ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

2012 (July 2016 revision)

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT & PHYSIOTHERAPIST ASSISTANT

EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

PEAC-AEPC

CAOT · ACE

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INTRODUCTION

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT & PHYSIOTHERAPIST ASSISTANT EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

The Occupational Therapist Assistant and Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP) is a joint initiative of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) and Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC). CAOT and PEAC are independently incorporated under federal law. The mission of the CAOT is to advance excellence in occupational therapy and it is the sole accrediting agency in Canada with the mandate for accreditation of occupational therapist educational programs. The mission of PEAC is to ensure the quality of physiotherapy education in Canada through accreditation. CAOT and PEAC are committed partners in the development and management of the OTA & PTA EAP.

OTA & PTA EAP PURPOSE AND GOALS

The Occupational Therapist Assistant & Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program's purpose is to optimize the contribution of OTAs & PTAs to the health and wellness of Canadians through the advancement of quality education.

The program has four strategic goals:

1. OTA & PTA education programs are prepared for the accreditation process.
2. Accreditation of OTA & PTA education programs in privately and publicly funded institutions.
3. Widespread understanding of the role of program accreditation to optimize the contribution of OTA & PTAs to the health and wellness of Canadians.
4. A sustainable and effective OTA & PTA EAP.

OTA & PTA EAP VALUES

In its operations, the OTA & PTA EAP adheres to the Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada (AAAC) Guidelines for Good Practice and believes in:

Collaboration: authentically engage key stakeholders
- Engage national stakeholders in **collaborative development** of standards
- Collaborate in **constructive conflict resolution** when necessary

- Facilitate a platform of **open discussion, respectful dialogue, consensus building, and collective support for decisions**

Respect: demonstrate inclusivity and value differences and diversity at individual, program and societal levels

- Support **diversity** in Canadian society through the lens of gender, language, culture, ethnicity, geography, and religion
- Collaborate in **constructive conflict resolution** when necessary

Quality: foster continuous quality improvement and excellence

- Foster **self-reflection** and growth within the OTA & PTA profession
- Embrace **critical reflection** of its practices and policies
- **Pilot** new standards and changes, and **communicate** the results clearly and in a timely fashion
- Model **flexibility** by adapting processes and standards to changing times while upholding quality in education
- Support the **right to quality** education
- Recognize programs for **innovation** within the framework of national standards

Fairness: apply standards, policies and processes consistently and objectively at all times

- Allow opportunities for **remediation and improvement**
- Ensure **consistency** in decision making

Accountability: demonstrate responsible decision-making and resource management

- Perform its business always in an **ethical manner** that generates **trust**
- Demonstrate **honesty** in all of its dealings
- Uphold the **highest confidentiality** in its practices and processes
- Conduct business in a **fiscally responsible and accountable** manner
- Model **flexibility** by adapting processes and standards to changing times while upholding quality in education
- Offer an **appeal process** that is fair, timely and objective

Transparency: inspire confidence through openness, communication and integrity

- Create **user-friendly** and helpful written documents and resources
- Communicate **clearly and respectfully** in all written documents and verbal encounters

- Ensure **wide and transparent distribution** of publically available materials related to the accreditation process

ACCREDITATION OVERVIEW

Accreditation is both a process and a condition related to assuring the quality of education programs. The process involves an integrated system of continuous assessment, evaluation, and improvement to comply with specified standards. The condition or state of being accredited provides a credential for the educational institution, students, and the public, affirming that a program has accepted and is fulfilling its commitment to educational quality[1]. The four main functions of accreditation are to:

1. Establish standards, criteria, policies and procedures for the evaluation of occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education programs;

2. Conduct assessments that encourage institutions to maintain and improve their programs;

3. Determine compliance with established criteria for accreditation; and

4. Provide ongoing consultation to occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education programs.

Accreditation of Canadian occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education programs is supported by several professional groups: 1) Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC), the accreditation agency for Canadian Physiotherapy education programs; 2) the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT), the accreditation agency for Canadian Occupational Therapist education programs; and 3) academic programs, through the Canadian Occupational Therapist Assistant & Physiotherapist Assistant Educators Council (COPEC). These founding organizations have the following roles:

CAOT and PEAC jointly:
- Developed and now manage the OTA & PTA EAP, collaborating with COPEC and other stakeholders as required.
- Recruited Steering Committee members during development of the program.
- Facilitated development of the pilot Accreditation Standards.
- Approve revisions to the Accreditation Standards.
- Developed the pilot Policies and Procedures for the operation of the OTA & PTA EAP.
- Approve revisions to the Policies.

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[1] Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (1993). Chicago, IL.

COPEC:

- Requested initiation of the accreditation program.

- Is the recipient of the accreditation process.

- Funds the program through annual accreditation fees (non COPEC member education programs also pay annual accreditation fees to the OTA & PTA EAP).

CAOT, PEAC and COPEC jointly:

- Provide membership to the Peer Review Teams for Accreditation reviews.

- Provide membership to the Joint Accreditation Committee and collaborate through this Committee to:

  - review and revise Accreditation Standards;

  - review accreditation reports and make accreditation award recommendations/ decisions; and

  - review and revise policies and procedures related to the OTA & PTA EAP.

PEAC:

- Is responsible for administering the accreditation program.

Standards and guidelines are developed and maintained by these three groups and the OTA & PTA EAP through the Joint Accreditation Committee to ensure the competency of entry-level practitioners. Guiding documents and processes may include:

- Accreditation Standards for Physiotherapy Education Programs in Canada (PEAC, 2010)[2]

- CAOT Academic Accreditation Standards (CAOT, 2011)[3]

- Essential Competency Profile for physiotherapist assistants in Canada (NPAG, 2012)[4] and

- Practice Profile for Support Personnel in Occupational Therapy (CAOT, 2009)[5]

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[2] Available on the PEAC website
[3] Available on the CAOT website
[4] Available on the NPAG website
[5] Available on the CAOT website

STANDARDS FRAMEWORK

The framework for the OTA & PTA EAP Accreditation Standards is based on the "5 + 1" model described by the Task Force on Accreditation of Health Professions Education.[6] This model uses five standards considered common to accreditation of professional education programs and requires that all programs:

- collaborate with their practice communities and the public to prepare a workforce that can respond to and meet community needs;

- provide appropriate, ongoing faculty development and evaluation;

- regularly assess the competencies and achievements of students and graduates;

- maintain an effective process of continuous self-assessment, planning, and improvement; and

- communicate information and accurately represent themselves to the public to ensure accountability and consumer choice.

An additional standard, the "+1" component of the model, permits accreditation programs to develop a standard specific to the profession.

The first five standards and criteria included in the "5+1" model were adapted for Canadian occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education programs through an iterative process consisting of multi-stakeholder input using focus groups and an electronic survey, and guided by the Standards Development Working Group. These five standards were considered common to both occupational therapist assistants and physiotherapist assistants. The "+1" component, or the profession-specific standard of the model, was based on the established occupational therapist assistant (support personnel) and physiotherapist assistant entry-level competencies. Overall, the OTA & PTA EAP standards and criteria are intended to focus on outcomes as the means of validating a program's activities and guiding and improving efforts towards the achievement of its mission and goals.

STANDARDS DOCUMENT

The standards document includes five standards common to both occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant accreditation standards, along with the evaluative criteria and examples of evidence used by the OTA & PTA EAP, PEAC and CAOT to determine the accreditation status of occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant entry-level education programs. Standard 6 (the "=1" component) is divided into Standard 6 OTA, based on the OTA competency profile (*Practice Profile for Support Personnel in Occupational Therapy (2009)),* and Standard 6 PTA, based on the PTA competency profile (*Essential Competency Profile for Physiotherapist Assistants in Canada (2012)*).

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[6] Gelmon, S., O'Neil, E., Kimmey, J., and the Task Force on Accreditation of Health Professions Education. (1999). Strategies for Change and Improvement: The Report of the Task Force on Accreditation of Health Professions Education. San Francisco: Center for the Health Professions, University of California at San Francisco.

Each standard is a broad statement outlining an overall expectation of the education program. The criteria describe ways in which the program can achieve compliance with the standard. The standards document is intentionally not directive or prescriptive, allowing for program diversity, autonomy, and innovation. The criteria are intended to provide a broad interpretation of a standard. The examples of evidence are not intended to be exhaustive.

In interpreting the standards, it should be noted that:

- A document or other source of evidence may be listed in relation to more than one criterion

- Words that are included in the Glossary at the end of the document are indicated by a 'G' in superscript font, for example, program^G.

The standards and related criteria must reflect the current requirements of both education and professional practice environments. Therefore, the standards will be reviewed on a regular basis, with input from all stakeholders in the accreditation process for the occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education programs.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This common resource document aims to provide a shared and full understanding of the accreditation[G] standards and evaluative criteria of the Occupational Therapist Assistant and Occupational Therapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP).

The document is intended for all users of the accreditation standards including:

- Education programs[G] working on self-study documents, program development, and evaluation;

- OTA & PTA EAP Peer Review Team members and Joint Accreditation Committee members who interpret and apply the accreditation standards; and

- Consumers of education programs (e.g., students) and other stakeholders in accreditation (e.g., regulators, government, the public) who want to better understand the educational standards for occupational therapist assistant physiotherapist assistant education programs.

Information provided about each of the OTA & PTA EA Standards includes:

- **Criteria,** which are used in the interpretation of the standards;

- **Examples of Evidence**[G] that education programs can provide to demonstrate compliance with the criteria in the Self-Study Report, the Report appendices, or on-site during the accreditation review; and

- **Explanatory Notes,** which provide additional information such as rationale and linkages between the standards, criteria, and evidence. Education programs can use these notes as a guide for development of the Self-Study Report.

Standard 1

The Educational Program and its Environment

Accreditation documentation must explicitly describe and include evidence that:
The education program has adequate^G resources and works closely with the educational institution, the practice community, and the public to identify changing health needs and prepare a workforce that can respond to and meet community assets and needs.

Criterion

1.1   CORE

The educational program is situated in an institution authorized^G under applicable law to provide postsecondary education in Canada.

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate compliance with the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Identifying the provincial legislation, ministry or other agency that grants the educational institution the right to provide postsecondary education.
- Describing the processes required by the educational program to maintain its status within the institution.

Examples of Evidence
May include but not limited to:
- Identify the agency which grants the educational institution the authority to provide postsecondary education.
- Provide examples of official publications or documents which verify the granting of this authority.
- Identify the certificate/diploma granted by the educational institution.

1.2   The program's vision, mission, goals and philosophy reflect expectations of the educational institution, the professions and the public.

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- The program's written and published vision, mission, and goals are:
  a. compatible and aligned with the mission of the educational institution in which the program is offered, and
  b. used as the basis for development of the curriculum^G.

- The program maintains positive collaborative relationships with professional associations, the practice community and regulatory bodies, as appropriate (e.g., through participation on committees or in other activities that are important to the professions).

Examples of Evidence
May include but not limited to:
- Documents describing the vision, mission, goals/objectives of the educational institution and the program.
- Description of the program's relationships with professional associations, regulators, and the practice community.

1.3 **The program has official standing within the institutional structure and is represented on appropriate institutional committees where decisions are made on admission, curriculum, budget and promotion.**

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- The appearance of the program on official organizational charts is similar in manner to other professional programs.
- A description of the committee structure (i.e.: mandate, processes, membership) on which the program has representation.

Examples of Evidence
May include but not limited to:
- A copy of the relevant section of the institution calendar describing the program status.
- A copy of the institution organizational chart.
- A list and description of the committees where the program is represented for decisions on admission, curriculum, budget and promotion.

1.4 **CORE**
The program lead^G is a registered occupational therapist or physiotherapist who has the ability to provide leadership for the faculty^G, staff, and students and management of the program.

1.4.1 **The program lead has adequate authority and resources to administer the program.**

NOTE: **for single discipline programs, the program lead must be of the same discipline as the program.**

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Documents and information that demonstrate the appropriate qualifications, leadership and positive outcomes of the program lead with respect to:
  a. program planning; curriculum content and evaluation;
  b. facilitating change; and

    c.   working with program and institution priorities.
- The rights and privileges of the program lead are consistent with other faculty having comparable roles and responsibilities.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- Position description for the program lead.
- Curriculum vitae of the program lead.
- Proof of the program lead's membership in the appropriate provincial/territorial regulatory college.
- Policies and procedures for selection process of the program lead.
- Confirmation of a full-time academic appointment in the institution.

1.5   CORE

The program has adequate financial resources to achieve its stated goals and objectives and assure its continuing operation.

Explanatory Notes

The budget plan is designed to protect the sustainability of the program. The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration of and/or commentary such as:
- The budget and financial reports adequately:
  a.   support the program's goals and needs;
  b.   reflect the adequacy of financial resources for faculty and staff salaries, materials and equipment, faculty development, curricular development, program facilities; and
  c.   support the continuing operation of the program at an appropriate level and ensure that obligations to potential and enrolled students are met.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- A copy of the program budget documents.
- A copy of the long-range financial plan.
- A report that confirms the long-range plan supports program development and sustainability.

1.6   **The program has adequate administrative and technical support staff and services to meet the needs of the faculty and students and achieve the goals and objectives of the program.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and/or commentary such as:
- The number and skills of administrative, secretarial and technical personnel assigned provides sufficient support services for the program.
- The program assures that support services are available to facilitate faculty and students in meeting their academic obligations to the program.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Position descriptions and curriculum vitae.
- Program organizational charts.
- Information about available services, e.g. library staff resources, information technology support.
- A report that confirms the adequacy of support staff for faculty.

1.7   **The program provides adequate quality, quantity and variety of learning resources[G] (e.g. equipment, materials, physical space) to enable students to achieve learning objectives.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- The library system provides access to current information in the fields of occupational therapy, physiotherapy, biomedical sciences, clinical sciences, health services, population health and related areas.
- The students are aware of learning resources and the methods available to access these resources.
- The number and size of the classrooms accommodate the number of students in courses and the scheduling requirements of the program.
- Learning supplies and equipment are available and in good repair and safe operating condition for laboratory experiences, teaching and supportive activities (for example, preparation of instructional materials).
- Learning supplies and equipment reflect contemporary practice in occupational therapy and physiotherapy, are sufficient in amount, and are available when needed.
- Single discipline programs are only required to provide learning resources applicable to the single focus area.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Inventory of educational tools and equipment for teaching the curriculum.
- Size and number of classrooms, seminar rooms, laboratory space.
- Lists of library and computer resources.
- Policies and procedures for students regarding access to library and computer resources.
- Documented orientation program for students including information on institutional and community resources.

1.8   There is a formal plan for the curriculum.

    1.8.1   The curriculum is grounded in a conceptual framework.

    1.8.2   The curriculum conceptual framework is consistent with current educational pedagogy.

    1.8.3   The methods of teaching are consistent with stated learning goals and objectives.

    1.8.4   The curriculum integrates academic and clinical /fieldwork education.

    1.8.5   The curriculum clearly delineates practice roles between OT/OTA and PT/PTA.

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- The curriculum is based on information about the contemporary practice of occupational therapy, physiotherapy and current literature and other resources related to the professions, professional education, and educational theory and practice.
- There is a description of the educational principles and values of the program and how they are integrated throughout the curriculum, e.g., adult education; interprofessional education[G]; encouraging active learning, respecting diverse talents and ways of learning. Values could include items such as transparency, equity, timeliness, evidence-informed[G].
- There are described linkages between the instructional methods, the educational principles, the curriculum plan, the course content, the needs of the learners, and the defined outcomes expected of the students.
- The objectives of the courses and learning experiences are stated in terms of outcomes, i.e., what the student will be able to do or demonstrate upon successful completion of each course, unit, or experience.
- The curriculum plan is formally documented and used as a resource by all those associated with the program (e.g. faculty, clinical placement sites, students).
- The curriculum plan is communicated to and understood by faculty, students and clinical/fieldwork educators.
- The curriculum plan clearly delineates practice roles between occupational therapists (OT) and occupational therapist assistants (OTA) and between physiotherapists (PT) and physiotherapist assistants (PTA).

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- A curriculum plan that is grounded in a conceptual framework and reflects the educational principles and values of the program.
- Organizational chart or description outlining integration of the curriculum into program courses.
- Program curriculum document/calendar.
- Student handbook/brochure.
- A report that confirms clinical/fieldwork education[G] is an integral part of the curriculum.

- Course outlines for clinical/fieldwork.

1.9   **The program develops and documents relationships with departments or units, off-campus training sites^G and other community resources that contribute to the professional preparation of students. The program ensures that consistency of educational experiences and evaluation are maintained at off-campus sites.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- The program has multiple partnerships established for student education both on and off campus.
- The program arranges and maintains agreements with other educational sites or facilities such as those for distance learning, satellite programs, e-learning etc.
- An agreement, in a format acceptable to both parties, exists between the institution and each site that accepts students for clinical/fieldwork education placements.
- Communication (i.e., with all sites that have such agreements) occurs on a regular basis to provide information about policies and procedures and relevant information pertaining to student education and supervision.
- There is an orientation process to ensure that new clinical/fieldwork educators understand the educational principles of the program, the tools for evaluation and the appropriate methods to provide educational experiences.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Affiliation Agreements or Letters of Agreement with facilities providing clinical placements or other off-campus learning that describe: the purpose and objectives of the agreement; the roles and responsibilities of the program, students and clinical/fieldwork educators; and procedures to follow in reviewing, revising, terminating the agreement.
- Documented means to promote and assess student learning outside the institution.
- Established policies and procedures for communication between the program and clinical/fieldwork education placement or other off-campus sites.
- Documented outcomes of communication between the program and educational sites both on and off-campus.
- Documents indicating orientation and ongoing education for clinical/fieldwork educators.

Standard 2
Faculty

Accreditation documentation must explicitly describe and include evidence that:

The educational program[G] has sufficient qualified faculty for effective program design, implementation and instruction and provides appropriate, periodic and ongoing faculty development and evaluation.

Criterion

2.1   The number and qualifications of faculty meet the program's mission, goals, and objectives through education administration, curriculum development, instructional design and delivery, and evaluation of outcomes.

    2.1.1   CORE
        The occupational therapy content of the curriculum is overseen and taught by a registered occupational therapist with relevant academic and professional qualifications.

    2.1.2   CORE
        The physiotherapy content of the curriculum is overseen and taught by a registered physiotherapist with relevant academic and professional qualifications.

    2.1.3   The faculty member responsible for overseeing clinical/fieldwork education is a registered occupational therapist or physiotherapist with relevant academic and professional qualifications.

    NOTE: *Single discipline programs are required to show compliance with either 2.1.1 OR 2.1.2.*

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Faculty expertise covers all areas of curriculum content.
- Teaching loads are appropriate to ensure faculty are able to carry out their roles and responsibilities in the area of teaching and academic administration (e.g. student counseling, development of placement sites, participation in committees).
- The number of faculty is sufficient to maintain stability and continuity in curriculum development and delivery.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- List of faculty members and summary of expertise and contribution to program design and evaluation, student instruction and evaluation.
- Faculty curriculum vitae including professional credentials and expertise related to program design, student instruction and evaluation.
- Faculty workload reports that reflect teaching, and educational responsibilities.
- Position description for the individual responsible for overseeing clinical/fieldwork education in the academic program.
- Curriculum vitae of the individual responsible for clinical/fieldwork education.
- Proof of the individual's membership in the appropriate provincial/territorial regulatory college.

2.2   **The educational institution and the program encourage and support career development of faculty relevant to their roles in the program, including support for new/junior faculty.**

2.2.1   **The rights and privileges of faculty are equitable with other faculty in the institution.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- The program supports, and the faculty participate in, professional development activities directed toward improving faculty and program effectiveness.
- The faculty development activities are linked to the needs of the program.
- There is culture of professional development among faculty.
- Resources for professional development may include financial support, time for activities such as faculty mentoring, extra-departmental collaboration, and sharing of clinical and teaching expertise.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- Policies and procedures for professional development of faculty.
- Financial support for activities related to professional development.
- Curriculum vitae of faculty including evidence of professional development activities.
- Availability of resources (e.g. human, financial, program) for faculty to support academic activities.

2.3   **Faculty members are evaluated in accordance with institutional policies and with reference to clearly outlined criteria using multiple sources of information.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Regular and ongoing faculty evaluation is designed to assess and improve the effectiveness of teaching and service activities of each faculty member and to ensure program effectiveness.

- Faculty evaluation considers measurable and multiple sources of data including input from students, assessments of teaching and service and other activities such as management of the program and clinical education, committee functions, or student affairs.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- Written policies and procedures for faculty evaluation.
- Documented outcomes of performance reviews.
- Teaching dossiers including summaries of student evaluations and peer review.

2.4   **The program supports the role of faculty in collaborating to develop, implement and evaluate the curriculum.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Mechanisms are in place to obtain input from all program faculty for curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.
- Established processes for integration of evolving practices into curriculum.
- Workloads and job descriptions for full time and part time faculty include paid time for dedicated curricular development and evaluation

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- Minutes/reports of faculty committee meetings and task forces related to curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.
- Policies and procedures/terms of reference for committee that develops, implements and evaluates the curriculum.
- Documented outcomes of meetings related to curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.

2.5   **The program faculty are responsible for contributing to the effective operation of the program and for ensuring that program policies are implemented.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Established processes are in place for review and implementation of existing policies.
- Mechanisms exist for policy development related to identification of emerging issues.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Minutes/reports of committee meetings (for example admissions, promotions committees) documenting the role of faculty in implementation of program policies.
- Policies and procedures/terms of reference for committees that develop, implement and evaluate program policies.
- Documented outcomes of meetings related to curriculum development, implementation and evaluation

2.6   **The program supports faculty in innovation, advancement and improvement in educational activities.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Faculty have access to space, materials, equipment, and technological support that are appropriate for innovative activities.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- Record of faculty innovative activities.
- Policies and procedures related to faculty development of innovative teaching/learning experiences such as interprofessional education, simulated case experiences, etc.

Standard 3
Students

Accreditation documentation must explicitly describe and include evidence that:

The educational program prepares students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities relevant to the practice of occupational therapist and physiotherapist support personnel and regularly assesses the students' competencies[G] and achievements.

Criterion

3.1   **The program ensures effective administration and coordination of student education throughout the course of study.**

3.1.1   The confidentiality of student academic records is assured.

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Mechanisms are in place to obtain input from faculty and students related to the coordination of student education throughout the course of study.
- Established processes exist for administration and coordination of student education.
- Established processes exist to ensure confidentiality of all student information.

Examples of Evidence
May include but not limited to:
- Minutes/reports of committee meetings (for example program/curriculum, promotions committees) documenting the administration and coordination of student education throughout the course of study.
- Description of measures in place to ensure confidentiality of student records.

3.2   **Students have opportunities to participate in academic activities such as program planning, development, and evaluation.**

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Opportunities are provided for students to participate in and/or have input to program planning, development and evaluation.
- Program committee membership includes student representatives when appropriate.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Committee terms of reference.
- Outcomes of meetings about curriculum, academic and clinical placement coordination.
- Student evaluation of program.

3.3   There is an overall plan for educational goals and students' achievement that includes:

- clearly defined, outcome-based competencies consistent with national competency frameworks;
- fair, transparent and timely evaluation criteria; and
- opportunities for feedback to students about their strengths and areas for improvement and remediation.

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- There are faculty, staff, and systems in place to monitor students, their needs, and performance.
- Outcome based competencies are consistent with national professional competency frameworks.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Policies and procedures related to evaluation and student progression.
- Course outlines including expected learning outcomes^G and evaluative criteria/methods.
- Samples of the variety of methods and tools used to measure academic performance.
- Minutes of meetings related to student promotion and progression / reports of student performance.
- Student handbook.

3.4   The program provides clinical education / fieldwork experiences in occupational therapy and physiotherapy that enable students to achieve the learning outcomes.

3.4.1   CORE
Clinical/fieldwork education includes a minimum of 500 hours in the clinical setting.
NOTE: Single discipline programs must include 350 fieldwork hours.

3.4.2   CORE
Clinical/fieldwork education includes no less than 30% (150 hours) of the total time in each discipline for each student.

3.4.3   CORE
A registered occupational therapist faculty advisor is available to students and preceptors on issues related to occupational therapy practice in fieldwork. Similarly, a registered physiotherapist faculty advisor is available to students and preceptors on issues related to physiotherapy practice in fieldwork.

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- The clinical placement experiences are adequate in number, appropriate in scope, and are diverse enough to meet the objectives of clinical education and the competencies for professional practice. Mechanisms exist to track student clinical placement learning experiences.
- Each student in the program has completed the required 500 hours, of which a minimum of 150 hours were in an OTA clinical setting and 150 hours in a PTA clinical setting (single discipline 350 hours, all in the single discipline).
- Clinical placement experiences for students are planned based on student progression in the curriculum, the type of supervision required, the variety of experiences needed, and the learning outcomes to be achieved.
- Policies and procedures exist to ensure every student completes the required placement hours in both OTA and PTA experiences prior to graduation
- The required placement hours in both OTA and PTA experiences have been completed by every graduate in *at least* the three most recent complete cohorts.
- Clinical placement experiences supervised by OTA/PTAs adhere to the guidelines described for such supervision situations (GUIDE-06).
- The program establishes policies and procedures with the clinical instructors, which help to assure that students receive guidance and regular formal and informal assessment of their clinical performance.
- The program ensures adequate orientation, support, and regular learning opportunities for clinical instructors.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Documentation of the variety and quantity of clinical placement experience that is reflective of current clinical practice.
- Individual student's portfolio/record of clinical placement experiences, including documentation of placement hours for OTA and PTA experiences as described in GUIDE 11- Tracking Fieldwork Hours.
- Minutes of clinical placement committee meetings; clinical placement reports.
- Documentation of student evaluation of placement sites and experiences.
- Policy and procedures for clinical placements, including documented methods to ensure clinical education is coordinated at each site.

3.5   **The program provides processes for students to address academic and clinical concerns.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- There are formal and informal opportunities in place for the students to express concerns about academic and clinical placement experiences.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Formal, objective and published policies and procedures for student appeals.
- Documented outcomes/ responses to students' concerns.

3.6   The program ensures students have timely and confidential access as required to academic support and/or psychosocial counselling.

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- Information about relevant institutional and program policies and procedures is available and accessible to students.
- Professional and career counseling and academic support are available to students enrolled in the program.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Published information about access to student support services such as health services, counselling, financial aid.
- Policies and procedures related to remediation.
- Policies and procedures related to accommodation of students in exceptional circumstances.
- Student orientation program.
- Student handbook.

Standard 4
Program Evaluation

Accreditation documentation must explicitly describe and include evidence that:
The educational program maintains an effective process of continuous self-assessment, planning and improvement.

Criterion

4.1   **There is a documented plan for program evaluation that is based on clearly defined and measurable goals.**

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- The program has a plan that outlines the process for conducting regular program reviews to determine the extent to which its goals are being achieved and are in keeping with best practices in professional education.
- The plan is comprehensive and includes regular review of all aspects of the program (of which only one part is the curriculum)

Examples of Evidence
May include but not limited to:
- Documentation outlining the plan for program evaluation, including data collection, data analysis and synthesis, identification of need for change, implementation of change and evaluation of the impact of the change.
- Evidence that timelines, responsibility and accountability are identified to ensure successful implementation of the plan.
- Terms of reference of committees responsible to conduct the phases of implementation of the plan

4.2   **The program collects data for a systematic and comprehensive evaluation of its effectiveness on a regular basis.**

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- The program is collecting information on a regular and ongoing basis as described in its program evaluation plan that includes input and feedback from stakeholders in the program, including students, faculty, staff, clinicians, clinical/fieldwork education instructors, employers, and others as appropriate.
- The collection of information uses multiple approaches to assessment and includes data from a variety of sources. Information may be obtained from, but is not limited to students, faculty, support staff, institutional administrators, and other stakeholders in the program.

- Individual courses and the curriculum as a whole are assessed through a variety of mechanisms.
- The faculty regularly assesses the performance of recent graduates related to the learning outcomes of the curriculum as well as the specific expectations linked to the program's unique mission and goals.
- The timelines, responsibility and accountability for data collection described in the program evaluation plan have been adhered to during implementation.
- Assessment of the clinical/fieldwork education placements can include the evaluation of clinical sites, the quality of student supervision, the availability of a variety of learning experiences, and the effectiveness of communication among all those associated with the clinical/fieldwork education placements.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Documentation of student, faculty, staff and graduate satisfaction surveys.
- Documentation of student attrition, completion rates, employment rates and career paths of graduates.
- Documentation of admission criteria linked to students' program completion.
- Documentation of processes for consultation with stakeholders, e.g., advisory committees, task forces, surveys.
- Follow-up surveys of recent graduates.
- Documentation about the variety and scope of clinical/fieldwork education placement sites.
- Student evaluation of courses and clinical placements.
- Policies and procedures for evaluation of clinical placement education.

4.3   The program analyzes and synthesizes program evaluation data to identify need for change.

    4.3.1   The program identifies, monitors, and evaluates indicators of students' and graduates' progress and uses these data for planning and development.

    4.3.2   The program reviews admission criteria, graduation and attrition data and analyzes and responds to trends.

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- Program evaluation includes analysis of data collected from multiple sources in relation to the desired program goals as identified in the program evaluation plan, and the identification of strengths and weaknesses of the program and required changes.
- The program analyses the results of the evaluation of clinical/fieldwork education placements to determine their adequacy in meeting its educational mission and goals and the needs of the students.
- The results of students' performance assessment demonstrate the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of the students and the goals of the program.

- The timelines, responsibility and accountability for data analysis, synthesis, and identification for need for change described in the program evaluation plan have been adhered to during implementation.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- Evidence of comprehensive analysis of all data gathered for criterion 4.2.
- Samples of reports of program evaluation.
- Annual reports.
- Use of data to identify the program's strengths and weaknesses; evaluation of needs for change.
- Meeting minutes describing discussion related to data analysis, synthesis and need for change

4.4   **The program makes changes in response to analysis of program evaluation data and evaluates the impact of these changes.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- The program conducts an evaluation following the implementation of changes to determine if the changes resulted in desired outcomes.
- The timelines, responsibility and accountability for implementation of change are described, in accordance with the program evaluation plan
- The timelines, responsibility and accountability for evaluation of the impact of the changes made are described in accordance with the program evaluation plan.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- Documentation of implementation and evaluation of program changes.
- Documentation of evaluation of impact of any changes made
- Committee meeting minutes describing discussions related to implementation of change and evaluation of impact of the change

Standard 5
Accountability

Accreditation documentation must explicitly describe and include evidence that:
The educational program accurately represents itself publicly and provides sufficient information to ensure accountability and consumer choice.

Criterion

5.1 Current and accurate information about the program is available to applicants, enrolled students, and the public about:
- institutional and program admission policies,
- language requirements,
- prior learning assessment process,
- tuition and fees,
- financial aid,
- graduation and credentialing requirements,
- academic policies and appeal processes, and
- student services.

Explanatory Notes
The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Using institutional guidelines and procedures, faculty initiate, adopt, evaluate, and uphold academic regulations that are specific to the program.
- Program policies exist to guide the dissemination and implementation of all established regulations affecting faculty and students.
- The educational institution ensures that policies and procedures that directly affect prospective and enrolled students, including accreditation status and activities, are clearly described, applied equitably, and carried out in a timely manner.
- When making decisions about admission, retention, and graduation of students, the program considers its mission, the mission of the institution, and the needs of society.
- The program provides prospective and enrolled students with access to or copies of rules and regulations related to admissions, matriculation, progression through the program, withdrawal and dismissal procedures, procedural fairness, clinical/fieldwork education experiences, and other academic policies and procedures.

Examples of Evidence
May include but not limited to:
- Documentation about admission policies, language requirements, tuition and fees, financial aid, graduation and licensing/registration requirements, academic policies and student services.
- Documentation describing the characteristics of the prior learning assessment process.

- Student handbook, program brochures, university documents.
- Program calendar; web site.
- Student orientation programs.
- Records that students admitted to the program meet the published admission criteria.
- Grading policy.
- Academic regulations.

5.2   **The program's documents and publications accurately reflect its vision, mission, philosophy and goals.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- Information about the program, including web page information and advertising, and materials related to institution and program policies are accurate, consistent, comprehensive, and current.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:
- Policies and procedures related to development and review of advertising, recruitment and admissions documents to ensure they clearly and accurately represent the program and career opportunities.
- Documented outcomes of evaluation and revision of advertising, recruitment and admissions documents.
- Documented feedback from students.

5.3   **The program provides a culture and environment that is safe and protects the rights, privacy, and confidentiality of all individuals, including students, faculty, staff and others participating in associated activities.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:
- The educational institution has policies and procedures to protect the rights, safety, privacy and confidentiality of all individuals involved in any aspect of the program.
- The educational institution and the program ensure that students are informed of potential health risks they may encounter throughout the education program and when at clinical/fieldwork education placements.
- Policies and procedures ensure fairness in the handling of student and faculty concerns and complaints at all levels of the program and educational institution.
- The educational institution, the program, and each clinical/fieldwork education placement site have policies describing confidentiality of records and other personal information, as well as policies and procedures about the use of human subjects in demonstrations and practice for educational purposes and research, if applicable.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Policies and procedures regarding:
  - preserving privacy, confidentiality, dignity and safety of students, faculty, staff and others involved in learning and teaching activities.
  - informed consent.
  - threats/harassment.
  - occupational health and safety.
  - grievance and complaints.
- Documentation of incidents related to unsafe environment and actions taken to resolve issue.
- Safety regulations and emergency procedures are posted.

5.4 **The program has an admissions process that is fair, transparent and timely.**

5.4.1 **There is a transparent admissions appeals process.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- Policies and procedures applied in student selection do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, and disability or health status.

  Note: This criterion, however, does not negate the program's ability to act affirmatively for certain groups of people, including those identified by race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin, or disability or health status, nor does it prohibit activities associated with enhancing diversity among the student populations. However, it is expected that all published materials related to admissions policies and practices include information about the program's decision to act affirmatively for the selected groups.

- A transparent admissions appeals process that is available to unsuccessful applicants.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Documented policies and procedures for program admissions.
- Minutes of Admissions Committee meetings.
- Documented decision-making processes related to admissions.
- Annual and cumulative summaries of admissions data.
- Documented program admissions appeals process

5.5   **The program monitors its compliance with accreditation standards and criteria on a continual basis and takes required steps to ensure compliance.**

Explanatory Notes

The evidence would adequately illustrate the criterion by demonstration and commentary such as:

- The educational institution and the program are committed to obtaining and maintaining their accreditation status and are responsible for submitting requested documentation and fees by the established deadlines.

Note: The college/university and program are responsible for notifying OTA & PTA EAP of all substantive changes in the program in accordance with established Policy and Procedures. Substantive changes to be reported include, but are not limited to, changes in program leadership and faculty complement, major curricular revisions, and the certificate/diploma or program offered.

Examples of Evidence

May include but not limited to:

- Publication of accreditation status in appropriate documents, for example, program calendar, web site.
- Documentation and submission of required accreditation fees and reports, for example Self Study Reports, Progress Reports, Annual Reports.
- Changes in program compliance with accreditation standards are reported in accordance with OTA & PTA EAP policies.
- Documentation of notification of any substantive curriculum changes to OTA & PTA EAP.
- Evidence that all requirements for maintaining candidacy status or accreditation status have been met by the program.

Standard 6

Occupational Therapist Assistant & Physiotherapist Assistant Competencies

This standard utilizes an adapted role-based CanMEDS model[7] and is organized around seven main "roles" for graduates that include: Communicator, Collaborator, Effective Practitioner, Change Agent/Advocate, Reflective Practitioner, Professional Practitioner and Educated Practitioner.

The occupational therapist assistant competencies have been articulated by the Canadian Association for Occupational Therapists, which is responsible for reviewing and updating the occupational therapist assistant competencies on a regular basis. All the competencies for occupational therapist assistants in Standard 6 occur under the supervision of a registered occupational therapist.

The physiotherapist assistant competencies have been articulated by the National Physiotherapy Advisory Group (NPAG) which is responsible for reviewing and updating the physiotherapist assistant competencies on a regular basis. All the competencies for physiotherapist assistants in Standard 6 occur under the supervision of a registered physiotherapist.

The criteria in this Standard reflect the minimum entry level competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) expected of students upon graduation to fulfill the role of occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant.

Accreditation documentation must explicitly describe and include evidence about how:
The education program facilitates the achievement of student learning outcomes related to current occupational therapy and physiotherapy practice, emerging trends in the health system and advances in theory and technology.

Examples of Evidence
The explanatory notes associated with each criterion are intended to provide guidance for programs about the evidence they could provide to demonstrate compliance with the criterion. Programs are not expected to provide evidence about each of the explanatory notes that are listed. Examples of evidence may include but are not limited to:
- Curriculum planning documents.
- Course outlines.
- Lectures/labs used to instruct students
- Examples of student assessment (exams, assignments, OSCE)
- Student performance.
- Evidence of student competency in each criterion

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[7] Frank, JR. (Ed.). 2005. The CanMEDS 2005 physician competency framework. Better standards, Better Care. Ottawa, Ontario: The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

Standard 6

Occupational Therapist Assistant Competencies

Role OTA 6.1 Communicator

The program prepares students to use effective communication to develop and maintain appropriate and respectful relationships with clients, families, care providers, and other stakeholders.

Criterion

OTA 6.1.1	Engages in and facilitates effective verbal and nonverbal communication with the client[G], supervising occupational therapist and inter-professional team members.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Communicate using various communication strategies including active listening, reflection, reinforcement, and empathy and accurately utilize and respond to non-verbal communication.
- Communicate effectively to facilitate the client's understanding (e.g., considering education, culture, age, and gender).
- Report timely, relevant and accurate information to the supervising occupational therapist, clients and other team members, related to all situations.

OTA 6.1.2	Utilizes objective and effective written communication skills with the client, supervising occupational therapist and interprofessional team members.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Produce written documentation that is accurate and precise using appropriate terminology following all applicable provincial, regulatory and employment standards.
- Prepare written materials to support service delivery.

OTA 6.1.3	Supports diversity in communication by using strategies to reduce communication barriers with different populations in different practice contexts and incorporates sensitive practice.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Adapt communication strategies to facilitate the client's understanding (e.g., considering education, culture, age, and gender).

Role OTA 6.2 Collaborator

The program prepares students to work collaboratively and effectively within an interprofessional team and with others to achieve optimal client care.

Criterion

| OTA 6.2.1 | Supports collaboration with the client, supervising occupational therapist and interprofessional team members. |

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of team members.
- Use a range of strategies to demonstrate mutual trust, respect and professional behavior.
- Communicate plan(s) for assigned services to the client and inter-professional team with ease and efficiency.
- Gather and report information to the supervising occupational therapist(s) with efficiency and timeliness.

| OTA 6.2.2 | Participates actively as an interprofessional team member. |

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Participate as a team member to provide interprofessional client care.

| OTA 6.2.3 | Anticipates, identifies, prevents and resolves conflict. |

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate use of a wide range of strategies to effectively resolve conflict.
- Seek appropriate consultation to assist with conflict resolution.

Role OTA 6.3 Effective Practitioner

The program prepares students to manage time, prioritize competing priorities in collaboration with occupational therapists and support the delivery of effective and efficient practice.

Criterion

OTA 6.3.1	**Manages activities that support effective service delivery and integrated client care.**

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Prioritize client services and other work requirements effectively.
- Use a systematic approach to identify and collect information to assist with assigned work activities.

OTA 6.3.2	**Uses human, financial, and physical resources effectively.**

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Facilitate the use of equipment, supplies, inventory records and space to support service delivery.

OTA 6.3.3	**Recognizes, respects and participates in established organizational quality improvement activities.**

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Participate in workload measurement activities, as required.
- Participate in committees and team meetings relevant to job functions.
- Participate in regular performance reviews.

Role OTA 6.4 Change Agent/Advocate

The program prepares students to understand how to responsibly use knowledge and influence within their role to promote the health and well-being of individual clients, communities, and populations.

Criterion

OTA 6.4.1
Promotes the benefits and value of their professional group.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of their profession within the health system.
- Advocate for the role of their profession.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the distinctive roles and responsibilities of the occupational therapist assistant.

OTA 6.4.2
Assists clients in making life changes in support of their health goals as determined by the supervising occupational therapist.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Work collaboratively to ensure the health needs of individual clients are met.
- Encourage the client to express individual needs and helps the supervising occupational therapist and team to ensure that needs are addressed.
- Considers factors such as client's behavior, motivation, etc. when assisting clients to make life changes in support of health goals.

OTA 6.4.3
Considers the impact of the determinants of health on the well-being of clients served.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Consider the impact of the determinants of health when assisting clients, families and communities to support health goals.

Role OTA 6.5 Reflective Practitioner

The program prepares students to incorporate critique, reflection, and quality improvement in their everyday practice and through lifelong learning.

Criterion

OTA
6.5.1
Recognizes the need for professional development through reflective practices and self-directed life-long learning.

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Maintain and improve knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of required job competencies through reflective practices and self-directed learning.
- Seek input to establish a plan to address learning needs.
- Determine resources to meet learning needs.
- Implement a learning plan.
- Apply learning to practice.

OTA
6.5.2
Modifies service delivery based on personal reflection and external feedback under the supervision of the occupational therapist.

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Use personal reflection, feedback and guidance from others as required to suggest changes to client service delivery.

OTA
6.5.3
Supports the supervising occupational therapist in applying an evidence informed approach in their services.

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of evidence informed practice.

Role OTA 6.6 Professional Practitioner

The program prepares students to commit to the best interests of clients and society through ethical and legal practice and high personal standards of behavior.

Criterion

OTA 6.6.1
Demonstrates ethical behavior with clients and team members in a variety of situations.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complementary but distinctive roles of occupational therapist assistants and occupational therapists.
- Adhere to standards for accountability to regulated health professionals.
- Demonstrate trust, integrity, accountability, commitment, respect, and compassion.
- Communicate accurate title, credentials and role.
- Comply with professional and employment standards including consent, privacy and confidentiality.
- Comply with policies guiding distribution of resources in the workplace.
- Demonstrate understanding of broad ethical issues within the health system and service delivery.
- Understand and manage potential conflict of interest situations.

OTA 6.6.2
Respects diversity and demonstrates sensitive practice.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of diversity on function and performance.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the client's cultural beliefs and values.

OTA 6.6.3
Maintains personal and professional boundaries.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Maintain an effective therapeutic relationship with clients and a working relationship with team members.
- Understand and identify authority/control issues involved in professional relationships with clients and team.

OTA
6.6.4

Performs within the limits of personal competence within their own professional scope.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Recognize the limits of personal competence and professional scope and take responsibility for own behavior and actions.
- Seek appropriate consultation from the supervising occupational therapist and other team members.

Role OTA 6.7 Educated Practitioner in Enabling Occupation

The program prepares students to be skilled practitioners in enabling occupation using evidence-based processes that focus on a client's occupations—including self-care, productive pursuits, and leisure—as a medium for action and outcome during performance of assigned tasks and within established guidelines and limits[8]

Criterion

OTA 6.7.1	Safely and efficiently supports the occupational therapist who is the expert in enabling occupation.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of occupational therapists and occupational therapist assistants.
- Demonstrate an understanding of client - centered practice.
- Demonstrate understanding of occupations, occupational performance and occupational engagement in practice with clients.
- Demonstrate understanding of occupational therapy practices.

OTA 6.7.2	Works to enable occupation with specific populations and occupational performance issues in a range of practice contexts.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate understanding of the client's occupational therapy plan and contributes to the intervention plan as appropriate.
- Implement assigned service components of the occupational therapy plan efficiently and safely.
- Establish positive therapeutic relationships with clients.
- Observe, monitor and report on the client's performance.
- Work effectively with individuals, families and groups.
- Respond to change in client status.
- Complete assigned data gathering using a range of tools to support the occupational therapy evaluation.

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[8] *Celebration of Enabling Occupation as the Core Competency of Occupational Therapist Support Personnel. Consistent with the Canadian Model of Client-Centred Enablement (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007), "expert in enabling occupation" is considered the central role, expertise, and competence of occupational therapist assistants. Work in this core function is interconnected with all other roles, drawing upon required competencies in order to effectively use occupation as both a medium for action and an outcome for occupational therapy intervention.*

OTA
6.7.3
Gathers information and data related to the client's status as assigned by the occupational therapist.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Complete assigned data gathering using a range of tools to support the occupational therapy evaluation.
- Monitor client responses and status before, during and after performance of assigned measures and tests.
- Report client information to supplement the occupational therapists' assessment/reassessment processes.
- Contribute to the development and revision of intervention activities within the occupational therapy plan.

OTA
6.7.4
Implements the interventions assigned by the occupational therapist.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the client's intervention plan.
- Orient clients to the area in which they will be treated and provide information about relevant service policies.
- Understand the precautions and limitations associated with occupational therapy interventions.
- Safely and efficiently perform the assigned service components of the occupational therapy intervention plan.
- Establish positive therapeutic relationships and facilitate client participation.
- Observe, monitor and report the client's performance.
- Work effectively with individuals, families and groups.
- Respond to change in client status including discontinuing a specific intervention if the client has an adverse reaction or the safety of the client is compromised.

OTA
6.7.5
Demonstrates effective problem solving and judgment related to assigned service components.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Apply relevant and current occupational therapy knowledge to the practice area.
- Ensure client and personal safety in the performance of assigned components of service delivery.

OTA
6.7.6

Participates in the learning process for clients, team members, peers, students and any other learners within their service.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Implement components of educational programs for learners.
- Serve as a resource to other learners.
- Contribute to the process of feedback and evaluation of learners' participation.

Standard 6

Physiotherapist Assistant Competencies

Role PTA 6.1 Communicator

The program prepares students to use effective communication to develop and maintain appropriate and respectful relationships with clients, families, care providers, and other stakeholders.

Criterion

PTA 6.1.1 **Engages in and facilitates effective verbal and nonverbal communication with the client, supervising physiotherapist and inter-professional team members.**

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Communicate using various communication strategies including active listening, reflection, reinforcement, and empathy and accurately utilize and respond to non-verbal communication.
- Communicate effectively to facilitate the client's understanding (e.g., considering education, culture, age, and gender).
- Report timely, relevant and accurate information to the supervising physiotherapist, clients and other team members, related to all situations.

PTA 6.1.2 **Utilizes objective and effective written communication skills with the client, supervising physiotherapist and interprofessional team members.**

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Produce written documentation that is accurate and precise using appropriate terminology following all applicable provincial, regulatory and employment standards.
- Prepare written materials to support service delivery.

PTA 6.1.3 **Supports diversity in communication by using strategies to reduce communication barriers with different populations in different practice contexts and incorporates sensitive practice.**

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Adapt communication strategies to facilitate the client's understanding (e.g., considering education, culture, age, and gender).

Role PTA 6.2 Collaborator

The program prepares students to work collaboratively and effectively within an interprofessional team and with others to achieve optimal client care.

Criterion

PTA
6.2.1

Supports collaboration with the client, supervising physiotherapist and interprofessional team members.

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of team members.
- Use a range of strategies to demonstrate mutual trust, respect and professional behavior.
- Communicate plan(s) for assigned services to the client and inter-professional team with ease and efficiency.
- Gather and report information to the supervising physiotherapist(s) with efficiency and timeliness.

PTA
6.2.2

Participates actively as an interprofessional team member.

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Participate as a team member to provide interprofessional client care.

PTA
6.2.3

Anticipates, identifies, prevents and resolves conflict.

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate use of a wide range of strategies to effectively resolve conflict.
- Seek appropriate consultation to assist with conflict resolution.

Role PTA 6.3 Effective Practitioner

The program prepares students to manage time, prioritize competing priorities in collaboration with physiotherapists and support the delivery of effective and efficient practice.

Criterion

PTA 6.3.1 **Manages activities that support effective service delivery and integrated client care.**

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Prioritize client services and other work requirements effectively.
- Use a systematic approach to identify and collect information to assist with assigned work activities.

PTA 6.3.2 **Uses human, financial, and physical resources effectively.**

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Facilitate the use of equipment, supplies, inventory records and space to support service delivery.

PTA 6.3.3 **Recognizes, respects and participates in established organizational quality improvement activities.**

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Participate in workload measurement activities, as required.
- Participate in committees and team meetings relevant to job functions.
- Participate in regular performance reviews.

Role PTA 6.4 Change Agent/Advocate

The program prepares students to understand how to responsibly use knowledge and influence within their role to promote the health and well-being of individual clients, communities, and populations.

Criterion

PTA
6.4.1

Promotes the benefits and value of their professional group.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of their profession within the health system.
- Advocate for the role of their profession.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the distinctive roles and responsibilities of the physiotherapist assistant.

PTA
6.4.2

Assists clients in making life changes in support of their health goals as determined by the supervising physiotherapist.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Work collaboratively to ensure the health needs of individual clients are met.
- Encourage the client to express individual needs and helps the supervising physiotherapist and team to ensure that needs are addressed.
- Considers factors such as client's behavior, motivation, etc. when assisting clients to make life changes in support of health goals.

PTA
6.4.3

Considers the impact of the determinants of health on the well-being of clients served.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Consider the impact of the determinants of health when assisting clients, families and communities to support health goals.

Role PTA 6.5 Reflective Practitioner

The program prepares students to incorporate critique, reflection, and quality improvement in their everyday practice and through lifelong learning.

Criterion

PTA 6.5.1	**Recognizes the need for professional development through reflective practices and self-directed life-long learning.**

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Maintain and improve knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of required job competencies through reflective practices and self-directed learning.
- Seek input to establish a plan to address learning needs.
- Determine resources to meet learning needs.
- Implement a learning plan.
- Apply learning to practice.

PTA 6.5.2	**Modifies service delivery based on personal reflection and external feedback under the supervision of the physiotherapist.**

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Use personal reflection, feedback and guidance from others as required to suggest changes to client service delivery.

PTA 6.5.3	**Supports the supervising physiotherapist in applying an evidence informed approach in their services.**

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of evidence informed practice.

Role PTA 6.6 Professional Practitioner

The program prepares students to commit to the best interests of clients and society through ethical and legal practice and high personal standards of behavior.

Criterion

| PTA 6.6.1 | Demonstrates ethical behavior with clients and team members in a variety of situations. |

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complementary but distinctive roles of physiotherapist assistants and physiotherapists.
- Adhere to standards for accountability to regulated health professionals.
- Demonstrate trust, integrity, accountability, commitment, respect, and compassion.
- Communicate accurate title, credentials and role.
- Comply with professional and employment standards including consent, privacy and confidentiality.
- Comply with policies guiding distribution of resources in the workplace.
- Demonstrate understanding of broad ethical issues within the health system and service delivery.
- Understand and manage potential conflict of interest situations.

| PTA 6.6.2 | Respects diversity and demonstrates sensitive practice. |

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of diversity on function and performance.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the client's cultural beliefs and values.

| PTA 6.6.3 | Maintains personal and professional boundaries. |

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Maintain an effective therapeutic relationship with clients and a working relationship with team members.
- Understand and identify authority/control issues involved in professional relationships with clients and team.

PTA
6.6.4

Performs within the limits of personal competence within their own professional scope.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Recognize the limits of personal competence and professional scope and take responsibility for own behavior and actions.
- Seek appropriate consultation from the supervising physiotherapist and other team members.

Role PTA 6.7 Educated Practitioner in Function and Mobility

The program prepares students to be skilled practitioners in function and mobility, integrating all of their roles for the promotion, improvement, and maintenance of the mobility, health, and well-being of their clients during performance of assigned tasks and within established guidelines and limits[9]. These may include but are not limited to:

- *Education and consultation.*
- *Therapeutic exercise.*
- *Electro-physical agents and mechanical modalities.*
- *Functional activity training.*
- *Cardio-respiratory and neuromotor techniques.*
- *Mobility, including the use of gait aids and devices.*

Criterion

PTA 6.7.1 **Safely and efficiently supports the physiotherapist who is the expert in function and mobility.**

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of client-centered practice.
- Demonstrate an understanding of physiotherapy practice.

PTA 6.7.2 **Gathers information and data related to the client's status as assigned by the physiotherapist.**

Explanatory Notes
The program prepares the students to:
- Complete assigned data gathering using a range of tools to support the physiotherapy evaluation.
- Monitor client responses and status before, during and after performance of assigned measures and tests.
- Report client information to supplement the physiotherapists' assessment/reassessment processes.
- Contribute to the development and revision of intervention activities within the physiotherapy plan.

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[9] *National Physiotherapy Advisory Group, 2012. Essential Competency Profile for Physiotherapist Assistants in Canada. The goals of physiotherapy include:*
- *Promotion of optimal mobility, physical activity and overall health and wellness*
- *Prevention of disease/injury/disability*
- *Management of acute and chronic conditions and activity limitations and participation restrictions*
- *Improvement and maintenance of optimal functional independence and physical performance. Rehabilitation of disease, injury, or disability with therapeutic exercise programs and other interventions*
- *Education and planning of maintenance and support programs to prevent re-occurrence, re-injury or functional decline.*

PTA
6.7.3

Implements the interventions assigned by the physiotherapist.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the client's intervention plan.
- Orient clients to the client to the area in which they will be treated and provide information about relevant service policies.
- Understand the precautions and limitations associated with physiotherapy interventions.
- Safely and efficiently perform the assigned service components of the physiotherapy intervention plan.
- Establish positive therapeutic relationships and facilitate client participation.
- Observe, monitor and report the client's performance.
- Work effectively with individuals, families and groups.
- Respond to change in client status including discontinuing a specific intervention if the client has an adverse reaction or the safety of the client is compromised.

PTA
6.7.4

Demonstrates effective problem solving and judgment related to assigned service components.

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Apply relevant and current knowledge to the practice area.
- Ensure client and personal safety in the performance of assigned components of service delivery.

PTA
6.7.5

Participates in the learning process for clients, team members, peers, students and any other learners within their service..

Explanatory Notes

The program prepares the students to:

- Implement components of educational programs for learners.
- Serve as a resource to other learners.
- Contribute to the process of feedback and evaluation of learners' participation.

GLOSSARY

Accreditation	1. The **state or condition of accreditation** means that a program has met standards of education established by professional authorities. 2. The **process** of accreditation is one of quality assurance through which accredited status is granted to an educational institution or program of study by responsible authorities (Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, 2003). A quality review process used by an organization whose authority has been publically recognized to grant official status to a program of study that has met or exceeded pre-determined standard outcomes (CAOT, 2005).
Adequate	Sufficient for a specific requirement. (Merrium-Webster, 2011)
Client	A person, family, group, community or organization that receives physiotherapy professional services, products or information. A client may also be known as a patient (PEAC, 2010).
Clinical/Fieldwork Education	Clinical/fieldwork education provides students with the opportunity to integrate knowledge and to acquire abilities and professional behaviours through a supervised and experimental learning experience (adapted from Canadian Guidelines for Fieldwork Education in Occupational Therapy (CGFEOT), 2003). (CAOT, 2005).
Competencies	The knowledge, skills and abilities obtained through formal, non-formal, or informal learning; ability to perform occupation-specific tasks and duties (CAOT, 2007).
Curriculum	List of subjects composing a structured training and/or educational program organized into a course, courses or work experiences that develop the knowledge, skills and abilities of learners. The curriculum has an implicit or explicit set of goals and objectives with respect to learning outcomes. This could be a pictorial model or figure identifying concepts and links between concepts (CAOT, 2005).
Educational Program	Unless otherwise indicated, program refers to the occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education program (PEAC, 2010).
Evidence	An official document or information that the program provides to demonstrate its compliance with the evaluative criteria (PEAC, 2010). The documents, actions, or other practical means by which a program of study demonstrates how it has met each standard (CAOT, 2005).
Evidence-informed Practice / Approach	Used interchangeably with evidence-based practice, evidence-informed practice further emphasizes that the best current research evidence is taken into account along with the integration of clinical expertise and client values in the decision-making process (PEAC, 2010).
Faculty	Academic faculty includes those individuals who are appointed to and paid by the college and have at least a .20 appointment in the program. Clinical faculty includes those who provide education in the institutional setting but are not paid employees of the college, although they may receive honoraria or other forms of compensation. Clinical faculty may include, but are not limited to, guest lecturers, instructors of specific course components, or tutors (PEAC, 2010).

Interprofessional Education	Occasions when two or more professions learn with, from, and about each other to improve collaboration and quality of care.[10]
Learning/Student Outcomes	A measured level of performance that demonstrates the degree to which a given competency or set of competencies has been achieved by the learner (PEAC, 2010).
Learning Resources	The supplies and supports such as equipment, materials and space required to promote effective learning.
Program Lead	The individual responsible for the coordinating and directing the administrative and educational activities of the program.
Training Sites	Agencies, institutions, facilities and others who provide supervised learning experiences for students.

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[10] http://www.caipe.org.uk/ (2002)

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