

**Faculty of Health and Life Sciences**



**Department of Social Work, Education and  
Community Wellbeing  
MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration)  
2021/22 Programme Handbook**

<b>Programme Information .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Programme Highlights and Aims .....	3
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) .....	5
Programme Learning Outcomes .....	5
Programme Structure.....	6
Results.....	7
Option Modules.....	7
Support from Your Academic Team .....	7
Hours of Study, Attendance and Timetable .....	7
Staff Student Programme Committees (SSPC).....	9
Employability on Your Programme .....	10
<b>Help and Support .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Your Student Portal.....	10
University Library .....	11
Students' Union.....	11
Key Policies and Information.....	12
Academic Language Skills (ALS) .....	13
Health & Safety and Security on Campus .....	14



This handbook provides you with information regarding your programme and where to find help and support during your time at Northumbria.

## Programme Information

### Programme Highlights and Aims

Our programme is based on the central tenet that engaging in meaningful and purposeful activity (occupation) is essential both to individual health and wellbeing and to the health of communities and populations (Royal College of Occupational Therapist (RCOT), 2014). The MSc (pre-registration) Occupational Therapy degree is underpinned by a comprehensive understanding of human occupation, the contribution of occupation to health and wellbeing and the provision of safe and effective occupational therapy in a range of professional contexts. Successful completion of this programme will lead to eligibility to register with the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) enabling you to practice as a State Registered Occupational Therapist. It will also enable you to develop knowledge of Occupational Science with expertise in human occupation which can be applied to many wider roles and opportunities. The importance of being actively engaged in occupations throughout life, and through periods of ill-health, transition and change, is increasingly recognised by local, national and international policy. Therefore, there are many exciting and varied opportunities for occupational therapists and for the profession as a whole. The philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of Occupational Science and the relationship to Occupational Therapy are embedded within the curriculum. The centrality of occupation to human life is threaded throughout modules and reflected in the teaching and learning experiences, which may include collaboration with staff and students from other Departments and Faculties. You will need a strong commitment to working sensitively, respecting diversity and to building partnerships to work alongside individuals, groups, families and communities to promote health and wellbeing. You will also need critical thinking, ethical decision making and a social and political awareness to enable you to contribute to the changing context of occupational therapy practice. Within the programme, there is a wide range of professional practice placement experiences including international, emerging practice opportunities and potential for an elective placement of your choice. In order to meet Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (PRSB) requirements all modules within the **MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration) are compulsory. For the PG Diploma in Occupational Therapy the year two research project is not compulsory, students are able to opt in to completing the PG Diploma rather than the MSc at the end of year one.** Optional elements enable the flexibility to contribute to a professional profile which is aligned to your own areas of interest, such as choosing an elective placement opportunity and choosing the focus of your research topic.

The programme is led and delivered by enthusiastic research active professors, associate professors, lecturers and practitioners with knowledge and expertise relevant to occupational science and the practice of occupational therapy across a diverse range of contexts, enabling the delivery of contemporary and research-informed learning opportunities. You will be part of a thriving occupational therapy student society and have strong links with our professional body the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT). These networks facilitate extra-curricular activities and provide a wide range of social and potential future employment opportunities. You will also have access to an award winning library and learning resource centre and excellent student support services. You are expected to adhere to the professional standards of practice, values and behaviours as set out by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and RCOT. We will encourage you to pursue and develop broad areas of competence, capability and interest through your learning experiences. This will occur within the University and via blended/online learning through analysis of theory, research and the evidence-base for occupational therapy and within your practice experiences. Involvement in an extended research project will also prepare you to consider your role in using evidence to inform practice and contributing to the creation of knowledge. The degree is a two-year full time Pre-registration Occupational Therapy programme designed to integrate your learning experiences in the University and across a broad range of clinical practice settings. These experiences will enable you to develop your knowledge, skills, values and behaviours required to be eligible for professional registration. Our Occupational Therapy programmes have also been commended by RCOT as part of the validation event for the 2017-2022 curriculum for the quality of teaching activity which supports final year students in preparing for employment, opportunities provided to all students to raise political awareness and appreciation of the real world environments they are entering into. Commendation was also given for the personal tutor support given to all students which gives the opportunity for individuals to explore their academic and professional aspirations which in turn strengthens motivation and supports ambitions.

### **Aims**

In supplementing the Northumbria University Graduate Characteristics the overall aims of the MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration) programme are:

1. To develop detailed knowledge of the key issues relating to human occupation and Occupational Therapy within the context of contemporary practice.
2. To develop the knowledge, skills, values and behaviours required to meet professional and regulatory body requirements and to practice safely and effectively as an Occupational Therapist.
3. To stimulate a collaborative, enquiry based approach to the complex nature of occupational therapy, issues of health and wellbeing, and societal needs.
4. To research, critically appraise, and apply knowledge relevant to Occupational Therapy practice and to contribute to knowledge generation through an independent research project.

5. To develop critical, analytical and reflective skills which can be applied to exploring, influence and leading issues pertaining to contemporary Occupational Therapy practice, and which can be embedded as part of lifelong professional learning and development.
6. To develop a philosophy of person-centred practice placing individuals, families, groups and communities at the centre of health and social care decision making and opportunities for using occupation to promote health and wellbeing.

### **Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)**

The programme meets the requirements of the Health and Professions Council (HCPC) which is the regulatory body for Occupational Therapists in the UK.

### **Programme Learning Outcomes**

In undertaking this programme, you are expected to achieve the following learning and educational outcomes on completion of each stage (level) of the programme, prior to progression to the next stage.

#### **Level 7**

##### Knowledge and Understanding

1. Synthesise and critically apply theoretical and scientific concepts to the understanding of human occupation.
2. Critically analyse occupational therapy practice within contemporary professional contexts.
3. Evaluate a wide range of factors influencing occupational therapy including environmental, political and social factors.
4. Critically analyse the nature of evidence in contemporary professional practice.

##### Intellectual/Professional Skills & Abilities

1. Independently apply professional skills for safe and effective practice.
2. Formulate self-directed plans for professional development and self-assessment, demonstrating a commitment to continuing professional development.
3. Critically evaluate and justify professional decisions across a range of settings.
4. Apply collaboration, verbal/non-verbal and written communication skills to effectively work with service users, carers and others.
5. Critically appraise and apply evidence to practice and contribute to knowledge creation through research.
6. Critically evaluate occupation focused interventions for individuals, families and communities.

7. Critically apply leadership and entrepreneurial skills in order to promote the therapeutic benefits of occupation and the occupational therapy role.

Personal Values Attributes (Global/Cultural Awareness, Ethics, Curiosity)

1. Critically analyse legal and ethical frameworks to manage complex and ambiguous areas of practice.
2. Critically reflect on diversity and complexity of human occupation in order to practice in a non-discriminatory manner.
3. Critically reflect on influences on quality in occupational therapy.
4. Critically evaluate local, national and international policy and guidance to articulate the contribution of Occupational Therapy in the context of health and wellbeing.
5. Apply innovative and independent thinking to a range of practice and professional issues.

## Programme Structure

### First Year (Level 7)

Semester	Module Code	Module Title	No. of Credits
Year Long	OT6004	Introduction to occupation with placement A	20
Year Long	OT7000	Research informed occupational therapy	20
Year Long	OT7001	Developing occupational therapy reasoning and skills with placement B	30

### Second Year (Level 7)

Semester	Module Code	Module Title	No. of Credits
Year Long	OT7004	Occupational therapy research project	60
One	OT7002	Occupation focused practice	20
Two	OT7003	Professional development and lifelong learning with placement C	30

## **Results**

Following Programme Assessment Boards (PAB), you can access your Student Module Record Form (SMRF) via your Student Portal on specified dates. Marks received before a PAB are subject to change and are not confirmed until they have been ratified by the PAB. For information around results release dates for your programme ask your programme leader.

For further information regarding your results, search '*understanding your academic results*' in the Help and Support Search in your Student Portal.

## **Option Modules**

If your programme offers option modules you will be notified of the process for selection and allocation at the appropriate time within the academic year. Module information is indicative and is reviewed annually therefore may be subject to change.

The University will use reasonable endeavours not to make any changes to your programme, either before you start or during the academic year for which you enrol. However, there are occasions where some changes may be necessary to assist and support the proper delivery of educational services.

## **Support from Your Academic Team**

Our pastoral support is designed to ensure that you can conduct your studies to the best of your abilities. We endeavour to ensure that you always know exactly what is expected of you during your studies. Staff will help you develop the skills required to plan, manage, and review your learning, and will support you should you encounter any issues which hinder you. This is supported by Module Leaders, Dissertation Supervisors, and by your individual Personal Tutor. A central principle of this system is to develop your autonomy in order that you develop a well-honed ability to work independently upon graduation.

You will find details and further information on your programme representative and personal tutor on the student portal.

## **Hours of Study, Attendance and Timetable**

## Hours of Study

Your degree programme is made up of a number of modules. Each module has a specific number of credits attached. Credits identify the total number of hours you are expected to apply to the module. Each credit represents 10 hours of learning. You will be expected to study a minimum number of hours, for example, 600 hours per semester of full time study.

The work you are expected to do for each module is made up of the following activities:

1. **Contact Hours:** These are the lecturers, seminars, workshops and tutorials shown on your timetable for each module
2. **Directed/Independent Study:** This is the time you will spend preparing for seminars, writing up your seminar and lecture notes, reading the recommended texts and articles, meeting with fellow students on group work and carrying out your own research
3. **Assessment:** This is the time you will be required to devote to complete the module assessment, which may include examinations, assignments, portfolio, presentations and group reports

You can access your timetable via the Student Portal.

## Why is attendance important?

Regular attendance at taught sessions is really important. Research shows a high correlation between attendance and achievement at University. As set out in your [Student Charter](#), the University asks you to engage actively with your learning opportunities both inside and outside of the University. We expect you to be an independent learner and an active participant in your own learning, and to take responsibility for achieving your learning outcomes and potential.

Engagement in group work, seminars and tutorials is a key element for both learning and the development of interpersonal skills.

## Why do we monitor attendance?

When you begin your studies, you will notice that we monitor student attendance at all timetabled sessions.

The University takes a proactive and positive approach to supporting your engagement with your studies and attendance on your Programme. Student attendance data, and other student engagement data which you have consented to provide, enables the University to identify where you may need some additional support



to 'stay on track'. We strongly believe in providing the best possible student experience we can, and we know that sometimes life can become complicated. If we are concerned about your attendance, we may contact you to see if everything is okay, and how we may help. Your lecturers, or your Student Engagement Team may contact you in-line with our [Attendance Monitoring Policy](#).

The Student Engagement Team are highly-experienced, professional support members of staff, who can work with you to ensure you receive the right guidance and support from the University, should you ever need it. They work with your Personal Tutor, Module Tutor and Programme Leader, and a range of confidential University Services and Procedures such as:

- Counselling and Mental Health
- Disability and Dyslexia Support
- Financial Support
- Welfare and Health support
- International Student Support
- Changes to your Circumstances
- Chaplaincy and Faith Advice
- Personal Extenuating Circumstances
- Requesting an Extension to an Assessment (Late Approval)

You can find out more about these by visiting the Help and Support Section of your [Student Portal](#) at any time.

The University also has a legal obligation to monitor the attendance of its international students under its Tier 4 licensing agreements.

### **Staff Student Programme Committees (SSPC)**

Programme Representatives are elected by you during Programme Rep Election Week, usually held close to the start of teaching, to represent the views of students on your programme to the University. They are there to take forward any programme-wide feedback and let the University know what students are enjoying on the programme, or what students would like to see improved. The Programme Representatives will be invited to one Student Staff Programme Committee (SSPC) per semester, usually around November/December and March/April. At this committee they will represent you and deliver your feedback so you are strongly encouraged to make your views known to them.

In the spirit of continuous improvement we aim to promptly address the issues you raise and actions are normally monitored through the SSPC and annual programme review. The SSPC is a formal, minuted

meeting of academic, technical and professional support staff and student representatives. Minutes will be posted on Blackboard after the meeting.

## **Employability on Your Programme**

Your programme at Northumbria is relevant to the workplace and already has employability embedded, so from day one you are gaining sought-after skills that will make you much more employable when you graduate.

You are gaining transferrable employability skills through project work and practical problem solving through real-world examples. You are getting experience of and insights into the workplace through external visits and group work, and you are building skills to enhance your employability by learning how to promote yourself in the competitive job market through reflection and action planning.

You have access to the Graduate Futures team, which provides online and face to face support with your career planning, applications, interviews and job and placement search, as well as virtual and on campus events delivered by expert staff and employers keen to recruit Northumbria students.

You may also have access to placement and study abroad opportunities on your programme, as well as support to start your own business.

To give yourself an edge over other graduates you can also get involved in opportunities outside of your course. Find out how you can get hands-on experience and gain further skills to make yourself more employable.

To access the links below you must first sign in to your [Student Portal](#).

[Careers and Employment](#)

[Study Abroad](#)

[Placements](#)

[Year in International Business - UK and Amsterdam](#)

## **Help and Support**

### **Your Student Portal**

Your Student Portal provides a single point of access to a range of self-help information and guidance on topics such as careers and employment, accommodation, international, IT, money and finance, your course,

student life and support and wellbeing. You can also route queries through to Ask4Help and our network of support professionals.

Link to Student Portal <https://myportal.northumbria.ac.uk/>

## University Library

Your University Library is here to support your academic success by providing you with expert help and high quality resources. On campus you have access to unique learning spaces, designed using student feedback and giving you a choice of places to read, think, focus collaborate and be inspired. Half of the library learning spaces are equipped with PCs or Macs, and self-service laptops give you additional choices in how you might want to work. There is WiFi throughout the University Library if you want to connect your own device.

Your online reading list service provides access to all the materials you are directed to read as part of your programme modules. For wider reading and research, Library Search offers a single point of discovery for exploring and accessing our extensive collection of print books, ebooks, journals, databases of subscribed scholarly content, primary source material and digital archives. You can also access wider global resources on demand via our Inter Library Loans service.

The Skills Development Team is available to offer support and advice for your academic work. If you need help with searching for information, academic writing, or referencing the Northumbria Skills Programme (NSP) is here to help you develop these and other learning skills. Alongside these workshops we offer one to one support by telephone, email, Skype, or MS Teams. We also provide a range of online help guides in a variety of formats through Skills Plus ([library.northumbria.ac.uk/skillsplus](http://library.northumbria.ac.uk/skillsplus)).

To access videos and other content from our NSP workshops you can self-enrol in our Northumbria Skills Programme Blackboard organisation (organisation ID is LR007BC).

If you have questions about developing your learning skills then please get in touch ([library.northumbria.ac.uk/develop-learning-skills/learning-skills](http://library.northumbria.ac.uk/develop-learning-skills/learning-skills)).

Access the University Library online through your Student Portal, or direct at [northumbria.ac.uk/library](http://northumbria.ac.uk/library)

## Students' Union

Your Students' Union, representing your academic interests.

Coming to University is a big investment, of time, money and effort that will affect the rest of your life. The Students' Union represents all students, helping them resolve problems they encounter through its work with the University. Independent of the University, it trains and supports over 1,000 students a year to represent Northumbria.

Every programme at Northumbria has a programme representative, a student from the course, elected by all members of the course in around the fourth week of teaching. Their role is to represent you to the programme staff. Large programmes may have two or three reps. These student reps are trained and supported by the Students' Union and will consult with you about the issues you face on the course, discuss them with programme staff and together we will try and find a solution.

Each department has its own Department Rep, as does each Faculty. Recruited and trained by the Students' Union, they meet monthly with the senior staff in the department and University on cross cutting issues and support programme reps in their work.

The five Sabbatical Officers who lead the Students' Union are elected by students every year. Their role is to represent the voice and views of students across the institution, working with the Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor and other senior staff. Two Officers each year sit on the University's Board of Governors. You can find the Officers in the ground floor of the Students' Union or contact them through our website.

You can find details of all of these reps in the MyReps section on your Student Portal.

In addition to the student representation, the Union also provides students with academic advice for students who need help in making a complaint, appeal or another issue to do with the student regulations. You can contact them at [www.mynsu.co.uk](http://www.mynsu.co.uk)

Finally the Students' Union is the largest provider of extra curricular opportunities and placements on campus. When you come to graduate employers will expect to see evidence of both your academic skills and also your personal skills and abilities. Volunteering with the Union is a great way to help develop these skills and experiences that will help your CV stand out. This isn't something you should leave to your final year, but you can get involved at any time on your course. You can find out more at [www.mynsu.co.uk](http://www.mynsu.co.uk)

## Key Policies and Information

You will find useful information and policies on a number of aspects around your on-course studies at:

### [Handbook of Student Regulations](#)

#### [Guidance for Students](#)

- Assessment regulations and policies
- Academic Misconduct
- Examinations
- Late submissions and Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PECs)
- Appeals and Complaints

#### [Student Engagement](#)

- Student Surveys
- Student Charter
- Student Protection Plan

#### [Academic Engagement](#)

- Personal Tutoring Policy
- Educational Analytics
- Student Attendance Monitoring
- Northumbria Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)
- Northumbria Graduate Characteristics

#### [Ethics and Governance](#)

## Academic Language Skills (ALS)

Academic Language Skills is an in-sessional academic study skills module delivered in each Faculty. If you are an International Student and are studying at a UK University for the first time, these modules should appear on your timetable. It is offered at postgraduate and undergraduate level. Each Faculty has a named ALS coordinator and experienced academic language lecturers lead the Seminars.

ALS modules run in Semesters 1 and 2 each year. If you have any questions, please contact the ALS Module Leader attached to your Timetable. You can also check this if you call into your nearest Student Central location.

The formal sessions and interactive seminars are designed by these lecturers in conjunction with Faculty Programme Leaders to tailor the course to your specific study areas.

The aim of the ALS program is to help you achieve your full potential in your credit-bearing modules, by enhancing your academic written and spoken communication skills. We do not want to add extra work to your already busy schedule, so the vast majority of the learning will take place during the weekly seminars. You may be asked to complete some preparation tasks for some seminars but these will be kept to minimum. Most weeks, you will just come along and participate in the sessions.

## **Health & Safety and Security on Campus**

To ensure your own safety and the safety of others, you must familiarise yourself with and adhere to all aspects of health and safety, both generally and more specifically, those that are most relevant to your programme and the areas you are working in. For any queries regarding health and safety or risk assessment within the Faculty please ask your Programme Leader.

**First aid:** The University provides a network of first aiders covering all sites. In the event of sudden illness or injury the first aiders should be the first point of contact.

**Fire and Evacuation Procedures:** Faculty staff acting as fire marshals have been nominated for all areas to ensure that everyone evacuates the building when the alarm sounds. On hearing or seeing the alarm you must leave the building quickly in an orderly manner and gather at the designated assembly point. You must not re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so by the Fire Marshal or Security Officer.

In an emergency, please use appropriate number:

- **First aid** 0191 227 3999
- **Emergency first aid** 0191 227 3200
- **Fire and evacuation** 0191 227 3200

More information is available in the [Health and Safety Policy](#).

Information to help you stay safe whilst on campus, including details of the free SafeZone app, can be found at [Safety on Campus](#).