



Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte
agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh

Regulating Health +
Social Care Professionals

Occupational Therapists Registration Board

Guidelines for Programme Providers

About this Document

CORU is a multi-profession regulator. The role of CORU is to protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct, education, training and competence through statutory registration of health and social care professionals.

CORU was set up under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended). It is made up of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and the Registration Boards, one for each profession named in our Act.

This document sets out the Occupational Therapists Registration Board Criteria for Education and Training Programmes – Guidelines for Programme Providers.

This document should be considered in conjunction with the following documentation:

- › Occupational Therapists Registration Board Criteria for Education and Training Programmes
- › Occupational Therapists Registration Board Standards of Proficiency for Occupational Therapists
- › Programme Approval and Monitoring Processes: Information for Education Providers.
- › Programme Information Guidelines for Education and Training Providers

Freedom of Information and Data Protection

The Health and Social Care Professionals Council and its records are subject to requests under the Freedom of Information Act, 2004.

Any personal data received by CORU will be used for the purpose of programme approval and monitoring and shared with those involved in these processes

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Introduction

The Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005 (HSCP Act, 2005) provides for the establishment of Registration Boards to establish and maintain registers for a range of health and social care professions. Entry onto to the register allows a person to use the title of that profession. This system of statutory registration is fundamental to the delivery of quality and accountability in the provision of professional services. The objective of the statutory registration system is to protect, guide and inform the public by ensuring that health and social care professionals are properly regulated and qualified for the job whether they work in the public or private sectors or are self-employed.

The objective of the Registration Board is to protect the public by fostering high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence among registrants of that profession (HSCP Act, 2005: Section 27(1)(as amended)). To this end the Act makes provision for:

- › the **approval** of education and training programmes (Section 48) – this allows a Registration Board to determine if it is satisfied that a programme is suitable for the education and training of candidates for registration in its register.
- › **monitoring** of approved programmes (Section 49) – this process allows a Registration Board to satisfy itself as to the continuing suitability of the education, training, assessment and examination and clinical training and experience provided by any education and training programme approved by the Board.

Regulatory approval of a programme by a Registration Board is distinct from academic accreditation. Regulatory approval is a judgment as to whether a programme associated with a given qualification consistently and effectively prepares graduate for entry into register of that profession. To receive approval a programme must demonstrate that it meets the requirements of the Occupational Therapists Registration Board.

There are two types of requirements:

- › **criteria for education and training programmes** are the requirements set by the Registration Board related to how a professional education and training programme is designed and managed. The criteria are used to ensure that a programme has a system in place to consistently and effectively produce graduates who meet the standards of proficiency for the profession.
- › **standards of proficiency** are the threshold standards set by the Occupational Therapists Registration Board for entry to the register. The standards of proficiency provide detail on the knowledge and skills that all graduates must possess at entry to the register.

Approval and Monitoring of Programmes

Approved programmes are those which meet all of the Occupational Therapists Registration Board's criteria and ensure that all students who successfully complete the programme meet all of the required standards of proficiency.

A programme which meets the required criteria and standards of proficiency for entry to the register is granted approval and the qualification associated with the programme is listed on the Approved Qualifications Bye-Law as one of the entry criteria to the register. Graduates possessing an approved qualification are eligible to apply for entry to the Occupational Therapists Register. The programme will then be subject to monitoring.

If a programme is not approved, the associated qualification will not be listed on the Approved Qualifications Bye-Law.

Monitoring is a requirement of all approved programmes and is conducted not less than once every five years. Qualifications may be removed from the Approved Qualifications Bye-Law if the associated programme does not meet the Board's requirements under monitoring.

Students graduating from a programme not listed on the Approved Qualifications Bye-Law are not eligible to apply for entry to the Occupational Therapists Register.

Criteria for Education and Training Programmes

The criteria for education and training programmes are used to ensure that a programme has a system in place to consistently and effectively produce graduates who meet the standards of proficiency for entry to the register. The Occupational Therapists Registration Board have set criteria in relation to.

1. Level of qualifications for entry to the register
2. Practice placements
3. Programme admissions
4. Programme management
5. Curriculum
6. Assessment strategy

These criteria form the Occupational Therapists Registration Board's requirements for the way education and training programmes are designed, organised and managed.

Standards of Proficiency

Providers must also demonstrate that those who complete the programme submitted for approval meet the standards of proficiency for occupational therapists. The standards of proficiency are the threshold standards deemed necessary by the Occupational Therapists Registration Board for entry to the register. In the approval and monitoring of education and training programmes, the standards of proficiency are used to ensure that graduates of an approved programme holding an approved qualification have the required skills and abilities for entry to the Occupational Therapists Register.

The standards of proficiency are detailed in a document called the *Standards of Proficiency for Occupational Therapists*.

Submissions for Programme Approval or Monitoring

CORU offers further information on the approval and monitoring processes and guidance on the preparation of documentation and arrangements for the visit for those providers who wish to make an application for programme approval.

The *Programme Approval and Monitoring Processes: Information for Education Providers* sets out details of each stage of this process.

Layout of the Following Sections

- (a) Criterion type and number
- (b) Criterion title
- (c) Specific criterion number
- (d) Text of the specific criterion

Guidelines:
This box contains examples and suggestions of the type of evidence that may be submitted to demonstrate compliance with the criterion.

Criteria for Education and Training Programmes

Criterion 1

Level of qualifications for entry to the register

1.1 The minimum level of qualification for entry to the register is NFQ Level 8.

Guidelines:

The level of qualification is based on what the Registration Board believes is needed for those who successfully complete the programme to meet all of the standards of proficiency.

Suitable evidence may include:

- > verification that the programme has been validated by the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at the specified level, or above

or if applicable

- > verification that the awarding institution has delegated authority to make awards at designated levels of the NFQ subject to QQI approval and has awarded the qualification at the specified level, or above.

Criterion 2

Practice placements

2.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a detailed programme structure showing the scheduling of placements across the programme and the connections between the academic and placement components of the programme.

2.2 The programme must ensure that each student completes a minimum of 1000 placement hours. Students must complete a minimum of 250 hours within a mental health and/or psychosocial setting and a minimum of 250 hours within a physical/ sensory disability practice setting.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > a detailed programme structure showing the duration and scheduling of placements across the programme
- > a calculation of the hours spent on placement
- > description of the procedures utilised to ensure each student receives the required hours of placement and which addresses situations of non-attendance
- > procedures for verification of hours in conjunction with placement educators

2.3 The number, duration and range of practice placements, and their position within the programme must reflect current practice and demands of the profession. They must be appropriate to facilitate translation of theory into practice and the achievement of the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > analysis of the current practice and demands of the profession
- > a full listing of the placements provided, which must adhere to the number, duration and range requirements appropriate for the profession
- > a description and schedule which show how the practice placement learning outcomes and progression are aligned with the rest of the programme and allow opportunities for feedback and progression towards the achievement of the standards of proficiency

- 2.4** The education provider will have a set of requirements for the selection of practice placements to ensure quality learning experiences for students that reflect the normal context and environment of practice. The education provider will work in partnership with the practice placement provider and have written agreements in place that clearly set out the responsibilities of all parties in ensuring that the placement supports the achievement of the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > a description of the requirements for a quality learning experience that reflects the normal context and environment of practice on placement
- > a description of the processes used by the provider to satisfy itself that these requirements are met
- > a copy of the written agreements used with placement providers that shows how the achievement of the standards of proficiency will be supported by all parties

- 2.5** The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring the quality of all practice placements. Students, the practice education team, placement providers and all relevant stakeholders – including service users where appropriate - must have a role in this review process including mechanisms for obtaining regular feedback.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > details of procedures for the on-going monitoring of placements
- > an explanation of how you collect, analyse and act on feedback from students and all stakeholders
- > a sample of feedback previously collected and the actions identified
- > policies and processes for dealing with situations where difficulties arise.

Evidence should demonstrate the existence of a functioning system rather than sporadic events or activities.

- 2.6** Clear communication and governance structures should be in place to facilitate ongoing communication between the placement and education providers.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a description of the governance structure included in a handbook for placement providers, a shared web space for communication or secure email system, schedule of meetings with placement providers. Evidence must point to the existence of ongoing communication structures, not just periodic interaction e.g. during approval or monitoring activities. These structures should be available across the duration of the placement and in all locations including those outside the State.

- 2.7** Student allocation to practice placements is based on the need to integrate theory and practice and to facilitate the student’s progressive development of the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > description of the decision making procedure used to allocate individuals to placement taking into account student’s performance in theory and practice elements
- > recording templates, logs or other supports that help students to relate theory to practice progressively over their placements and to receive feedback

- 2.8** Practice placement attendance requirements are explicit and detailed mechanisms and processes are in place to manage absence/non-attendance.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > course handbook or placement handbook with explicit communication to students on placement requirements and detail of the consequences and procedures that will apply in cases of absence/non-attendance including repeat placements, regulations regarding carrying placements and the consequences for progression if attendance requirements are not met

- 2.9** Pre-placement requirements – including academic, legal, occupational health and other requirements, and procedures for non-compliance with these requirements, are clear.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include training materials or supporting documentation for students where the pre-placement requirements are outlined. This may overlap with evidence submitted under the criterion 3.1

- 2.10** While on placement, appropriate support, guidance and supervision is maintained with the student by the practice education team.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include placement handbook or other documentation given to students. This must include details of scheduled sessions of support, guidance and supervision available from the practice education team as well as robust procedures for contacting the practice education team between scheduled sessions. These procedures should cover the placement period and all settings including those outside the State.

2.11 There must be a clear and explicit process in place for students to raise concerns in relation to their practice education and access appropriate supports.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include programme handbook or placement handbook where this process is communicated to students. The process should facilitate contact with the placement co-ordinator or other named individual throughout the placement and with the support services in the institution.

2.12 The student code of conduct - and processes for dealing with breaches of that code whilst on placement - is in place.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include documentation provided to students and practice placement providers which communicates the code of conduct and the processes used for dealing with breaches of the code.

2.13 The profile and roles of the practice education team must be described. Practice educators must also be registered with the appropriate registration board.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > job descriptions or role profiles used
- > list of all practice educators and their registration numbers

2.14 Students, practice placement providers and practice education teams will be fully prepared and informed of the expectations of the practice placement, including the education/training provider's student fitness-to-practise requirements.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include training materials or support documentation such as a placement handbook where the expectations and requirements are communicated to the parties involved, this will include information on:

- > the objectives of the placement
- > the setting of programme level and individual learning outcomes to be achieved by the student on placement
- > the timing and duration of the placement
- > records to be maintained
- > a student code of conduct
- > assessment requirements
- > procedures, including meetings, that should be followed when a student does not reach the required level of proficiency as specified in the documentation, and
- > communication channels for all the parties

2.15 Supervision policies include guidelines on how students progressively achieve independence in practice.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the webpage, handbook or other documentation given to students and practice placement providers.

2.16 Guidelines/procedures and supports are available for practice educators in managing students, including students who are in difficulty, throughout the placement.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a webpage, handbook or other documentation given to practice placement providers. This may include details of the support person or service to contact for guidance on managing students. This may also include criteria for identifying a student in difficulty, details of the procedure to follow and details of a support person or service to contact in such situations.

2.17 The education provider will make regular support and training available to the practice education team to develop their practice education skills.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include training agendas, materials, handbooks or feedback mechanisms that show the regular support and training available to the practice education team in all locations.

2.18 All stakeholders must be informed about practice education assessments, their link to the standards of proficiency and the marking criteria used. The practice education team must have access to assessment tools and be trained in completing these assessments and providing feedback during the placement.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a course or placement handbook to show clarity of communication with students and training materials or documentation outlining the support to the practice education team in making assessment decisions and to the provision of feedback.

2.19 Mechanisms for the return of placement assessments to the education provider must be in place.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a description of the mechanisms which apply to ensure that placement assessments are returned in a timely manner to the education provider to be stored securely and not kept at the placement location. The training materials or supporting documentation where this is outlined may also be included.

Criterion 3

Programme Admission

- 3.1** Clear and comprehensive information for prospective students about the programme and procedures for admission to the programme, including direct applications, must be available to ensure that prospective students can make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. Information provided should adhere to CORU's advertising guidelines regarding the approval status of qualifications and programmes.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the main communication items you use to disseminate information about the programme e.g. webpage, printed brochure, open day presentations, calendar entry.

- 3.2** The procedures for all student admissions to the programme must ensure that the stated entry criteria are met including any criteria relating to language proficiency, health requirements, criminal records and other appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards to ensure that students can participate in all elements of the programme.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a description of the selection procedures used to collect and evaluate information from applicants to ensure they meet the entry requirements. This may include evaluation sheets which are explicit about the criteria you use in making selection decisions including situations where multiple applicants meet the stated entry requirements and there are limited places. Evidence of the communication artefacts used to explain the stated entry requirements may also be included.

- 3.3** The admissions procedures must detail procedures for the recognition of prior learning and other inclusion mechanisms at the individual and collective levels and document the evidence used to justify any programme exemptions in the context of their impact on achievement of the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

The Registration Board sets requirements for the approval of programmes in their entirety. Thus, any procedures which offer advanced entry or give exemptions from the approved programme must satisfy the Board. Suitable evidence may include a description of the procedures used to collect and evaluate information about individuals or collectives seeking exemptions. You may also include the documentation you use to ensure that students admitted via these routes meet the standards of proficiency upon completion of your programme.

- 3.4** The admissions procedures must ensure that the provider has suitable policies in relation to equal opportunities for applicants and students that meet the requirements of the most recent legislation together with an indication of how these are implemented and monitored.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include written version of these policies which may be specific to your department/school or they may be the institutional policies that apply to your department/school. You must explain how these policies are put into practice and monitored for applicants and students. You must provide evidence that these policies are communicated to applicants and students (for example, in a student handbook or on a website), with information about what an applicant or student should do if they feel they have been discriminated against.

Criterion 4

Programme Management

- 4.1** The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's plans to ensure that admitted cohorts of students will have the opportunity to complete the programme and be eligible to apply for registration.

Guidelines:

By 'secure place' we mean that the institution is committed to providing enough financial resources to deliver the programme for the current cohort of students. Suitable evidence may include the strategic plans for the school/department and the institution, a multi-year funding model or letter of commitment.

- 4.2** The named person with direct responsibility for the design and integration of the profession-specific components of the programme must have appropriate qualifications and experience. S/he must also be registered with the appropriate registration board unless other arrangements are agreed, for example, during the transitional period.

Guidelines:

We will want to see that the person who has overall professional responsibility for the programme has appropriate qualifications and experience for the job.

It will be helpful if you complete the template provided which is designed to include evidence that he/she:

- > holds a relevant professional qualification
- > has relevant educational management experience;
- > is able to organise how the programme will be delivered.

We expect that this person will normally be registered with the relevant registration board. However, we recognise that it may be possible for a programme to be led by someone who is registered in another health and social care profession. If this is the case, you should provide detail on the resources that are provided to support them in their role.

- 4.3** The programme must have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place incorporating input from staff, students and all relevant stakeholders.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include description of the system, the terms of reference and composition of any committees or groups involved in its implementation. You must include evidence of the implementation of your system e.g. the meeting dates and minutes of meetings, information gathering instruments, reports, and the outcome of feedback such as decisions made or action plans as they related to the programme.

- 4.4** All staff involved in the programme delivery and assessment of students must possess relevant qualifications, expertise and knowledge for the subject matter they teach

Guidelines:

We will want to see that the qualifications and experience of the teaching staff are appropriate for the programme elements that they teach. Completing the template provided for the relevant teaching staff should demonstrate how this criteria is met. You will need to show us that the staff on the programme team (including part-time staff) and other people who help deliver the programme are qualified to deliver the programme.

- 4.5** Those responsible for delivery and assessment of the core professional elements of the programme must be registered with the appropriate registration board

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a list of those responsible for the delivery and assessment of the core professional elements of the programme and the registration number of each individual listed.

- 4.6** A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional development relevant to their roles as educators of health and social care professionals.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include development policy in operation and details of development events or activities communicated to staff and contributors. Development activities may relate specifically to the profession and to education generally.

- 4.7** There is a mechanism in place to communicate and foster an understanding of the practice of the profession among non-professional staff involved in the delivery of the programme.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include materials used to induct non-professional staff on professional requirements, composition of programme or curriculum committees to include non-professional staff or module descriptors which clearly distinguish between professional and non-professional learning outcomes.

- 4.8** There are resources to support student learning in all settings to achieve the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > module descriptors, handbooks and guides
- > up to date reading lists

During the approval visit, a tour of facilities can be used to present evidence such as;

- > information communications technology facilities
- > a virtual learning environment
- > lecture rooms
- > tutorial rooms
- > presentation equipment
- > specialist laboratories
- > specialist equipment and materials
- > library facilities
- > student learning support resources

We will also speak to students and service directors (e.g. librarian) about facilities and resources during the approval visit.

You must provide a summary in your mapping of how these resources are used to achieve the standards of proficiency and description of how they are made available in all settings. By all settings we mean the places where the theoretical and practice placement elements of the programme are delivered. If these elements are delivered across multiple sites e.g. classes specific to the students on the programme are held in different campuses you must be clear about the access in both sites.

- 4.9** There must be academic, health, wellbeing and welfare support mechanisms in place for students, designed with their needs in mind, and responsive to feedback from those who use them.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include websites for health and counselling services and the personal/pastoral care tutor services.

During the approval visit, a tour of facilities can be used to present evidence such as the health centre. We will also speak to students and service directors (e.g. head of student services) about facilities and resources during the approval visit.

You must show how you use monitoring and evaluation systems to determine how these support mechanisms are used and how effective they are.

4.10 The provider must identify any requirements for attendance, the procedure for monitoring attendance and the consequences of not meeting attendance requirements where relevant.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a description of the attendance requirements, consequences of not meeting them and procedures used to address poor attendance. You may also wish to include evidence that this information has been communicated to all relevant parties e.g. students, staff and practice tutors.

4.11 Where students act as service users in practical and clinical teaching, relevant protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Guidelines:

By 'relevant protocols' we mean procedures for obtaining and storing current and informed consent for all relevant activities e.g.

- > sharing personal information;
- > patient positioning activities;
- > practising techniques specific to a certain profession; and
- > experiential groups.

Suitable evidence may include details of the procedures that apply and sample completed consent forms. You must tell prospective students how involved they are expected to be in the programme, taking account of, for example, students' right to confidentiality, cultural differences or the person's medical health. You must show where you make this clear to students and applicants linking the evidence for this criterion with that for criterion 3.1.

4.12 A profession-specific student code of conduct must be in place, including explicit information on processes and outcomes for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct, and fitness to practise.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the documents where the code, process and outcomes are communicated to students, staff, practice placement providers and any other relevant individuals. You may want to consider the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics from the relevant Registration Board.

- 4.13** There must be a quality assurance policy and system in place – which includes regular quality assurance audits, reviews and reports – that identifies quality issues and with clear accountability for addressing these issues.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the written quality assurance policy which should include a statement on the institution's strategy for quality and standards, the organisation of the quality assurance system, the involvement of students and other relevant stakeholders and accountability of departments, schools, faculties or other organisational units and individuals for the assurance of quality. By 'in place' we mean a functioning systems with evidence of outcomes such as reports and action plans applicable to the level of the programme.

- 4.14** There must be formal processes in place for students to raise individual and collective concerns about the programme and to provide feedback on the content and quality of the programme.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the website or course handbook where the processes are communicated as well as evidence that the system for regular feedback on programme is functioning e.g. instruments used to gather feedback, outcome of such feedback collection including reports, decisions and action plans applicable to the level of the programme.

- 4.15** The programme provider must have secure mechanisms in place to manage and store student records/data and demonstrate compliance with data protection legislation.

Guidelines:

We do not expect that this information is maintained at individual department level. Documentary description of the mechanisms will suffice with the option to visit the relevant section/department/office during the review visit.

- 4.16** The programme provider must have detailed health and safety policies, procedures and implementation processes in place, including review of these policies and demonstrate evidence of appropriate insurance.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the relevant polices and documentation of the procedures and process for implementation and review and an insurance certificate, or equivalent, that shows insurance applies to students in all settings e.g. on placement and all classroom and laboratory settings.

Criterion 5

Curriculum

- 5.1** The curriculum must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

As part of the approval process we require you to map the standards of proficiency against the intended curriculum. This mapping and the supporting evidence such as module descriptors or assessments will be used as part of the evidence you submit for this criterion. Your evidence must demonstrate that every student completing the programme can meet all of the standards of proficiency, no matter what their entry route onto the programme, which elective modules they choose, or if they postpone their study. Suitable evidence for this criterion may include a summary grid mapping the curriculum to standards of proficiency by year/by stage/across the whole programme.

- 5.2** The curriculum must be guided by evidence-informed professional knowledge, relevant to current practice and the philosophy and core values associated with the profession with evidence of input from all relevant stakeholders including service users and employers.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include:

- > minutes or reports of curriculum input from service users, employers, practitioners and other stakeholders
- > details of qualifications and experience of teaching staff (which might include information about how you keep the curriculum relevant throughout the ongoing research experience, or professional activity of members of the programme team);
- > evidence that the programme team take part in continuing professional development (CPD);
- > evidence of how research and academic activity affect the programme, and its development;
- > peer-reviewed journals used in the curriculum;
- > implementation plans following reports from quality assurance bodies
- > evidence of how changes in policy and practice or guidance e.g. from professional bodies affect your programme's development.

- 5.3** The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum and achievement of standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a statement of your learning philosophy, your course handbook, module descriptors which outline the learning approaches used in each module.

- 5.4** Where the profession normally engages in interprofessional practice to achieve service-user outcomes, the curriculum must reflect evidence of relevant inter-professional education along with addressing the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group.

Guidelines:

The narrative should justify the inclusion of inter-professional education with relevant professionals based on an analysis of the practice environment of the profession. Suitable evidence may include timetables showing which parts of the curriculum are shared, and which are not, module descriptors with learning outcomes and the profiles of external contributors if used on the programme.

- 5.5** The curriculum should be designed to facilitate the timely integration of theory and practice with regular opportunities for feedback, reflection and consolidation.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a programme design overview of the sequencing and integration of the various programme elements. This may have already been prepared for quality assurance purposes. The summary provided in the mapping document should explain the rationale behind the programme design.

- 5.6** The curriculum must embed a culture of professionalism and make sure that students understand the implications of professional regulation including adherence to the relevant Registration Board's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a module descriptor and assessments where the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics from the relevant Registration Board is taught and applied by students.

Criterion 6

Assessment Strategy

- 6.1** Assessments must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include individual module descriptors which explain the assessment methods used for that module along with a programme or stage level mapping of the assessments against the standards of proficiency. The programme handbook may also be used to provide evidence of:

- > pre-requisites and co-requisites on the programme;
- > compulsory and optional modules;
- > individual module pass marks;
- > number of resits allowed for each assessment, module and practice placement component (and within what period of time);
- > treatment of absence from assessments
- > number of module resits allowed within any one year;
- > compensation regulations;
- > maximum time a student can take to complete the programme.

- 6.2** Assessments must be employed that assess learning outcomes (at module and programme levels) and appropriately and effectively facilitate progression decisions and the achievement of the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include individual module descriptors which explain the assessment methods used for that module along with a programme or stage level mapping of the assessments against the standards of proficiency. The programme handbook may also be used to provide evidence of:

- > pre-requisites and co-requisites on the programme;
- > compulsory and optional modules;
- > individual module pass marks;
- > number of resits allowed for each assessment, module and practice placement component (and within what period of time);
- > treatment of absence from assessments
- > number of module resits allowed within any one year;
- > compensation regulations;
- > maximum time a student can take to complete the programme.

- 6.3** There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure good practices are implemented in assessment including the use of formative and summative methods.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include an overview of all assessment methods, formative and summative used, as well as a description of your programme validation, review, external examining or moderation processes. You may wish to include examples of feedback used to ensure good assessment practices.

- 6.4** Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the assessment regulations and qualifications and experience of the current external examiner(s).

- 6.5** Students must be informed about the assessments being used for their programme and be clear about requirements for progression and procedures for non-progression decisions.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the programme handbook or assessment regulations where the requirements and procedures are communicated to students and staff involved in progression decisions. The requirements for progression may include credit-related and non-credit-related elements.

- 6.6** All staff involved in the assessment of students – formative or summative – must be informed about their link to the standards of proficiency and, where appropriate, trained to facilitate these assessments.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include qualifications and experience of staff involved in assessment and information on assessment training or supports provided by the institution.

- 6.7** All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Guidelines:

By external-reference frameworks we mean those such as the National Framework of Qualifications. The programme may have to meet the requirements for a Bachelor degree, for example. Suitable evidence may include the programme validation, moderation and external examining processes.

- 6.8** The assessments in both the education setting and practice placement setting should be constructively aligned to achievement of the standards of proficiency.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include a grid of assessments used in all settings mapped against the standards of proficiency. The rationale for the alignment should be explained clearly in the narrative.

- 6.9** Procedures are in place for students to obtain results and feedback and to make an appeal of their results. Students and staff are informed of these procedures.

Guidelines:

Suitable evidence may include the assessment regulations where the procedures are described and programme handbook where they are communicated to students and staff involved in marking and provision of feedback.

Glossary

Act - The Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended).

Approval process - The process that leads to a decision as to whether a programme meets the criteria set for approval of education and training programmes and produces graduates who meet the standards of proficiency.

Approved programme - A specific and coherent set of educational activities designed to achieve learning objectives over a sustained period which meets the criteria for education and training programmes and standards of proficiency set by a Registration Board and has been granted approval by the Registration Board.

Approved qualification - A document that attests to a person having achieved the standard of proficiency required for registration in a designated profession, that has been approved by bye-law of the Registration Board of the profession concerned and that relates to a qualification awarded in the State.

Approved qualifications bye-law - The Approved Qualifications Bye- Law lists the qualifications approved by the Registration Board as attesting to the standards of proficiency required for registration under Section 38 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005 (as amended).

Core programme team - Members of the programme team who also have responsibility for aspects of the programme design and management such as curriculum, assessment and admissions. This may be the course committee or any other group who manage these elements of the programme.

Code of professional conduct and ethics - The standards of conduct, performance and ethics to which a member of that profession must adhere throughout the course of their work.

Criterion/criteria - The requirements for the design, organisation and management of an education and training programme to ensure that it can consistently and effectively produce graduates who meet the standards of proficiency.

Education provider - The institution that offers an education and training programme and which control key aspects of the programme including admissions, curriculum delivery, quality management, placement management and assessment.

External contributor - A person who contributes to the curriculum of a programme but who is not employed by the education provider.

Mapping document - Template document to be completed by the education provider explaining how the programme meets the criteria and standards of proficiency.

Monitoring process - The process which determines the continuing suitability of an approved programme.

Practice placement - A period of clinical or practical experience that forms part of a programme.

Practice education team - Persons who are responsible for a student's education during the period of clinical or practical placement. This includes the practice educator on site in the placement providers.

Programme director - The named person with direct responsibility for the design and integration of the profession-specific components of the programme.

Programme team - The individuals responsible for the delivery and assessment of the curriculum.

Register - A register established and maintained under Section 36 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended).

Registration Board - A board established under Section 26 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended).

Review team - A group of persons who carry out the review of programmes and prepare a report to assist a Registration Board in making decisions in relation to approval and monitoring.

Service user - A person who uses or is affected by the services of registrants or students.

Standards of proficiency - The threshold skills and abilities required for entry to the register.



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