: NES. Available at: <https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/our-work/ahp-practice-education/> Accessed on 08.07.26.

NHS England (2026) Elearning for healthcare *Supporting AHP students*. London: NHSE. Available at: [https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/Catalogue/Index?HierarchyId=0\\_36974&programmId=36974](https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/Catalogue/Index?HierarchyId=0_36974&programmId=36974) Accessed on 08.07.26.

Royal College of Occupational Therapists (2026) *Learning and development standards for pre-registration education: revised edition 2026*. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists. Available at: <https://www.rcot.co.uk/explore-resources/standards-guidelines/learning-development-standards> Accessed on 08.07.26.

Royal College of Occupational Therapists (In press) *Professional standards of practice, conduct and ethics for occupational therapy*. London: RCOT

Royal College of Occupational Therapists (2021) *Career development framework: guiding principles for occupational therapy*. London: RCOT. Available at: <https://www.rcot.co.uk/explore-resources/rcot-publications/career-development> Accessed on 08.07.26.

Royal College of Occupational Therapists (2026) *Early career principles and standards for occupational therapists*. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists. Available at: <https://www.rcot.co.uk/explore-resources/standards-guidelines/early-career-principles-and-standards-occupational-therapists> Accessed on 08.07.26.