The Purpose
The College of Occupational Therapists (COT) has devised this Code of Continuing Professional Development to support the occupational therapy workforce by setting out clear expectations for all BAOT (British Association of Occupational Therapists) members’ professional development.

It is aligned with, and complementary to, Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) requirements for registrants, and does not replace the regulatory requirements of HCPC for professional development and adherence to their standards for continuing professional development (HCPC 2012).

The Code places responsibility upon all occupational therapy personnel to extend their professional development beyond regulatory requirements in order to ensure a fulfilling career journey that sustains the profession in changing contexts and provides the best outcomes for service users.

The Code should be interpreted by individual members to reflect their specific practice environment and level of expertise.
The Code

i. You are personally responsible for ensuring that you continue to learn, develop and enhance your professional skills and practice abilities as an occupational therapy professional and embed them in your practice.

ii. Development activities will ensure that, at a minimum, you are able to practise in a safe and reliable manner, centred around your service user/s and their occupational engagement.

iii. Your critical reflective thinking and development will take account of:
   a. Your personal values beliefs and attitudes.
   b. Your professional capability.
   c. Your practice context.
   d. Relevant current and future policy.

iv. Learning and development opportunities occur in both professional and personal areas of life and may be formal or informal. These experiences can support and evidence professional development if considered through a critically reflective approach and applied to occupational therapy practice. You will be able to demonstrate how you turn every suitable experience into a learning opportunity.

v. Critical reflective thinking underpins the bringing together of different ideas and application of all professional development activities to the benefit of your service user/s, your service and yourself. You will be able to demonstrate how you have developed your critically reflective thinking skills throughout your professional journey.

vi. You will undertake systematic formal reflection; for example, through annual appraisal and regular supervision, on your:
   a. Current professional skills and practice abilities as an occupational therapy professional.
   b. Current context of practice and service needs.
   c. Personal beliefs and values as they relate to your professional life.
   This appraisal (or systematic formal reflection) will be informed, where possible, by service user and colleague feedback and should form the baseline for your professional development strategy and plan.

vii. You will establish, maintain and actively pursue a professional development strategy that considers your current role, supports your future career path and gives direction to your learning. A plan to fulfil this strategy will be identified to ensure all the development opportunities that you undertake have purpose and meaning to you.

viii. As applicable to your professional role you will be able to demonstrate how your professional development plan positively impacts on:
   a. The experience of service users.
   b. The quality of services provided now and in the future.
   c. Your professional identity as an occupational therapy practitioner.

ix. Your professional development activities will work to support organisational needs and be shared with relevant others, including fellow occupational therapists, associate members and other professionals.

Health and Care Professions Council (2012) Continuing professional development and your registration. London: HCPC.