Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for a postgraduate award
MSc(pre-reg) Occupational Therapy (3802)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the University prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the University's academic regulations and policies can be found here. Further information on the University's Admissions Policy can be found here.

Your postgraduate taught course in pre-registration occupational therapy provides progressive structures in which you will be able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. Your course contains mandatory modules to introduce you to contemporary critical and theoretical occupational therapy approaches, with a global context. It will integrate occupational therapy core principles with environmental, social, and economic factors to equip students with the necessary skills to address the health and care needs of a wider population including marginalized communities using traditional and non-traditional OT models.

Your degree courses at Royal Holloway, University of London, will be delivered over two years, which normally involves modules to the total value of 180 credits (which is equivalent to 90 ECTS credits[1]).

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is a brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – Also referred to as 'programme', this term refers to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies. 'Courses' were formerly known as 'programmes' at Royal Holloway.
Module – This refers to the credits you will study each year to complete your degree course. Postgraduate taught degrees at Royal Holloway comprise 180 credits. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title. 'Modules' were formerly known as 'course units' at Royal Holloway.

[1] The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer. ECTS credits reflect the total workload required to achieve defined learning outcomes and their associated workload, including teaching hours and guided independent study. 15 UK credits is equivalent to 7.5 ECTS. 30 UK credits is equivalent to 15 ECTS. Further details on ECTS can be found within the ECTS User Guide 2015.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	September 2026	**Location of study**	Egham
Course award and title	MSc (pre-registration) Occupational Therapy	**Level of study**	Postgraduate
Course code	3802	**Year of entry**	2027/28
Language(s) of Tuition	English		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department	Psychology	**Other departments involved in teaching the course**	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full time	**Duration of the course**	Two years
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT)		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	**For queries on admissions:**	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery Please note in order to meet RCOT standards of accreditation (standard 2.6), the university can only consider requests for recognition of prior learning in a maximum of one third of the total pre-registration course.

Section 3 – Degree course structure				
3.1 Mandatory module information **The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study**				
Module code	**Module title**	**Credits**	**FHEQ level**	**Module status (Mandatory Condonable MC or Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC**
Stage 1 (Year 1)				
HE5200	Occupational Therapy with a Global Context	30	7	MNC
HE5201	Human Sciences and Occupational Performance	30	7	MNC
HE5202	Occupation in Practice- 1	15	7	MNC
HE5208	Practice Placement (PP) 1	0 Pass/ fail	4	MNC
HE5203	Occupation in Practice-2 (module focused on PP2 preparation)	15	7	MNC
HE5209	Practice Placement (PP) 2	0 Pass/ fail	4	MNC
Stage 2 (Year 2)				
HE5204	Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy	30	7	MNC
HE5205	Collaborative Approach in practice (module focused on PP3)	15	7	MNC
HE5210	Practice Placement (PP) 3	0 Pass/ fail	5	MNC
HE5206	Research project in Occupational Therapy & Global Health	30	7	MNC
HE5207	Research in practice (module focused on PP4 preparation & research methods)	15	7	MNC
HE5211	Practice Placement (PP) 4	0 Pass/ fail	6	MNC
Total		**180**		

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories: 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

3.2 Optional modules

Not applicable

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's Academic Regulations.

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

All postgraduate taught students are required to take and pass the non-credit bearing Moodle-based Academic Integrity module SS1001 in order to be awarded. The pass mark for the module assessment is stated in the on-line Academic Integrity Moodle module. Students may attempt the assessment as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who otherwise meet the requirements for award as stipulated in the Academic Taught Regulations but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be awarded.

All modules and individual assessment components within modules need to be completed and passed to qualify as an Occupational Therapist and register with the Health and Care Professions Council.

To progress from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of the course, you must successfully complete all taught modules within the stage. This includes passing all assessment components, as well as HE5208 Practice Placement 1 and HE5209 Practice Placement 2. Failure to pass any module or required assessment component will prevent progression to the next stage of the course.

To be eligible for raising to the next class, the Final Average must fall within 2.0% of one of the classification boundaries in Table 11 of Section 19 of the Academic Taught Regulations AND the marks for both HE5206 Research Project in Occupational Therapy and Global Health and HE5204 Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy must be in the upper class.

Students in the occupational therapy course are required to complete four practice-based learning placements and a minimum of 1000 hours of practical learning over two years, as per the requirements of RCOT Learning and Development standards of pre-reg education (2019, 5.2.1) and the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT, 2016). Each practice-based learning module (Practice Placement) is linked to an academic module which is a 15-credit module such as Occupation in Practice 1, Occupation in Practice 2, Collaborative Approach in Practice, and Research in Practice. To progress to the next placement, students must pass the previous one by meeting the criteria specified in the Practice Placement module & Practice Placement Assessment Document (PPAD). The PPAD criteria align with the HCPC Standards of Proficiency (Occupational Therapists, RCOT Learning and Development standards for pre-reg education and students must successfully complete the required hours. Formative (halfway) and summative (final) assessments are conducted in each placement to assess the progress and achievement of students over the two years. The primary responsibility for the assessment of students is held by the practice educator, who has undergone formal preparation and education, including regular updates, before the placement. The Occupational Therapy Placement Lead will support the practice educator and student to ensure robust and consistent arrangements for the assessment of practice learning.

Practice-based learning placements are graded as pass/fail, and students can be assessed a maximum of twice on each placement. Failure to meet the assessment criteria will result in failure of the placement and the module overall. If a student fails a practice placement, they will get a new practice placement, which may delay their progression to year two of the course or delay the completion of the course. If a student fails the second attempt at a practice-based learning component or fails the first attempt at consecutive practice-based learning components, they will be withdrawn from the course. Hours from a failed practice-based learning component will not count towards the overall minimum requirement of 1000 practice-based learning hours. If a student fails the practice-based learning due to substantiated grounds of fitness to practise concern, no retrieval attempt will be offered.

Please note that all the assessments including both academic and practice-based learning components contribute to the award and must be successfully completed by the student for them to be eligible to apply to register with the HCPC as an occupational therapist and to be eligible to apply for professional membership with RCOT. (RCOT, 2019,4.11).

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are to:

- Equip students with advanced knowledge and understanding of occupational therapy philosophy, core values, skills and theoretical frameworks.
- Integrate occupational therapy core principles with environmental, social, and economic factors to equip students with the necessary skills to address the health and care needs of the wider population including marginalized communities using traditional and non-traditional OT models.
- Develop knowledge and skills that focus on occupational therapists' role in disaster management, sustainability, and global health challenges alongside local and national health needs.
- Enable students to critically evaluate the evidence base, research methods, and research governance relevant to occupational therapy and global health.
- Prepare graduates who will be prepared to work as occupational therapists who are adept at promoting individual well-being and a sense of belonging while also contributing to the overall global health needs.

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes

In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (*Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*))* These LOs are based on the entry-level occupational therapy core knowledge and practice skills (COT,2016) , HCPC's Standards of Proficiency (2022) & Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (2023, effective from September 24). On successful completion of the MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration), students will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

	Course Learning Outcome	**Module title**
1	Develop an enhanced understanding of the impact of occupational disruption on individual, group, and community performance, and the importance of restoring opportunities for participation in occupation throughout life span using a person-centered occupational therapy process	Occupational Therapy with a Global Context Human Sciences and Occupational Performance Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Occupation in Practice 2 Research in Practice
2	Establish professional identity, understand standards of Occupational therapy practice and current legislation impacting local and global professional practice	Occupational Therapy with a Global Context Occupation in Practice 1 Occupation in Practice 2 Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Collaborative Approach in Practice
3	Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the key principles, theories, and methodologies in research and critically reflect on social, cultural, and political perspectives of how knowledge is constructed and validated in Occupational Therapy and global health research.	Research Project in Occupational Therapy & Global Health Research in Practice Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Occupational Therapy with a Global Context
4	Demonstrate and apply an understanding of professional behaviours associated with legal and ethical values, codes of conduct, non-discriminatory practice, and health and safety of patients, self, and colleagues in relation to local and global health.	Occupational Therapy with a Global Context Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Occupation in Practice 1 Occupation in Practice 2 Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice Research Project in Occupational Therapy & Global Health
5	Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of the collaborative practice in health, care, and other voluntary/ independent settings such as independent organisations, charities, etc.	Collaborative Approach in Practice Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Research in Practice Research Project in Occupational Therapy & Global Health

Skills and other attributes		
1	Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of Occupational Therapy core practice skills such as therapeutic communication, listening, observation, reflection, interviewing, and documentation (written and digital).	Occupation in Practice 1 Occupation in Practice 2 Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice Occupational Therapy with a Global Context
2	Critically analyse how biological, psychological, and social factors bring change in the human systems across the lifespan.	Occupation in Practice 1 Occupation in Practice 2 Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice Human Sciences and Occupational Performance
3	Apply evidence-based clinical reasoning skills to design a person centred care plan with a clear role of OT and multidisciplinary team (MDT)in the care plan.	Occupation in Practice 1 Occupation in Practice 2 Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy
4	Apply biological, social, and psychological principles to understand how mental health and emotional well-being influence occupational engagement.	Occupation in Practice 1 Occupation in Practice 2 Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice Human Sciences and Occupational Performance Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy
5	Critically reflect on social, cultural, and political perspectives of how knowledge is constructed and validated in Occupational Therapy and global health research.	Occupational Therapy with a Global Context Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice Research project in Occupational Therapy and Global Health
Transferrable and employability skills		
1	Design and develop an E-portfolio with a reflective understanding of the Royal College of Occupational Therapy career development framework and demonstrate digital literacy skills in the E-portfolio completion	Occupation in Practice 1 Occupation in Practice 2 Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice

2	Critically evaluate the impact of diversity, culture, disadvantage, and injustice on occupational engagement and performance within local, national, and global contexts.	Occupational Therapy with a Global Context Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Research project in Occupational Therapy and Global Health
3	Critically analyse how biological, psychological, and social factors bring change in the human systems across the lifespan.	Occupation in Practice 1 Occupation in Practice 2 Collaborative Approach in Practice Research in Practice Human Sciences and Occupational Performance Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy
4	Demonstrate project management skills in planning, undertaking, and delivering an independent and ethically sound, research-based project to completion.	Research in Practice Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Research project in Occupational Therapy and Global Health
5	Identify and defend social, political, economic, and ecological factors that impact health equity, sustainability, and global public health.	Occupational Therapy with a Global Context Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy Research in Practice Research project in Occupational Therapy and Global Health

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

The curriculum design is based on a spiral approach that combines constructivist and critical pedagogy. Students will gain in-depth knowledge through active engagement in enquiry- based learning, independent research, and finding solutions to complex problems. The curriculum's goal is to encourage students to critically examine local and global health issues, individual circumstances, and systemic barriers that limit participation, within an occupational science framework. By understanding theory and practice, students will develop an appreciation of multiple perspectives and a sense of critical consciousness and professional identity. The curriculum will help students develop practical skills and self-reflection, leading to professional transformation. Students enrolled in this course are expected to engage in theoretical and practice-based learning, demonstrating high levels of personal motivation, emotional resilience, and academic performance. The course aims to prepare graduates to work as occupational therapists who can promote individual well-being and a sense of belonging while addressing global health needs.

Teaching and learning on your course are closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly in the areas of occupational therapy, global health, long-term conditions, disease prevention, etc. In general terms, the course provides an opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate the learning outcomes detailed herein. Teaching and learning are mostly through lectures, seminars, hands-on practical skills, placement-specific workshops, study groups, essay consultations, oral presentations, and guided independent study. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by coursework assignments, examined essays, case study-based assignments, online tests and exercises, practice-based skills examinations, oral presentations, and the dissertation or long essay. In addition, students may be involved in workshops and may produce various forms of creative or editorial work. The learning and assessment tasks are designed in alignment with HCPC standards of proficiencies (2023), HCPC standards of conduct, performance & ethics (2023) and RCOT's Learning and development standards of pre-registration education to ensure that students can demonstrate professional behaviour, conduct, performance and ethics during the course and meet the registration requirements as an occupational therapist. Students will be offered a formative opportunity for all module assessments including academic and practice-based learning modules to maximise performance in their summative assessments.

Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be OT laboratory- based sessions, simulations, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff. In addition to the contact time, students are expected to undertake around 25-30 hours of personal self-study per week which is indicated in module outlines. Typically, this will involve guided study, pre-module or session reading, quizzes, and preparation for assessments related to the study modules. Students are expected to read around topics introduced in class to further extend their knowledge and identify areas that need clarification or further discussion in class. Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the CeDAS and library resources, the virtual learning environment (Moodle), and extensive electronic learning resources. The course fully uses Moodle for each module, clearly identifying student expectations. A shared approach to design, ensuring inclusive access for students, is used across Occupational Therapy and other PGT courses within the Department of Health Studies.

The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module you will gain the credits listed.

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online Royal Holloway Curriculum Catalogue. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Section 8 – Additional costs
Please be aware that there will be additional costs such as travel and accommodation for placements, and occupational health related costs as required. Please be aware that the university will support DBS (for Home students only) and the initial occupational health assessment costs; however, the university does not pay for vaccinations, further occupational health follow-ups, or additional assessments.
These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	7
Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.	

Section 10– Intermediate exit awards (where available)
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award in Allied Health Studies if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards are outlined in the sections below.

Award	Criteria	Mandatory modules	Awarding body
PG Certificate	To be awarded the PG Cert in Allied Health Studies must pass 60 credits at Level 7. **The award does not confer eligibility for registration with HCPC.**	HE5200 Occupational Therapy with a Global Context (30 credits) HE5201 Human Sciences and Occupational Performance (30 credits)	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
PG Diploma	To be awarded the PG Dip in Allied Health Studies must pass 120 credits at Level 7. **The award does not confer eligibility for registration with HCPC**	HE5200 Occupational Therapy with a Global Context (30 credits) HE5201 Human Sciences and Occupational Performance (30 credits) HE5204 Contemporary Practice in Occupational Therapy (30 credits) HE5205 Collaborative Approach in Practice (15 credits) HE5207 Research in Practice (15 credits)	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College