

A National Framework for Support Worker Education and Development

Jointly developed by

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) and
The College of Occupational Therapists (COT)



THE CHARTERED SOCIETY OF PHYSIOTHERAPY



College of
Occupational
Therapists



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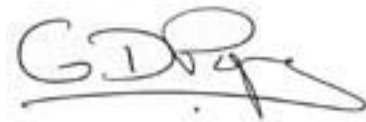
Foreword

Joint statement from CSP and COT Council Chairs

The Government has acknowledged the need to modernise the workforce, which includes increasing the status, responsibility, and accountability of support workers.

In meeting this aim, the National Framework for Support Worker Education and Development, developed and produced jointly by The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) and The College of Occupational Therapists (COT), provides a document by which support workers can evaluate their practice and learning needs and determine the 'what' and 'how' of continuing professional development. It is meant to assist support workers in identifying their lifelong learning and CPD goals so that they are continuously challenged in their role and service users receive the highest level of quality care possible.

The COT and the CSP fully value the contributions that support workers make as partners in service delivery. Support workers are essential members of the workforce in delivering quality intervention across health and social care services. We hope this framework enables support workers to realise their potential in education and development so that they will continue to contribute to excellent, high quality practice.



Professor Jenny Butler
Chair of Council
**College of Occupational
Therapists**



Grahame Pope
Chair of Council
**The Chartered Society
of Physiotherapy**



Statement from the Chair of the Framework Steering Group

Our hopes for a framework for support worker education and development are now a reality. There are a lot more validated learning opportunities than we have ever had before and this framework will, I hope, be a very valuable resource for us to develop our individual careers.

I have felt strongly for some time that allied health profession support workers should be working together. The core skills we need are similar and many of us are being required to broaden our remit across several therapies. We now need to adapt to new challenges and responsibilities to provide a high quality seamless service to our patients. I believe support workers themselves have influenced changes in educational opportunities, and will continue to do so by networking locally with peers and managers and nationally through the professional bodies such as CSP and COT.

My thanks go to the steering group, CSP and COT officers, and councils for enabling the publication of this document.



Lucy Gymer
Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Support Worker
Chair of the Framework Steering Group



Key to abbreviations

AfC	Agenda for Change
AHP	Allied Health Professions
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
AVCE	Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education
BSc Hons	Bachelor of Science Honours Degree
BTEC	(formerly Business and Technology Education Council) Vocational brand of Edexcel
CATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer System
COT	College of Occupational Therapists
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSP	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DH	Department of Health
EC	European Commission
FE	Further Education
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
HSA	Hospital Saving Association
ILA	Individual Learning Accounts
IT	Information Technology
KSF	Knowledge and Skills Framework
N/SVQ	National/Scottish Vocational Qualification
NHS	National Health Service
NHSU	National Health Service University
NOCN	National Open College Network
NOS	National Occupational Standards
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSF	National Service Framework
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OCN	Open College Network
OTIP	Occupational Therapists in Independent Practice
PDP	Personal Development Plan
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SEHD	Scottish Executive Health Department
SSSC	Scottish Social Services Council
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification
TI	Technical Instructor
UG	Undergraduate
WDC	Workforce Development Confederation



Introduction and context

Support workers in occupational therapy and physiotherapy are valued members of the health and social care team. Government initiatives, in particular the modernisation agenda, have resulted in support workers being required to develop their roles, supported by relevant education and development opportunities.

This framework:

- Applies to support worker education and development across the health and social care sectors (including voluntary, private, and public sectors).
- Identifies options and guides support workers in choosing learning pathways to further their development
- Enables support workers to keep abreast of current good practice and to demonstrate development
- Guides and facilitates change that is required by external stakeholders and aims to meet the needs of employers
- Maps a range of lifelong learning opportunities for support worker CPD and career development
- Assists with the planning of future learning for role and career development, including new job responsibilities and routes to qualifying as an allied health professional
- Highlights diversity and equal opportunity issues for support workers as members of a team.

Why do we need a framework?

The primary purpose of this framework is to support and guide you – the support worker – in choosing learning pathways to further your development. The term support worker is used throughout, recognising that it covers the broad spectrum of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and generic assistants including technical instructors, sports and massage therapists and others who work within the physiotherapy, occupational therapy or multi-disciplinary team. (Within the National Health Service (NHS) some of these job titles may be changing due to Agenda for Change). Your working environment may be in the NHS (acute, community or mental health), social care, or the independent, voluntary or private sector: the framework is equally relevant to all.

The publication of this framework is timely in light of the NHS modernisation agenda and the increasing status, responsibility and accountability expected of healthcare support staff. It is linked to the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) and addresses your expectations with regard to your career development whether you work in the voluntary, public or private sectors.

The development of a joint framework emerged from a recognition that a joint CSP/ COT framework for education and development would best reflect the current working arrangements of many support workers.

The framework maps the range of learning opportunities available to you when considering your CPD. It includes mandatory and induction training, in-service education and the various options of accredited courses and routes onto either 'Assistant Practitioner' status, or entry to one of the physiotherapy, occupational therapy, or other health professions' qualifying programmes. The framework acknowledges that CPD is an integral part of all the learning pathways, which are underpinned by work experience, reflective practice and portfolio keeping – learning in action. >



> The framework is designed primarily to guide you in your CPD. It can be used in preparation for appraisal and as a tool to support the development of a Personal Development Plan (PDP). It can also be used by education providers for curriculum development and by managers and service providers as a guide to learning and development opportunities for their staff. The framework includes case examples from support workers involved in various educational programmes.

This is a living document, which will need to be updated with all the changes that are taking place within the health, social care, and the education sector. For this reason detailed information regarding contact and application details is in loose-leaf form so that it can be updated. This supporting material is titled *Support Worker Education and Development: Learning Opportunities* and can be obtained from the CPD unit at the CSP or from the Education Group at the COT. Information that is specific to one profession (e.g OT) will be available only through the respective professional body. The list of information included is not exhaustive but every effort has been made to include most of the relevant and significant learning opportunities across the UK.

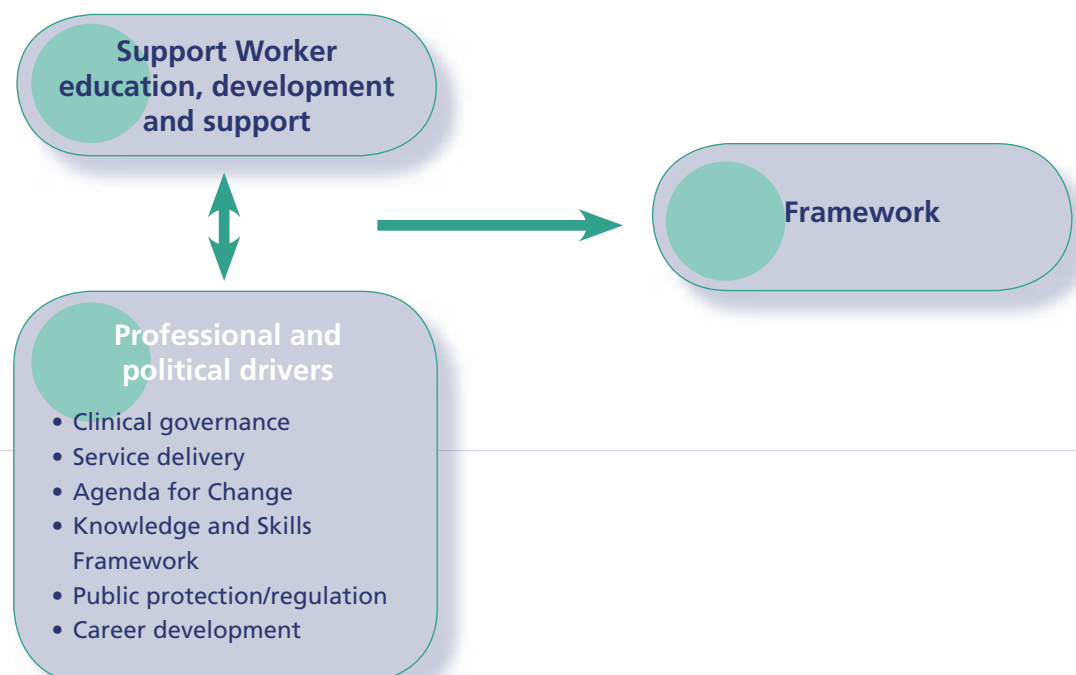
The framework is also supported by a number of briefing documents worksheets. The briefings cover topics including:

- The political context in which support workers work
- The impact of Agenda for Change (AfC), the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) and the NHS Careers Framework on support workers in the NHS
- Factors regarding knowledge and skills and career development for support workers in the social care sector.

The worksheets are there for you to write down your thoughts, ideas and responses to key questions that are posed throughout the framework document.

The framework has been developed by a small representative steering group, served by CSP and COT officers, and has involved a wide consultation process with CSP and COT members and associate members. Further development of the framework will be explored with other allied health professions (AHP) professional bodies in the foreseeable future.

The drivers for a national framework



Framework outcomes and user guide

The *National Framework for Support Worker Education and Development* has eight key learning outcomes (see below). These outcomes represent the areas in which you are expected to develop your knowledge and skills when engaging in your CPD. The outcomes cover the main areas of your practice and can be linked with, and mapped against, other existing frameworks.

You need to consider if you are making progress in your education and development against any or all of these outcomes. Any chosen learning route or pathway (whether it be a formal course, shadowing, reflection or peer review) needs to be considered in light of whether it achieves these outcomes. Achievement of the outcomes will occur at different points throughout your career and not all of the outcomes will be met each time. You should, however, aim to meet all of the outcomes below at some stage in your career and at increasing levels of complexity as you develop.

The following outcomes have been identified as key to your development as a support worker:

Framework outcomes

1. Undertake effective CPD
2. Establish and maintain good communication with others
3. Practise within core areas of support worker practice in line with evidence-based healthcare, national standards and changing demands
4. Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of issues affecting support worker practice
5. Support equality for all in AHP practice
6. Assist people to optimise their health and social wellbeing and acknowledge their right to make their own decisions
7. Contribute to the delivery of AHP services in response to individual need
8. Manage oneself and work with others to optimise results.

The framework outcomes can be linked with other key frameworks of relevance to support workers working in the health and social care sector in general, and the NHS in particular. National Occupational Standards (NOS) provide a detailed framework against which to measure support worker performance in particular areas of practice. Many of the new NOS in health and social care cover areas outlined in the framework above. If you work in the NHS you also need to consider how the framework outcomes link with dimensions in the KSF. Appendix 8.1 demonstrates the key links between the framework outcomes above, the NOS and the KSF. There may also be competency frameworks in place at your work. These are relevant to your competent performance in your own environment. These can also be mapped, at a local level, onto the framework outcomes above.

Reflecting on the achievement of these outcomes for any form of learning is an individual responsibility. It may be helpful to decide which outcomes you already meet and what evidence you already have to support you in demonstrating those met outcomes. You may have a portfolio of evidence gathered as part of undertaking a National/Scottish Vocational Qualification (N/SVQ) or through your engagement in CPD. You should consider seeking support from your line manager, supervisor, CPD co-ordinator and/or mentor in looking at how the evidence you have gathered demonstrates how you have met some or all of the framework outcomes. You can then consider ways in which progress could be made in addressing the outcomes that you do not currently meet.



Do you currently meet any of the above learning outcomes? Are there some that you feel you need to work towards? Jot your thoughts down in the worksheets that support this framework.

User guide

To summarise

The framework outcomes can be used as a tool to assist you in identifying your learning needs and in gathering evidence of your learning and development. An assessment of the evidence you have gathered of your development across all of the outcomes may highlight gaps that can then form a starting point for planning your future learning. Once your chosen learning activity has taken place, the framework outcomes can be used to assess how well the activity you undertook has addressed the gaps in your knowledge and skills. At the same time it is important to assess what changes you have made to your practice and how the learning has been assimilated into your practice.

You can also use the outcomes to guide you in structuring the evidence you already have, in a meaningful and comprehensive way. This process may also assist you to identify evidence you could gather that might be of use in demonstrating your abilities. The process of using the framework as a starting point for engaging in the CPD process is described in detail in Section 3: Lifelong Learning and Continuing Professional Development.



Think about the gaps you may have identified in your learning. Identify some specific topics you might like to learn more about, as well as approaches to meeting these learning needs. Jot your thoughts down in the worksheets that support this framework.

How do I record evidence of my learning?

Whether undertaking a formal or informal CPD activity (see Section 3) you should keep a record of your learning activities. You are advised to create and maintain a CPD portfolio for this purpose. A portfolio is also a place to further analyse learning and highlight where new learning may need to be undertaken in the future.

Portfolio-keeping is a relatively new approach to learning for many people. Many employer organisations produce their own portfolios for employees. The CSP and COT have developed guides and materials for use by all their members, which can support the development of a portfolio for qualified, associate and student members alike (COT 2004a, CSP 2001). Ultimately, however, a portfolio is simply a folder or file in which you keep evidence of your learning. Whether you purchase a purpose-made portfolio, or simply go to a stationers to buy a ring binder and some subject dividers, you will have the starting point from which you can develop your own portfolio.

It is your responsibility to judge the effectiveness and usefulness of any learning that takes place, especially if you have been systematic about identifying your learning needs, writing clear expected learning outcomes, and accessing appropriate learning activities. The impact of this learning on your practice may also be monitored by your employer or other agencies. This approach to the monitoring and measurement of learning is favoured and promoted by the CSP and COT and this framework gives you outcomes against which to measure your learning. A table of different types of CPD activities is included in Appendix 8.2 as well as examples of types of evidence that you may consider including in any CPD portfolio.



What evidence of your learning have you gathered? How do you demonstrate this evidence?

Additional considerations

You undertake your work in a context that is driven by both your area of work and the wider political agenda. Please see the briefing, *Political Context – the need for education and development*, for a detailed description of the political drivers that have pushed the agenda for support worker education and development in each of the four countries. The diagram below summarises the different drivers that may affect your working life and your career development.

Drivers of change: support worker education and development

The diagram below depicts the various influences on support worker education and development. The triangles represent the sectors in which support worker education and development is occurring and undergoing change. The green squares represent the elements that have influenced the increase and needed emphasis on support worker education and development.



Your CPD (e.g., maintaining competence, continuing to learn and develop) is just as important as ever. There is a strong push towards you becoming regulated (Department of Health (DH) 2004a, Scottish Executive Health Department (SEHD) 2004); a similar process that currently occurs for AHPs e.g., occupational therapists, dieticians, and physiotherapists. Plans to have all support staff in social care across the UK regulated by Skills for Care, the sector skills council for the Social Services Sector are well underway (Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) 2004).

If you work in the NHS, your organisation may have a specific section on their website that is geared towards lifelong learning and could be of interest to you. You may discover learning opportunities or develop ideas on how to pursue learning for your own personal development.

Check out the NHSU website: www.nhsu.nhs.uk/webportal/index.jsp for more learning opportunities or to learn about new developments of lifelong learning within health.

In addition to the above mentioned briefing on political context, the following briefings, *Support Workers in the NHS: Agenda for Change, the Knowledge and Skills Framework and the NHS Careers Framework* and *Support Workers in Social Care: Knowledge and Skills and Career Development*, will provide you with expanded information.



3.

Lifelong Learning and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Both the CSP and COT are committed to the basic principles of lifelong learning, which are directed towards equalising opportunities for personal and professional development, with the goal of achieving safe, efficient and effective person-centred services. The term CPD is used to cover all aspects of personal and professional development relevant to your work role. CPD is defined as:

A range of learning activities undertaken to maintain and develop knowledge and skills for effective and high quality practice.

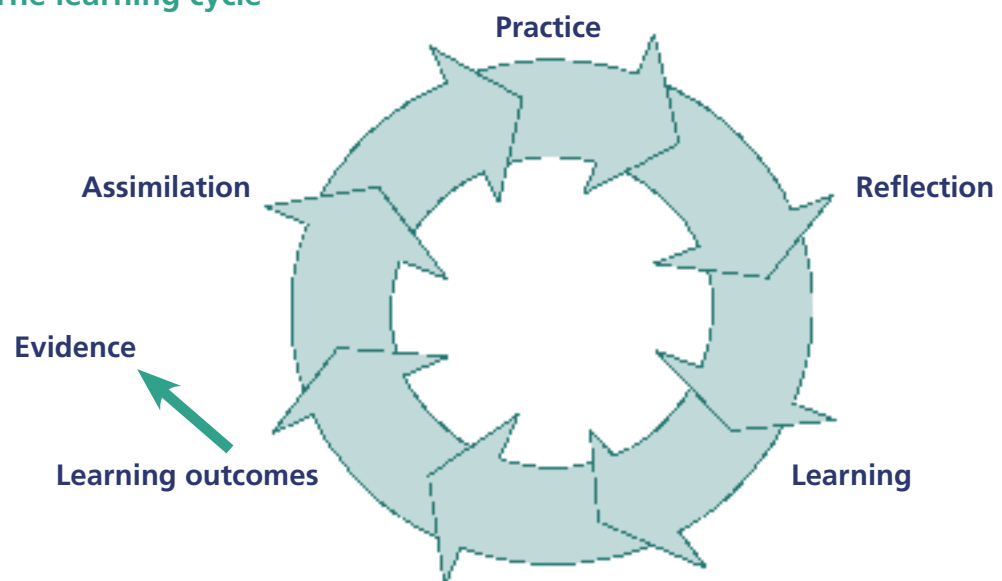
This framework is underpinned by CPD, a process that enables you and others to maintain, develop and enhance your skills, knowledge and competence to improve your performance at work. In order to be effective in your CPD, you should systematically go through the CPD process, outlined below, reflect on your learning and practice and keep a portfolio of your development.

The essential CPD principles are:

- You are responsible for managing and undertaking CPD activity and the effective learner knows best what he/she needs to learn
- The learning process is continuous and comprises a systematic cycle of analysis, action and review
- Expected learning outcomes should be clear, should serve organisational needs, patient/client needs and individual goals
- The process is planned and based on identifiable outcomes of learning that the individual achieves.

Whilst you are responsible for your CPD, support is required from your employers, manager and colleagues in terms of guidance, resources and a learning culture. CPD should be seen as an integral part of practice.

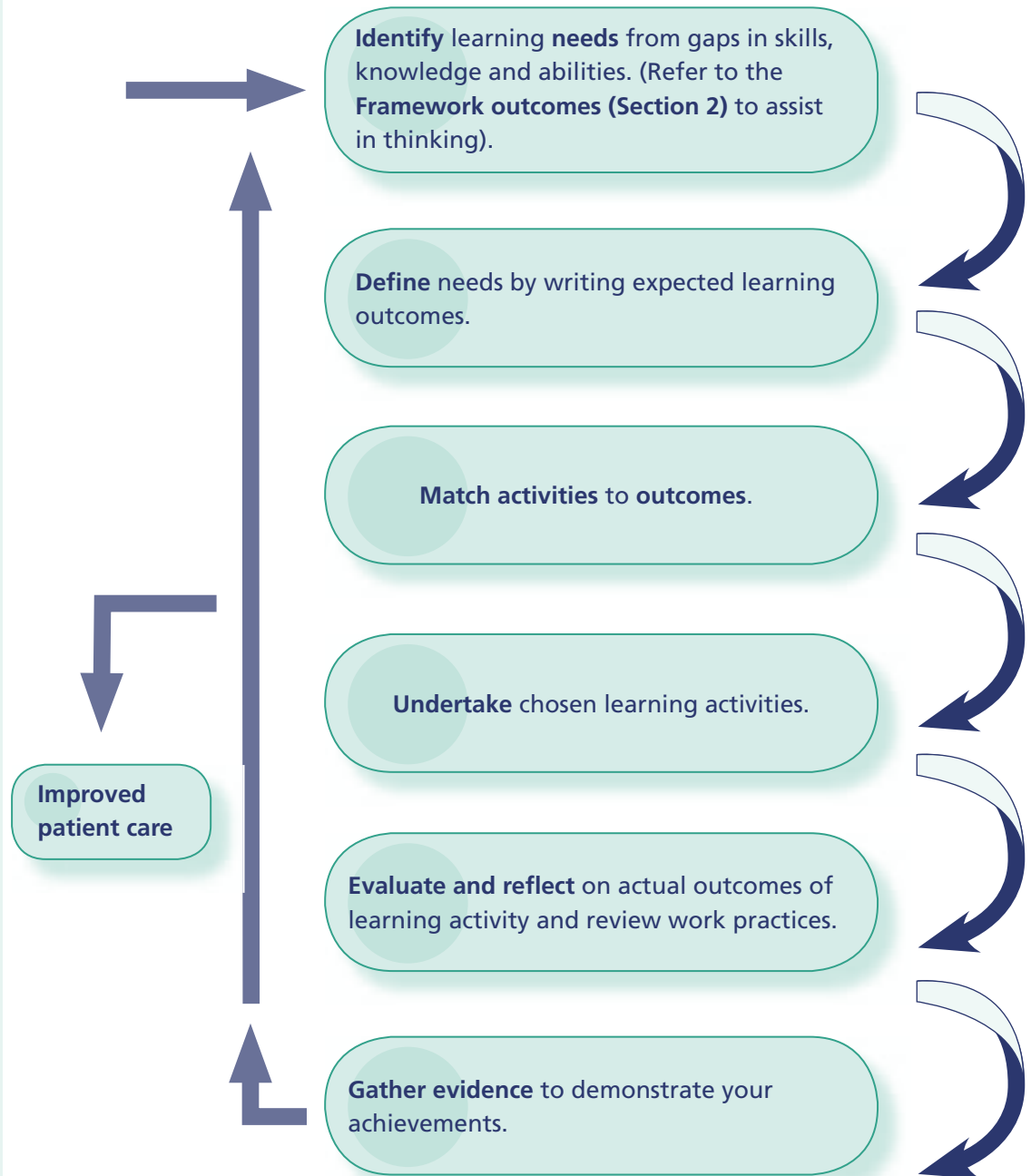
The learning cycle



The diagram above illustrates the learning cycle in which you should be engaged throughout your practice. By reflecting on your practice, and thereby drawing out learning, you should be able to assimilate that learning into your practice to the benefit of your patients or clients. While you are engaged in this cycle you will be generating evidence of your CPD.

The CPD process for support worker education and development

Putting the CPD principles into action looks like this:



In order to be an effective learner, you need to focus on the above process and discuss your identified learning needs with your manager and colleagues. These principles should be clearly linked into an appraisal or development review process and your PDP and can guide you in the questions you should be asking.

- 1. Identify learning needs** – What gaps are there in my skills/knowledge which, if addressed, could help me do my job more effectively?
- 2. Write expected learning outcomes** – What exactly do I need to know/must I be able to do to meet my role objectives or to develop my role?
- 3. Learning activity** – What educational activity will best meet my learning need and produce the desired learning outcome? This framework will be a useful tool in answering this

question. It is also important to consider your personal learning style when choosing the activity. The CSP and COT have respective guides for portfolio development including questionnaires that can be used to determine your preferred learning style (COT 2004a, CSP 2001).

4. **Evaluation of learning** – What have I actually learnt from the activity and has it addressed initial skills or knowledge gaps?
5. **Application of learning to practice** – How am I now going to use my new skill/knowledge in practice to improve patient/client care and service delivery?
6. **Evaluation of impact of learning on practice** – What difference have my new skills made to my practice?

The above process can be seen as a constantly repeating cycle that any learner should go through when considering undertaking a CPD activity.

Planning your CPD

CPD needs careful thought and planning. The focus will vary at different stages of your career and there may be periods when you devote considerable commitment to your development and other times when you are undertaking CPD just to keep abreast. For example, if you are a newly appointed support worker, it is likely that you will concentrate on your induction plan and some in-house education. If you work in the NHS and are aiming to develop your role and seek regrading or movement through the AfC pay bands, you may consider undertaking a formal qualification alongside in-service education and other informal learning activities. Alternatively, if you are satisfied with your current position, your plan will consist of keeping up-to-date by, for example, in-service education, discussion with colleagues or reading books, journals and articles relating to your practice

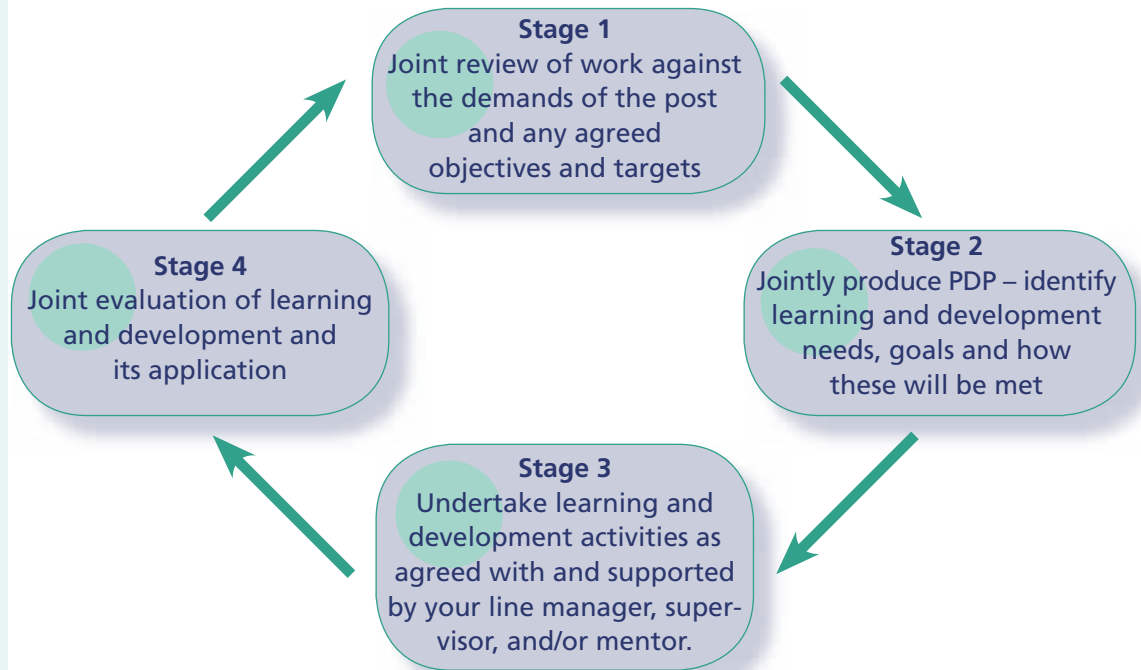
It is important to undertake a range of appropriate CPD activities, which will fulfil your identified learning outcomes (CSP 2003a and b, CSP 2004a). If you work in the NHS or social care you need to refer to the NOS when addressing your CPD. You also need to demonstrate that you have learnt from the activities and how you have used the learning in your practice. A CPD portfolio is a tool to help you through this process (CSP 2003c).

Planning your CPD is an activity that may take place within the formal context of a personal development review. The development review process has four stages:

1. A joint review between you and your line manager (or another appropriate person acting in that capacity) of your work against the demands of the post, including how you are applying your learning.
2. The development of a PDP that identifies your learning and development needs, short and long-term goals and how these goals will be met. The plan is jointly developed and agreed between you and your line manager as to how these goals will be met.
3. Undertake learning and development activities as agreed with and supported by your line manager, supervisor, or mentor on an ongoing basis.
4. An evaluation is completed based on the learning and development that has taken place. The cycle then starts at the beginning again. The process is shown in the diagram on the next page.



Development review process



The above review process was developed as part of the Department of Health programme for implementation of the KSF and the new NHS Careers Framework (DH 2004b). For this cycle to take place (and continue) you and your manager need to be clear about the expectations within your current post. In the NHS, this will be done through developing a KSF outline for that post. The KSF outline describes the NHS KSF dimensions that apply to that post and identifies the level at which the post requires you to be working. It is this outline that identifies the key elements of the KSF required for a particular job role, service or patient/client need. The KSF outline is the tool used in the development cycle to identify your development needs whether you wish to remain at your current level or progress through the career framework to a higher level of working. If you work outside the NHS there will be other frameworks, such as locally developed competency frameworks, or NOS, that can be used to assist in the development review cycle. Wherever you work, the framework outcomes outlined in Section 2 will be a useful additional resource in development planning.

For more information on AfC and the KSF see the briefing paper *Support Workers in the NHS: Agenda for Change, the Knowledge and Skills Framework and the NHS Careers Framework* that accompanies this document.

Associate members and members of CSP or COT can download CPD tools and information from their respective websites:

CSP: www.csp.org.uk

COT: www.cot.org.uk



Learning environments

Learning and development is more likely to occur when people are encouraged to regularly question and discuss their practice with others, and feel that it is safe to do so. Learning should not be an isolated process and support from line managers and peers is crucial. Different processes and mechanisms, such as appraisal, mentoring, peer review, should be introduced to foster the culture of a 'learning organisation' where learning is valued as a means of enhancing the service and individual development .

Learning can be undertaken in a range of settings, covering many different types of approaches, both formal and informal. You may find that some learning environments suit you better than others. It is important to consider this when you are looking at the various learning options available to you.

Which type of learning environment would suit me best?

Classroom learning

This traditional approach to learning will suit you if you are a learner who likes a formal learning environment and can take time out from other commitments to attend classes. In today's society, however, it is recognised that the traditional classroom approach is no longer relevant to many people. Other learning settings have evolved; some 'blended' with classroom learning to provide all-round support (e.g., BTEC and National Open College Network).

Work-based learning

Work-based learning in physiotherapy and occupational therapy occurs through everyday work activities, developing professional knowledge and skills that can be evidenced by writing measurable learning outcomes. Work-based learning activities include any learning activity that takes place in the workplace and can be formal e.g., N/SVQ, or informal, such as reflecting on day to day practice. It is also possible to pursue a work-based learning route to qualification as a physiotherapist or occupational therapist.

To capture learning from work-based activities, the CSP and COT encourage systematic, documented, reflective practice in order to provide evidence in the form of learning outcomes. Reflective practice requires the learner to take a moment to consciously analyse decision-making processes, drawing on theory and applying it again in practice. This critical analysis and evaluation of practice or learning activity refocuses thinking about existing skills and knowledge of practice. Different methods of reflective practice can be adopted; you can keep a diary, journal or log, or use peer review and clinical supervision systems to document reflections.

Work-based learning may be suitable for you if you enjoy reflecting on your own experiences in your workplace and drawing learning from your own experiences. It may also suit your circumstances better by allowing you to continue to work while you pursue a qualification. Although reflection and evaluation should be part of any learning programme they form an integral and defining part of the work-based learning approach.

Online/e-learning

Over recent years, online learning, also referred to as e-learning, has developed vastly. This has given learners more flexibility to choose where, when and how they learn. It is no longer essential to travel distances to find an appropriate course provider. Throughout the UK, further and higher education providers are developing online courses, from basic skills training and Information Technology (IT) courses, to complex clinical education. The key to online or e-learning is that the content provided digitally is supported by appropriate learning support and services, (e.g., Learndirect, Care Connect).

Taking part in on-line or e-learning programmes may suit you if you are comfortable working with a computer and enjoy working at your own pace.

Distance learning

Distance learning provides similar benefits to online/e-learning in the sense that you choose when and where you learn, but distance learning does not have to be carried out online, as learners on correspondence courses are aware. Paper-based learning resources take you through your course of study. It should be recognised, however, that learning providers can and do combine both online and paper-based distance learning to provide holistic support for individuals, (e.g., the Open University).



What is your preferred learning style? How might it help guide you in choosing your learning activities?

When considering various learning environments and options it can be very helpful to be aware of your own learning style and preferences. There are self-evaluation tools available to help you look at this aspect of your learning profile (CSP 2001). Moreover, there are many different learning style assessment tools available. A google search of 'learning styles' will provide you with plenty to choose from.



4.

Choosing learning activities

When looking at the wide array of learning and development opportunities available it is important to bear in mind that all kinds of learning activities can contribute to your CPD. Any learning activity that is undertaken to address a gap in your knowledge and/or skills should result in development of your practice. In Section 3, the link was made between that process and the benefit to the patient/client.

What learning opportunities are currently available?

The diagram below illustrates the various learning and development opportunities that are available to support workers.



It is important to understand that learning activities which lead to support worker education and development all sit within the overall context of CPD and lifelong learning. Detailed information on all of these routes can be obtained from the '*Support Worker Education and Development: Learning Opportunities*' support documentation that accompanies this publication. When trying to decide what type of learning to take it is important to consider whether you prefer an informal or formal learning style.

What is meant by formal and informal learning?

Formal learning

Learning typically provided by an education or training institution, structured (in terms of learning outcomes, learning time or learning support) and leading to certification. Formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective.

Informal learning

Learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not structured (in terms of learning outcomes, learning time or learning support) and typically does not lead to certification. Informal learning may be intentional but in most cases it is non-intentional (European Commission (EC) 2001).

Informal learning can be viewed as the process of developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in the context of our everyday lives both at home and at work. Sometimes informal learning can be unexpected but proves valuable and can be documented as evidence in your CPD portfolio. Alternatively, you may have identified a particular learning need and have decided to undertake an informal learning activity e.g., shadowing, critical review of literature, to address your identified learning need.

Formal learning is more structured and opportunities are available through a range of providers such as:

- Trust training and development departments
- Local authorities
- NHSU
- Private organisations
- Further education (FE) colleges
- Higher education institutions (HEI).

The length of courses can vary from one day to several years and may be delivered on a full-time or part-time basis. Teaching and learning methods can also vary. Some programmes of study may emphasise distance learning, work-based learning or utilise e-learning formats, whilst others are more traditional and are based in the classroom.

Formal programmes of study will be designed at a specific level around a curriculum, to enable learners to achieve a set of learning outcomes and/or specific competencies. Any assessment will focus on evaluating how well these have been achieved.



Recognition of learning achieved

The award of **credit** is a means of formally recognising and measuring learning achievement. This will require some form of assessment, to ensure the achievement of designated learning outcomes and is awarded by an accredited body, which adheres to the guidelines of a quality assured national framework. For example:

- The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
- The Framework for Higher Education (HE) Qualifications
- * The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

Credits are set at a specific **level** which indicates the demands of learning required. The levels are hierarchical, therefore, Level 3 will be more demanding than Levels 2 or 1. Advanced is higher than intermediate or foundation levels.

The credit systems used by HE and FE differ and Scotland has a different framework to the rest of the UK. Confusion can arise as both systems refer to credits at different levels but the levels are not equivalent between FE and HE. Charts are provided in Appendix 8.3 to indicate comparable levels and qualifications.

If you have completed a programme of education and are considering applying for another course, it is worth looking into whether you can gain some recognition of the learning you have already achieved. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) is the general term used for the award of credit on the basis of demonstrated learning that has occurred at some time in the past. Decisions on APL are made on a case-by-case basis and you should make your education provider aware of your interest in APL as early as possible in your dealings with them so that the possibility can be investigated.

How do I make the most appropriate choice?

On page 22 is a flowchart representing the decisions that can be made around education depending on your desired outcomes. This decision tree attempts to capture the full range of possibilities, depending on where you want to go in your career and what you want to achieve. Using this tool involves asking yourself what you want to achieve. Whether you want to maintain and develop your knowledge and skills within your current role, or whether you want to progress to obtain a professional qualification, you will need to undertake learning activities to achieve your goals. This tool can be used to assist you in deciding where you want to go and how to get there. The progressive learning pathway on page 23 shows the steps you can take when looking to develop your career, from maintenance of current knowledge and skills through to embarking on an undergraduate qualifying programme. It is important to stress that you need to address maintenance of your knowledge and skills whatever your career aspirations may be.

When considering your options you may find it easier to ask yourself what it is you need to know rather than where you want to be. The framework outcomes (Section 2) give you a structure against which to measure your existing levels of skills and knowledge. In doing this you may identify areas in which you need to develop and this may guide you into particular learning pathways.

The important point is to make sure that you are planning your learning and development in a meaningful way to ensure that you reach your personal goals whilst, at the same time, addressing the service needs of your place of work. It is also important to bear in mind that there may be factors within your work context (e.g., National Service Frameworks (NSF) see briefing paper *Political Context – the need for education and development*) that have an impact on your learning and development needs.

If you are looking for information on funding for your education and development, see Appendix 8.4: Funding. This information is not exhaustive but every attempt has been made to include as many funding sources as possible.

**Decision around learning options:
What do I want to achieve?**

Maintain and develop my knowledge and skills within my current role

Develop within the support worker role, increasing my knowledge and skills

Progress to assistant practitioner level, developing my scope of practice

Qualify as a physiotherapist, occupational therapist or other AHP

In addition to steps taken to maintain knowledge and skills (blue box)...

Decide if you want to:
Undertake an education programme to obtain recognised award e.g., BTEC, HNC, N/SVQ, NOCN.

In addition to steps taken to maintain and develop knowledge and skills (blue box)...

Decide if you want to:
Undertake an education programme to obtain a foundation degree.

Do I have the necessary entry requirements?

1. Participate in in-service education programmes
2. Undertake appropriate activities to ensure knowledge and skills remain up-to-date, e.g., shadowing, peer review, reading, short courses
3. Undertake systematic CPD through portfolio keeping and reflective practice.

Ensure that you are undertaking informal learning and capturing evidence of its impact on your practice.

If no..
In addition to steps taken to maintain and develop knowledge and skills (blue box)...

Undertake an accredited award, e.g., access course, foundation programme,

If yes..
In addition to steps taken to maintain and develop knowledge and skills (blue box)...

Consider part-time, work-based or situated learning programmes or three-year full-time qualifying programme

If you have a degree in a subject either related or unrelated to healthcare consider an accelerated pre-registration programme in OT

If you already have degree in related subject area consider accelerated 2-year physiotherapy qualifying programme (M level).

Progression:

When looking at education options to develop your skills and knowledge or scope of practice it is important to consider academic progression.

Programmes that have credit, either at FE or HE level, will have a transferability and currency, making them valuable wherever you work. If gathering credit points through modular programmes make sure that they can be put towards achievement of the award for which you are aiming.

Other resources:

- National Framework for Support Worker Education and Development
- CSP and COT information papers and Portfolio guides
- CSP Short course database
- Awards for courses for CSP and COT associate members.

Progressive learning pathways for Support Workers

Award examples:

Human Biology A Level, Access to HE certificate, Foundation programme linked to UG programme, HNC OT Support, Foundation Degree.

AIM: To qualify as a physiotherapist, occupational therapist, or other health professional

1. Undertake or collect evidence of recent study to gain necessary entry criteria for undergraduate (UG) qualifying programmes
2. Physiotherapy: If you already have a degree in a related subject area, you could also consider an accelerated masters programmes
3. Occupational Therapy: If you already have a degree, you could also consider an accelerated pre-registration programme.

Award examples:

Foundation Degree, HNC OT Support, N/SVQ Level 4 or N/SVQ Level 3 with intention of obtaining N/SVQ Level 4.

AIM: To expand scope of practice and progress to assistant practitioner post

1. Continually seek opportunities to expand knowledge base and develop skills
2. Undertake a relevant education programme. Note: The 'Assistant Practitioner' is a new role in some areas of health and social care and there are many NHS trusts and educational institutions that are developing various programmes. Currently the role is most prevalent in England and Wales. There are some roles that require two years working experience (minimum) and a N/SVQ Level 3 award initially, with the intention of working towards a N/SVQ Level 4 award. The education requirements within each of the four countries may vary.

Award examples:

N/SVQ Level 3, BTEC, NOCN, HNC OT Support.

AIM: To develop within my current role, increasing range of knowledge and skills through accredited education

1. Achieve formal recognition of learning by undertaking relevant accredited programmes or units of study to obtain credits or qualifications
2. Participate in informal learning and identify achievements from learning.

These informal and non-accredited courses should be undertaken by all levels of support worker.

AIM: Maintain and develop my knowledge and skills to maintain my current role

1. Use all informal learning opportunities and collect evidence about its impact on your practice
2. Participate in in-service education programmes
3. Undertake appropriate development activities to ensure knowledge and skills remain up-to-date e.g., shadowing, peer review, study days, background reading
4. Engage in systematic CPD through reflective practice and maintaining a portfolio.



Diversity and equal opportunities

Government policy on widening participation aims to ensure that educational provision is equally accessible to all (Disability Rights Commission 2002). You may be considering becoming a student and there may be a number of factors you wish to consider that are governed by the DDA. Educational institutions and awarding bodies should have policies on Equal Opportunities and Managing Diversity. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part 4 covers applicants, and potential applicants, to study programmes as well as students. It also includes those individuals attending open days or interviews, receiving a prospectus, or those targeted by recruitment drives and outreach work. Additionally, all information should be available in a full range of accessible formats. This ensures an inclusive approach, thereby avoiding the need to have 'special' procedures in place for disabled enquirers.

You are encouraged to discuss any specific learning requirements you have with your employer and with the education provider to which you are applying. Information about any disability you have cannot be passed on to another person without your explicit permission. Your employer and the education provider have a duty to address any issues you may have in participating in a programme that has been identified as part of your PDP. An individual has the right not to declare a disability. There can be no charge of discrimination if the institution did not know, or could not reasonably have known, that a person was disabled. However, in order to claim a lack of knowledge about a disability the institution must have taken reasonable steps to find out about a person's disability, such as specifically giving all students the opportunity and encouragement to disclose. The legislation is designed to foster equality of opportunity and to prevent discrimination (Disability Rights Commission 2002).

Even if you are not considering studying, the DDA applies to you as an employee. You can expect the following broad principles to be adhered to by your employer and/or educational institution:

- Equality of treatment regardless of your age, creed, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, marital status or sexual orientation
- The right to protection from unreasonable and offensive behaviour from others which results in unfair treatment and less effective performance at work
- Clear policies from each organisation defining their approach to unacceptable behaviour
- Clear information on a point of contact if you have concerns regarding fair treatment at your college or in your workplace.

Throughout this framework you are encouraged to be an active participant in your own career development. If you come up against barriers that appear discriminatory it is up to you to challenge unfair treatment with the person or organisation involved. If this is not successful, or you need further help, it is important to belong to a Trade Union. Associate members of CSP and COT have this protection and trained advisers are available to support you in complex situations. If you work in the NHS or social care, see your local CSP steward or your local UNISON steward in the first instance. If you are employed in the private or independent sector, contact your regional industrial relations representative through CSP or the Occupational Therapists in Independent Practice (OTIP) specialist group of COT (if you are an OT support worker).

All support workers whether in the NHS, social care or the private and independent sector are expected to practice in a non-discriminatory manner and to acknowledge the patient/client rights to make their own decisions in line with human rights and disability discrimination legislation.



Summary

- You have a critical role in identifying your learning needs and agreeing a PDP with your manager. Actions to be taken should be agreed in partnership
- You have an equal right to career development, in line with service requirements, with all members of the work team
- You should discuss any specific learning requirements you have with both your employer and the education provider to which you are applying for admission to a programme
- Employers and the education providers have a duty to address any issues you may have in accessing a programme that has been identified as part of your PDP
- COT and CSP have produced guidance for members on supporting students on clinical placement (COT 2004b, CSP 2004b).



Case studies

The following case studies provide examples of different learning pathways and learning routes undertaken by support workers in various sectors across the UK.

Case 1: Committee project work (NHS employee)

Many employers recognise the excellent work of their staff and will provide opportunities for further growth and responsibility.

Sally has worked within a hospital trust for three years as a therapy assistant. During this time she has continued to improve in her clinical skills and has always been eager to learn about new ways to treat various patient problems. She has also been an excellent team worker. Sally has attended as many in-service education sessions and onsite workshops as she could manage and has always sought answers to her questions from her OT supervisor.

Sally's manager, who was very busy with many projects and operational responsibilities, needed to enlist the help of her staff to complete some of her projects. She asked Sally if she could be the therapy assistant representative on a hospital-wide committee which looked at evaluating, and possibly changing, the hospital's 'Falls Prevention Programme'. Sally served on this committee for 12 months and since then has developed a strong interest in falls prevention and is assisting her supervising therapist and the rest of the falls prevention team with a research project. In her fourth year working as a therapy assistant, Sally continues to really enjoy her job, as she feels challenged every day and knows that she continues to contribute to the positive outcomes of her patients. She has received excellent feedback for her annual performance appraisal, as well as identifying some areas in which she can further develop, and has regularly kept her CPD portfolio up to date. She and her manager can clearly see how she could progress within the KSF.

The above case is just one example of how you can continue to progress in your career or develop in your current role. Remember, you don't have to wait for your manager or supervisor to approach you to do this. If you have an idea you would like to explore, or feel that you would like to be more challenged in your job, approach your manager to discuss it and have some thoughts prepared on how you would like to proceed.

Case 2: NVQ Level 3 (Social Care employee)

Peter is newly employed by a Social Care Council as an occupational therapy assistant. He underwent a comprehensive induction programme and established learning goals and objectives with his manager following his induction. One of the agreed goals was to obtain his NVQ Level 3 award in Promoting Independence. Peter and his manager both did some research into where and how he could obtain this award. His employer applied for funding through the Training Support Program run by the Department of Health. This helped to pay for the tuition and to back-fill Peter's position by 80 per cent for the time he needed to take away from his clients. Two years later, Peter has his NVQ 3 award, has taken on more responsibilities on the job and is now considering pursuing an OT degree.



Case 3: Four-year part-time in-service qualifying programme (OT)

Nichola is currently a basic grade OT who completed a 4 year part-time in-service OT programme while working as a support worker in an elderly rehabilitation/intermediate care service:

Nichola says:

“...I found that my mentors (work and personal) helped to keep me on track and helped to motivate me particularly towards the end of the four years. The study has enabled me to develop into a professional role by developing clinical skills and understanding the theories for evidence based practice.”

Advice to learners:

“I fully recommend the in-service course as I feel that it prepares you to work in the NHS. I still say to people today, if I was asked to do this again I would do my training in the same way as I feel that is a valuable experience. I have also just agreed to become a mentor for an assistant in the workplace who will be starting the same course in September. I very much support any worker who wants to develop their career in OT but it should be remembered that not everyone wants to become an OT. Therefore, I would like to see more support for workers who want to develop skills through experiences and other courses...I believe that every experience is valuable and it is reflecting on those experiences that is learning.”

Case 4: Masters degree (TI with a bachelors degree)

As a support worker, you may already have a degree and could consider pursuing a masters programme that is related to your current work role. Graham is a TI II who has a previous bachelors honours degree in 3D Ceramics and is currently completing a Masters degree in Integrative Arts in Health, Education and Community Settings:

Graham says:

“Not only do I enjoy learning but I also believe that having this qualification will help me to be more prepared for changes that may occur in the workforce. My employer has been fully supportive of me returning to further my education.”

Advice to learners:

“I think it is important to further one’s education as it does help one to do a better job and learning can be fun.”



Case 5: Open College Network (full-time physiotherapy assistant)

Jean works mainly in neurology and care of older people, but a quarter of her time is with out-patients in a community hospital. As well as assisting the physiotherapists in neurology and hydrotherapy, she assesses and treats people with mobility problems. She also has administrative duties regarding appointments, equipment and health and safety checks. She has been in post over 2 years and started part-time.

Jean attends and helps organise in-service training for assistants, including mandatory training. She has recently completed the North West Wales NHS Trust therapy assistants training programme and access course which has NOCN accreditation. There is only one study day a month so most of the learning is work-based or self-directed.

Jean says:

“It has been very enjoyable and rewarding and increased my understanding, awareness and knowledge. This has given me increased self-confidence but it has not been easy. I would have liked a personal tutor, although all the staff were very supportive. I found it hard studying at home, with all the other demands on my time. I have increased responsibility and more work is delegated to me. My pay has also increased, but best of all I have been accepted onto the part-time BSc Physiotherapy course at Salford university.”

Advice to learners:

“You must be totally motivated. Ensure you set aside enough time for study and a suitable quiet space. I used to use the hospital library and computer after work.”

Case 6: SVQ Level 3 (part-time TI II)

Lisa works as a team assistant in a multi-disciplinary community physical disability team in Scotland. She supports and assists the team therapists and nurse, sometimes working with other assistants or on her own with clients and carers. She has been working in this team for 5 years and in her current post for 18 months. The work is very varied and demanding, requiring a wide knowledge base. She has just completed a SVQ Level 3 in *Diagnostic and Therapeutic Support*.

Lisa says:

“I found it very challenging at the start as it seemed such a mammoth project. It was a huge undertaking, a steep learning curve and a lot of hard work. I had good support from my manager and assessor and immense satisfaction on completing each unit. I have increased my self-confidence and would like to continue with further study. I am now considering options in holistic/complementary health and possibly social sciences.”

Advice to learners

“Make sure each chosen element is suitable to your current practice. Allow yourself a set time each week for your studies and break it down to achievable goals. Don't get bogged down in paperwork and ask for help when necessary.”

Case 7: NVQ Level 3 – Foundation degree (full-time TI III)

Ken works in NHS acute care in Northern Ireland. He started this job 4 years ago and has been in his present grade for 7 months. He works independently most of the time, but works with a physiotherapist as required, for hydrotherapy, horse riding and some other treatment programmes. He is half-way through his NVQ Level 3, but would like to go on to do a foundation degree.

Ken says:

It has been hard to get the time to do the course, and I find it too basic. Regrettably, there is no change in my pay as yet but there is a chance of moving on to TI II or I with increased pay and status.”

Advice to learners

“Choose your course carefully. It is difficult in Northern Ireland to find a course that can lead onto a career in physiotherapy.”

Case 8: BSc Honours in Physiotherapy (part-time assistant/part-time physiotherapy student)

Mike works on the Bank as a rehabilitation assistant 1-2 days a week, mainly with older people and on an intermediate care ward. He works on his own and with a physiotherapist, but also has occasional OT-related duties. He is currently studying for a BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy and has a six year-old daughter. He has recently switched from a career in engineering.

Mike says:

“It has been very enjoyable, rewarding and stimulating - but a little stressful at times because of having so much to fit into not enough time. I have enjoyed working with people who have come into physiotherapy from a wide variety of backgrounds - the group has gelled very well, and we help each other.”

Advice to learners:

“Make sure you are absolutely sure that you want to study and that you will be motivated to see it through and have the full support of family and friends. Enjoy, and remember it is about developing you as an individual, and not just about the certificate at the end!”



Case 9: Higher National Certificate in OT Support (TI III, Neurological Rehabilitation)

Darrell currently works full-time as a TI III within a neurological rehabilitation unit at a NHS acute trust. Darrell's employer funded the 2-year course and allowed him one day per week away from work to attend class.

Darrell says:

“...I was fortunate to study with some great people, mainly mature students who came from a diverse work background. This gave me a clearer insight into the variety and complexities of our profession. My job role and responsibilities have not radically changed but my knowledge gained has possibly influenced responsibility levels and autonomy, involvement in projects, and other external courses. I myself feel better informed, and my clearer understanding of the OT process has benefited clients and staff.”

Advice to learners:

“If you are given the opportunity to obtain qualifications then go for it. There may be financial reward, but this should not be your motivator. Make sure you have access to a PC or word processor. It will boost you.”



Concluding remarks

If you are a support worker, it is hoped that this framework has been, and will continue to be, useful as you aim to achieve your goals and aspirations in your career. Your continuing professional development is yours to make it what you want it to be, whether you strive for furthering your education or developing your skills for your current role. Use your support mechanisms to help you along the way (e.g., professional body, supervisor, mentor, manager). The COT and CSP look forward to continuing to support you as you endeavour to pursue your own CPD.

If you are a manager the framework will be useful in guiding and facilitating staff development through PDP and appraisal and also in the development of new support worker roles.

If you are an education provider you may be able to address gaps in learning opportunities available to support workers, or consider adaptation of the qualifying programme to allow foundation degree graduates to enter at the start of the second year. It is hoped the framework will assist in collaborative work with education providers, furthering opportunities for HEIs and FEs to work together and with the training departments of healthcare organisations.

Access to learning and development is the vehicle by which support workers will move along the skills escalator. Opportunities to fully access the skills escalator will depend on enabling the support worker to engage in learning and development opportunities that will develop their skills and competencies. It is hoped that this framework will support them in accessing these opportunities.

This framework is supported by detailed information on the various learning opportunities that are available to support workers in the form of the *Support Worker Education and Development: Learning Opportunities* loose-leaf document. There are also a number of briefing documents, as highlighted earlier, that accompany this publication. If this support documentation does not accompany your copy of the framework you should contact your professional body directly to request a copy or download it from their website.

This framework has been produced through collaborative working between the CSP and COT. It is hoped that the success of this project will promote continued collaboration between the two bodies and it is also hoped that this framework might possibly be adapted for use by other allied health professions.



Appendices

Appendix 8.1: Support worker framework outcomes and their relationships with the Knowledge and Skills Framework and National Occupational Standards

No.	Support Worker Framework outcome	Relevant KSF Dimension	Relevant NOS*
1.	Undertake effective CPD	Core Dimension 2: Personal and people development	HSC33: Reflect on and develop your practice
2.	Establish and maintain good communication with others	Core Dimension 1: Communication	HSC31: Promote effective communication for and about individuals
3.	Practice within core areas of support worker practice in line with evidence-based healthcare, national standards and changing demands	Core Dimension 3: Health, safety and security Core Dimension 5: Quality	HSC3116: Promote the values and principles underpinning best practice
4.	Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of issues affecting support worker practice	Core Dimension 4: Service improvement Core Dimension 5: Quality	HSC3116: Promote the values and principles underpinning best practice
5.	Support equality to all in AHP practice	Core Dimension 6: Equality and diversity	HSC35: Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals
6.	Assist people to optimise their health and social wellbeing and acknowledge their right to make their own decisions	Dimension HWB2: Assessment and care planning to meet health and wellbeing needs Dimension HWB4: Enablement to address health and wellbeing needs	HSC348: Plan, agree and implement development activities to meet individuals' needs AHP18: Provide advice and information to individuals on how to manage their own condition HSC341: Support individuals to retain, regain and develop the skills to manage their lives and environment
7.	Contribute to the delivery of AHP services in response to individual needs	Core Dimension 4: Service improvement Dimension HWB5: Provision of care to meet health and wellbeing needs	HSC242: Contribute to the effectiveness of teams HSC397: Participate in interdisciplinary team working to support individuals HSC348: Plan, agree and implement development activities to meet individuals' needs HSC390: Prepare, implement and evaluate agreed therapeutic group activities GEN6: Prepare environments and resources for use during clinical activities AHP70: Support the practitioner during therapeutic interventions **

No.	Support Worker Framework outcome	Relevant KSF Dimension	Relevant NOS*
8.	Manage oneself and work with others to optimise results	Core Dimension 1: Communication Core Dimension 2: Personal and people development Core Dimension 4: Service improvement Core Dimension 5: Quality	HSC31: promote effective communication for and about others HSC242: Contribute to the effectiveness of teams HSC397: Participate in inter-disciplinary team working to support individuals

* The number prefix for these NOS may change as part of the final validation process for the new standards but the titles will be as shown. If you would like to look at the details of any of these NOS they can be downloaded from the Skills for Health website on www.skillsforhealth.org.uk

**Plus all the profession-specific units within the physiotherapy/occupational therapy functional bundles

Appendix 8.2 Examples of CPD activity (AHP project 2002)¹

Work based	Examples of professional activity	Formal/ educational	Self-directed learning	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning by doing • Case studies • Reflective practice • Clinical audit • Coaching from others • Discussion with colleagues • Peer review • User ratings • Gaining and learning from experience • Involvement in wider work of employer, e.g., representative on a committee • Shadowing • Secondments • Job rotation • Journal club • In-service training • Supervision of staff/students • Visits to other departments and reporting back • Role expansion • Significant event analysis • Completion of self-assessment questionnaires • Project work/ management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in a professional body • Active member of specialist interest group • Lecturing/teaching • Mentoring • Examiner • Tutor • Branch meetings • Organising journal clubs or other specialist groups • Maintaining specialist skills e.g., musical ability • Expert witness • Active member of other professional bodies/groups • Presentation at conferences • Organiser of accredited courses • Research supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses • Further education • Undertaking research • Attendance at conferences • Submission of articles/paper • Seminars • Distance learning • Courses accredited by professional body • Planning or running a course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading journals/ articles • Review of books/ articles • Updating knowledge via web/ TV/press 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public service • Voluntary work • Courses

¹This is not an exhaustive list and is for illustrative purposes only.

Appendix 8.2 (cont.) Examples of types of evidence for CPD (AHP project 2003)²

Things you may have produced	Materials demonstrating reflection and evaluation of learning and practice	Materials acquired from others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information leaflets • Case studies • Critical literature reviews • Adapted user/student notes • Policy or position statements • Discussion documents • Procedural documents • Documents relating to national or local processes, e.g., schemes for peer review, mentorship or clinical supervision • Recent job applications • Reports e.g., on project work, clinical audit, reviews of activity • Protocols • Guidance materials e.g., for service users, colleagues or students • Clinical audit tools • Clinical guidelines • Course assignments • Action plans • Course programme documents • Presentations • Articles produced for publication • Questionnaires • Research papers/proposals/funding applications/ethical approval applications • Induction materials for new members of staff • Learning contracts • Contributions to work of a professional body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profiles drawn from learning portfolios • Adapted documentation arising from appraisal, clinical supervision, job evaluation, compliance with locally-implemented competence frameworks. • Adapted documentation from compliance with local or national CPD schemes • Evaluation of courses/conferences attended • Personal development plans • Claims for academic credit for prior or experiential learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testimonies • Letters from users, carers, students or colleagues • Course certificates

²This is not an exhaustive list and is for illustrative purposes only.

Appendix 8.3: Credit Accumulation and Transfer System, HE and FE credit levels

Credit Accumulation

Credit acts like a currency for learning achievement and can be accumulated over varying periods of time, to work towards a specified target or qualification. Credits are normally only valid for five years. For example, within the NOCN accreditation process a unit will be given a specified level and credit value. Credits at varying levels can be accumulated over time to work towards numerous qualifications covered within the framework. The Access to HE Certificate, accredited by NOCN, requires the attainment of 16 credits, 12 of which must be Level 3 and the rest at Level 2.

Universities in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland have a range of regional and national credit accumulation and transfer consortia. Scotland has its own specified credit system. Discuss with your local education provider the credit requirements for that particular institution.

Most universities operate modular schemes and Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems (CATS). Modules may be compulsory within a defined programme of study or modules can be chosen to gradually gather academic credit and work towards varying levels of qualification. Transfer of credits may also be possible between the same or different institutions. This may be useful if you move geographical areas or have to terminate studies for a period of time, but you need to seek professional advice before starting a programme where you are relying on credit transfer.

Think about the credits you might require for a transfer to a qualifying programme or foundation degree, etc. Remember to enquire first before diving in!

Mapping equivalences of credit frameworks within England, Wales and Northern Ireland

National qualifications framework				Framework for HE qualifications	Quality Assurance Agency
FE Levels	General	Vocational	Occupational		
FE Level 1 Foundation	GCSE D-G	Foundation GNVQ	NVQ 1		
FE Level 2 Intermediate	GCSE A-C	Intermediate GNVQ	NVQ 2		
FE Level 3 Advanced	A/AS Level AEA	AVCE/ASVCE/ AVCE Double Award	NVQ 3		Level 0 Foundation
FE Level 4 Higher		HNC HND Foundation degree	NVQ 4	C Level: HE I Level: HE diplomas Bachelor degrees	Level 1 Certificate Level 2 Intermediate
FE Level 5 Higher			NVQ 5	H Level: Honours degrees Graduate certificates Graduate diplomas	Level 3 Honours
				M Level: PG Certificates PG Diplomas Master degrees	Level 4 Masters
				D Level: Doctoral	Level 5 Doctoral

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework			
SCQF LEVELS	SQA National Units	Scottish Vocational Qualifications	Higher Education Qualifications
1	Access 1		
2	Access 2		
3	Access 3 Foundation S Grade		
4	Intermediate 1 General S Grade	SVQ 1	
5	Intermediate 2 Credit S Grade	SVQ 2	
6	Higher	SVQ 3	
7	Advanced Higher		HNC, Certificate of HE
8		SVQ 4	HND, Diploma of HE
9			Bachelor degrees
10			Honours degrees
11		SVQ 5	Masters
12			Doctorate

Appendix 8.4: Funding information³

<p>England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSP Charitable Trust • Hospital Saving Association (HSA) cpdadministrator@csp.org.uk • COT – HSA Short Course Grants www.cot.org.uk • NHS Learning Accounts www.dh.gov.uk • Career Development Loan www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/cdl/ • Adult learning grants www.dfes.gov.uk/skillsstrategy/subPage.cfm?action=progUpdates.viewUpdate&i_progUpdateID=59 	<p>Higher Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Grants www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport/students/pla_.shtml • NHS Bursary Scheme www.nhs.gov.uk/sgu/sgu.cfm • NHS Bursary Childcare Allowance www.nhs.gov.uk/sgu/sgu.cfm • Student Loans, Parents' Learning Allowance, Childcare Grant, Adult Dependents' Grant, Access to Learning Funds www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport/students/pla_.shtml
<p>Northern Ireland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSP Charitable Trust • HSA cpdadministrator@csp.org.uk • COT – HSA Short Course Grants www.cot.org.uk 	<p>Higher Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Library Board (ELB) Bursaries, Student Loans www.student-support.org.uk/home.asp
<p>Scotland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSP Charitable Trust • HSA cpdadministrator@csp.org.uk • COT – HSA Short Course Grants www.cot.org.uk • Skillseekers (funds 16-24 year olds for SVQ Levels 2, 3) & Modern Apprenticeships (funds for Level 4) www.scottish-enterprise.com/sedotcom_home/stp/careersadvice/develop-your-skills-work-based-training-2/skillseekers.htm?siblingtoggle=1 • Grant Aided Expenditure & Specific Training • Grant (STG) (Scottish Executive funds Local Authorities in Social Care) www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/social/circswsg12002.pdf • Scottish Union Fund (any trade union in Scotland may apply for funding for training purposes) www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/sulf5-00.asp • Business Learning Accounts for SMEs (small to medium sized enterprises) (currently being piloted over two years) www.scottish-enterprise.com/publications/businesslearningaccounts.pdf • Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) – re-launched in Summer 2004, targeted at people with incomes of less than £15,000/year. www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/publications/pdf/2003/03ar03ag.pdf 	<p>Higher Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate Students' Allowance, Young Students' Bursary, Mature Students' Bursary Fund, Scottish Executive Health Department bursaries www.student-support-saas.gov.uk • Hardship funds www.support4learning.co.uk/money/funds_access.htm#Scotland

<p>Wales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSP Charitable Trust • HSA cpdadministrator@csp.org.uk • COT – HSA Short Course Grants www.cot.org.uk • Individual Learning Account Wales www.support4learning.com/money/funds_grants.htm#ila • Assembly Learning Grant (through LEA) www.support4learning.com/money/funds_grants.htm#assembly • Local Health Boards (LHBs) – Wales DfES (England & Wales): Adult Learning Grants for full-time study at Level 2. www.dfes.gov.uk/skillsstrategy/subPage.cfm?action=progUpdates.viewUpdate&i_progUpdateID=59 	<p>Higher Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Maintenance Grant www.learning.wales.gov.uk/ • NHS (Wales) Students Award Tel: 029 2026 1495 • Financial Contingency Funds, Adult Learners Grant, Parents' Learning Allowance, Childcare Grant, Student Loan, Career Development Loan www.elwa.ac.uk/elwaweb/elwa.aspx?pageid=2948
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³Your employer will always be a possible source of funding.

Appendix 8.5: Glossary

Access programme – The main aim of an Access programme is to prepare adult learners from non-traditional backgrounds and under-represented groups for admission to undergraduate education. They often lead to GCSEs and A levels and are run by Colleges of Further Education. Designed to prepare students who do not have standard entry qualifications for higher education courses.

Appraisal – A process where an employee's performance is evaluated, usually by their line manager, against agreed criteria or standards.

Assistant Practitioner – A health care worker who delivers healthcare to patients with a level of knowledge and skill beyond that of the traditional support worker. He or she would be able to deliver elements of healthcare in domains that have previously only been within the remit of registered professionals. They would not, however, have the full range of knowledge and skills and competencies that registered healthcare professionals would have. They would not be expected to work without supervision. (Standing Conference of English WDC Chief Executives 2003)

BTEC – (formerly Business and Technology Education Council) – Vocational courses validated by Edexcel. Qualification equivalent to two A level courses. There are considerable practical elements to the courses with work placements offered.

Care Connect – Care Connect Learning offers courses that are relevant to the learning needs of people providing care and support to service users in the public, voluntary and private sectors. The courses have been developed to complement the new framework of standards being introduced by the Government (i.e. KSF).

Community support workers – Community support workers have a role very similar to support workers but work within social services. They include residential social workers (who help to look after people in residential care), and domiciliary care workers (who act as home helps, visiting people who are unwell and helping with daily chores).

Clinical governance – Framework for NHS organisations to demonstrate accountability and to continuously improve the quality of their services and safeguard high standards of care by creating an environment in which excellence in clinical care will flourish.

Continuing Professional Development – A range of learning activities undertaken to maintain and develop knowledge and skills for effective and high quality practice.

Credit Accumulation and Transfer Schemes (CATS) – Arrangements within education institutions, which determine student progression towards defined learning outcomes, including formal qualifications, and recognition of these arrangements between institutions to facilitate the transfer of students.

Edexcel – A UK examining and awarding body. It provides a wide range of qualifications including at higher education level.

Experiential learning – Learning achieved in the workplace, or through other professional activity, rather than that gained in formal teaching situations.

Foundation course – A recognized HE course designed to prepare students who have qualifications, which are acceptable for entry in general, but are not appropriate to a specific course of study. Foundation courses are also used as Year 0 of a degree course to enable students with non-traditional qualifications to participate in HE by using Year 0 as a preparatory year for a full degree programme.

Foundation degree – Two-year higher education qualifications that were first offered in 2001-02. The foundation degree is a newly established vocationally based higher education qualification which aims to increase the number of people qualified at higher technician or associate worker/practitioner posts. Foundation degrees are one level below the honours degree.

Framework for HE Qualifications – Statements published by the QAA (one for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and one for Scotland) that set out comparative expectations, in terms of the nature and volume of students' learning, for awards conferred by higher education institutions at different academic levels.

GNVQ – General National Vocational Qualification. Vocational qualifications taken mainly by pupils age 16 and in full-time education.

Higher degree – Degree above bachelors level such as masters degree or doctorate.

Higher National Certificate (HNC) – A certificate award gained through work-related subjects e.g., HNC in OT Support. It is an award offered by universities and many colleges. One can often go on from an HNC to study a degree.

Higher National Diploma (HND) – A two-year course that equates to two years of a degree course. Offered in many subject areas, mostly with a practical application.

Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) – A development tool, also linked to pay progression, whereby an individual would need to apply the knowledge and skills in a number of dimensions to achieve the expectations of their NHS job.

Learning cycle – The cycle consists of four stages that adults actively go through to learn from experience.

LearnDirect – A network of online learning and information services. A government-sponsored initiative in flexible learning, intended to make possible the vision of a 'learning society' where everyone can learn and upgrade their skills throughout life.

Learning need – A gap in skills, knowledge or abilities that must be filled to allow an individual to meet a particular objective.

Learning style – Preferred way of learning. Individuals develop learning styles that emphasise some learning abilities over others. Each person's individual learning style acts as a basis for selecting appropriate learning experiences.

Lifelong learning – Ongoing learning by which individuals maintain, enhance and broaden their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Masters degree – MA/MSc/MPhil degrees are awarded to graduates who have undertaken a further course of study, after an honours degree, either full or part-time. Masters degrees may be taken following a period of work experience and some courses take the form of company training programmes.

Mentor – Mentoring has its origins in advising and counselling and can be either formal or informal. It is concerned with the encouragement of broad longer-term development rather than short-term skills acquisition (CSP 2004c).

Modernisation Agency – Established in April 2001, the NHS Modernisation Agency is designed to support the NHS and its partner organisations in the task of modernising services and improving experiences and outcomes for patients.

NHSU – Established by the Government as a new kind of learning organisation providing learning and development opportunities for everyone working in health and social care. In 2005 it is set to merge with the NHS Modernisation Agency and NHS Learning Centre, and incorporate the Innovation Board to create the NHS Institute for Learning, Skills and Innovation.

National Open College Network – provides accreditation services for adult learning and is the central organisation for 30 Open College networks (OCNs) based across the UK.

National Occupational Standards (NOS) – Agreed statements of competence, which describe the work outcomes required for an individual to achieve the standard expected of them in work.

National Qualifications Framework – Sets out the levels at which qualifications can be recognised for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It helps learners make informal decisions on the qualifications they need, by comparing the levels of different qualifications and identifying clear progression routes to their chosen career.

National/Scottish Vocational Qualification (N/SVQ) – Work-related, competence based qualifications based on national occupational standards. They reflect the skills and knowledge needed to do a job effectively, are recognized by employers and other organizations throughout the UK, and give recognition to the learner for his/her skills and knowledge.

Occupational Therapist – Occupational therapists enable people to do things that will enhance their ability to participate or by modifying the environment to better support participation. OTs have a broad education that equips them with skills and knowledge to work collaboratively with individuals or groups of people who have an impairment of body structure or function due to a health condition, and who experience barriers to participation. (WFOT 2004)

Occupational Therapy – Occupational therapy is concerned with the promotion of health and well-being through occupation. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life. OT is practiced in a wide range of settings, including hospitals, health centres, homes, workplaces, schools, reform institutions and housing for seniors. Clients are actively involved in the therapeutic process, and outcomes of occupational therapy are diverse, client-driven and measured in terms of participation or satisfaction derived from participation. (WFOT 2004)

Personal Development Plan (PDP) – A formal record of learning objectives normally derived from the Individual Performance Review process.

Physiotherapist – Chartered physiotherapists work to combat a broad range of physical problems, in particular those associated with neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, cardiovascular and respiratory systems. They can work alone or, increasingly, with other healthcare professionals in multi-professional teams.

The aim of the physiotherapist is to identify and maximise human movement potential within the spheres of promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, in partnership with their clients. Physiotherapists are expected to adhere to the principle that every individual is entitled to the highest possible standard of culturally-appropriate health care provided in an atmosphere of trust and respect for human dignity and underpinned by sound clinical reasoning and scientific evidence (WCPT 2004).

Physiotherapy – Physiotherapy is a health care profession concerned with human function and movement and maximising potential:

- It uses physical approaches to promote, maintain and restore physical, psychological and social well-being, taking account of variations in health status
- It is science-based, committed to extending, applying, evaluating and reviewing the evidence that underpins and informs its practice and delivery
- The exercise of clinical judgement and informed interpretation is at its core.

Portfolio – A private collection of evidence that demonstrates learning and development as well as a tool for planning future learning.

Postgraduate student – A student on a course that normally requires a first degree as a condition of entry.

Profile – A collection of relevant evidence extracted from the portfolio for a particular purpose and audience.

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) – A government funded body with responsibility for assuring standards in higher education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Reflective practice – Professional activity in which the practitioner thinks critically about their practice and as a result may modify their practice and/or modify their learning needs.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) – There are many different kinds of Scottish qualifications - Highers, SVQs, HNDs, Degrees and many more. The Framework gives each qualification SCQF credit points and a level to make it easier for you to compare one with another.

Scottish Executive Health Department (SEHD) – The body responsible for health policy and the administration of the National Health Service in Scotland.

Skills/abilities and knowledge – Skills/abilities and knowledge are required to perform a job effectively. Knowledge, usually factual or procedural, is the foundation on which skills and abilities are built. Skill refers to the capability to perform job operation, often psychomotor-type activities. Abilities usually require the application of knowledge and refer to cognitive capabilities necessary to perform job functions.

Supervision – A formal or informal process of professional support and learning which enables individual practitioners to develop knowledge and competence, assume responsibility for their own practice and enhance public protection and safety of care in complex clinical situations. It is central to the process of learning and to the scope of the expansion of practice and should be seen as a means of encouraging self-assessment and analytical and reflective skills (Bodyworker 2004).

Support Worker – An individual who provides care to a patient/client under the supervision of a regulated health professional.

Specific job titles used for occupational therapy and/or physiotherapy support workers include:

- Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy Assistant
- Technical Instructor (I,II,III)
- OT/PT Helper
- Rehabilitation Assistant
- Generic Support Worker
- Community Care Officer
- Therapy Assistant
- Health Care Aide
- Enablement Workers
- Education Health Workers
- Community Support Workers
- Sport and massage therapists.

Within the NHS some of these job titles may be changing with the implementation of Agenda for Change.

Undergraduate – Student working towards a first degree, higher education certificate, or diploma or equivalent.

Work-based learning – A spiral of learning that occurs through everyday work that encapsulates the development of professional knowledge and skills, and is evidenced by measurable learning outcomes to the benefit of patient care.

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