

CPD@RCOT Short Course

Group Session – Facilitator's Guide

Occupational therapy with children: Right intervention, right time, right place



Name of Facilitator: _____

This guide is designed to help you, as the facilitator, to support participants with their learning during the group session of the CPD@RCOT Short Course.

Facilitator guide introduction

Thank you for being the group session facilitator for the CPD@RCOT Short Course 'Occupational therapy with children: Right intervention, right time, right place'.

This guide will help you to understand the role of a facilitator. It gives you some suggestions on how to support participants, and to help them make the most of the discussions. It is intended for professionals at Career Levels 3 to 5 of the Facilitation of Learning Pillar of Practice ([RCOT Career Development Framework](#)). If you are at a higher Facilitation of Learning Career Level, the guide should also support you if you wish to refresh your knowledge of the subject matter.

According to the Cambridge dictionary, a facilitator is “someone who helps a person or organisation do something more easily or find the answer to a problem, by discussing things and suggesting ways of doing things” (Cambridge University Press, 2019).

This is exactly what you will be doing in the group session: your role will be to enable the discussions and encourage participants to think critically to enrich the debate. You do not need special skills or previous knowledge of the topic. You can participate in all the group activities. You just need to bring your interest and enthusiasm to the room!

CPD@RCOT Short Courses can be delivered to a group or can be taken on your own. If you are on your own, you are your own course facilitator and this guide will be particularly relevant to you.

Preparing for the group session

Familiarise yourself with the course

Before the group session takes place, review the pre-work reading and activities. Compare the group session activities to the PowerPoint presentation. While doing so, study the activity notes in this guide.

Review in your mind what you want to say at each stage of the group session. Write down any questions, examples or scenarios from your own practice that are relevant to the activities. You can use these as a starting point for discussions if the group needs encouragement to engage.

Planning according to group size

It is best to work through the material in small groups so that all learners have a chance to participate and contribute. If the group is five people or less, everyone can work together. If the group is six or more, divide people up into groups of 3-5 for the session activities. The groups can stay the same throughout the session, or, if the dynamics are not working well, the groups can be mixed after each activity.

A simple way to divide people randomly into groups is to count off individuals according to the number of groups. For example, if the number of participants is best divided into three groups, sequentially assign each person a number 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3 and so on.

Ask each group to appoint a recorder, who notes down a summary of the key discussion ideas with the agreement of the group.

Planning according to group needs

Before the group session takes place, check if any of the participants has special needs or requires specific assistance to access the course. Some suggestions to support assistance are given in this section.

Disability Rights UK has developed a [Factsheet for Adjustments](#) for a considerable number of special needs. The document offers a list of adjustments and approaches to improve communication.

Other charities have more information on specific needs. For example the following guidance is available:

- Action on Hearing Loss: [Communication tips for the general public](#)
- Hearing Link: [How to communicate with a hearing impaired person](#)
- Royal National Institute of Blind People: [Guide on how to meet, greet and guide a blind or partially sighted person](#)
- British Dyslexia Association Advice for Educators: [What do I need to know as a teacher?](#)
- National Autistic Society [Communication tips, so you can communicate more effectively](#) They also provide [Communication tools](#) to improve understanding.

Appoint a timekeeper

Each section of the group session is timed so that the whole session does not over-run. As facilitator and participant, it is difficult to keep track of the time for each section as well. Appoint a timekeeper before the course starts, or at the beginning of the group session. For the longer activities, it is helpful for the timekeeper to give a two-minute warning before the end of the section (and see notes below).

Resources you will need for a face to face session

Find out the details of the housekeeping points described in the welcome section on page 5 if you do not know them already.

Have paper and pens available for each group. Prepare a piece of paper to circulate at the beginning, so that participants can record their contact details, if you do not have them already. If there are late-comers, ensure they record their details.

Prepare a way of recording and if possible, displaying, the discussion points generated by the whole group. This can be on a flipchart, post it notes, or you can write notes on paper or type them on a laptop or tablet.

If you are recording on paper, take photographs of the points that have been generated. After the course, send these out to the group members using the details participants provided at the beginning.

For guidance on running a remote group session, contact RCOTApprovedLearning@rcot.co.uk

Guidance for sole learners

CPD@RCOT Short Courses can be taken individually, and in this case, you are the course facilitator and timekeeper. Use the Power Point presentation whilst completing the course and follow the “Facilitating the group session” instructions.

Take notes and ask yourself questions at any point of the Short Course. Record what you are learning and pay attention to how much time you expend on each activity.

Consider sharing your thoughts and discussing any possible questions with your supervisor, and debate what you have learned with work colleagues / fellow occupational therapists.

Complaints

If a participant feels uncomfortable with any of the activities, or has a general complaint about the course, advise them to send an email to RCOTApprovedLearning@rcot.co.uk. We are happy to listen to concerns and to make changes where appropriate.

Facilitating the group session

► **Welcome** (Slide 1: 5 minutes)

Welcome the group to the session:

- Introduce yourself if you are not known already to all attendees by giving your name, your job title, your organisation and, in one brief sentence, your interest in the course.
- If you do not already have everyone's details, circulate a paper for people to write their names and email addresses. Explain that this is to circulate the shared learning points that are generated from the session.
Make sure you securely destroy this paper when you have used it to circulate shared learning points
- If the course is being held outside the normal premises of work for any of the participants, go through housekeeping:
 1. location of toilets;
 2. whether there is a planned fire alarm;
 3. fire exits;
 4. where to congregate if fire alarm activates.
- Nominate a timekeeper if this has not been decided before the session starts.
- If any participants are not known to the others before the start of the session, ask everyone present to briefly introduce themselves by name, job title and organisation.
- Encourage participants to bring their practice experience to the discussions.
- Remind participants of the following:
 1. Only offer information or experiences they feel comfortable about sharing
 2. They must act within their professional codes of conduct.
 3. Whatever is discussed in the group session must be considered confidential.

► **Learning Outcomes** (Slides 2 – 5: 5 minutes)

- Briefly review what learners will be able to do as a result of taking this course.
- If time allows and the group is not too large, ask each person to state in one sentence what they hope to gain from taking the course.

Now divide the participants into small groups if appropriate

► **Activity 1 – Reviewing referral data** (Slide 6: 30 minutes)

Ask participants to refer to Activity 1 from the pre-group session (pages 3 and 4 of the workbook) and feedback findings to the group.

Encourage group members to explore the reasons behind these referral patterns e.g. knowledge/confidence among particular referrers, school culture, difficulties becoming evident for children at a particular age/stage.

Ensure group members do not jump to solutions at this stage, rather seek to understand the patterns in the data.

** Ask the timekeeper to warn the group when 20 minutes have passed, so groups can pace their discussions. Ask the timekeeper to warn the group again when 25 minutes have passed, so the 5 remaining minutes can be used to summarise the debate.**

** Record the most common referral patterns and share with the group later **

► **Activity 2 – Doing things differently** (Slide 7 – 8: 30 minutes)

Use Slide 8 of the Power Point presentation as a reference to be used by participants throughout this activity.

Encourage the group to consider existing interventions first to help them use current resources as efficiently as possible.

Then consider the development of new targeted/universal interventions that could meet the needs of identified groups.

** Ask the timekeeper to warn the group when 20 minutes have passed, so groups can pace their discussions. Ask the timekeeper to warn the group again when 25 minutes have passed, so the 5 remaining minutes can be used to summarise the debate.**

** Record the learning points of this activity and share with the group later **

► **Activity 3 – Formulate an action plan and next steps** (Slide 9: 15 minutes)

Encourage participants to consider the following while developing their plans:

- a. Action plans should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely);
- b. Impact might be measured in terms of reduced waiting times, improved satisfaction of families and staff etc

Encourage a couple of group members to share their action plans.

** Ask the timekeeper to warn the group when 10 minutes have passed, so the 5 remaining minutes can be used in the debate of some few action plans **

► **Conclusion** (Slide 10: 10 minutes)

1. Concluding points to offer:

- Exploring referral patterns allows services to consider different ways to meet the needs of children/young people and referrers.
- Offering existing interventions at a different time and/or expanding the range of intervention options can help ensure more children/young people receive the help they need at the right time and in the right place.
- Investing in more universal provision (e.g. by providing information/training) may prevent problems from escalating and requiring more specialist input later on.
- When planning service changes, it is important to consider how the impact of changes will be monitored.

2. Remind participants there are further resources provided on pages 8 and 9 of the course workbook.

3. Remind participants to complete their certificate at the back of the workbook.

4. Allow 5 minutes for participants to record immediate reflections and plans of action on page 7 of the workbook. Encourage them to return to this page in the next few days, and not longer than a week, to review their learning points and add further thoughts and ideas.

5. Thank participants for their participation and engagement.

Post-course follow up

1. Distribute the discussion points to all participants, using the contact details you gathered at the beginning of the course.
2. To comply with GDPR, securely destroy the contacts paper when you have circulated shared learning points.
3. As possible after the course, complete the Facilitation reflection on the next page. Then complete your course facilitator certificate on the following page. File these pages in your CPD portfolio.
4. Send feedback to RCOT on the course using the [feedback form](#) or send suggestions to Prof.Dev@rcot.co.uk.

Facilitation reflection

Occupational therapy with children: Right intervention, right time, right place'

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Date of course | |
|----------------|--|

Did you have concerns about facilitating the course before you started? How realistic were these in retrospect?

Consider what went well. What were the elements that made these aspects work? If you were to facilitate again, how would you make sure you include these elements?

Review what you would do differently next time. What do you want to change and why? If you were to facilitate again, what would you put in place to make this happen?

Do you have any unanswered questions about facilitating the learning of others? Who could you discuss these questions with?

Record your reflective learning points on facilitating the learning of others. If you have more than three, add them on the back of the page.

My reflective learning points on facilitating the CPD@RCOT Short Course 'Occupational therapy with children: Right intervention, right time, right place'

1.

2.

3.

RCOT would appreciate your feedback so that we can make improvements for future participants. Please fill our [feedback form](#) or send suggestions to Prof.Dev@rcot.co.uk. If you have any complaints, send an email to RCOTApprovedLearning@rcot.co.uk.

CPD@RCOT

Certificate of Facilitation of Learning

This is to certify that:

facilitated the CPD@RCOT Short Course

for ___ people on _____

Occupational therapy with children: Right intervention, right time, right place

The learning outcomes for this course are:

1. Identify the needs of the children and young people referred to your service;
2. Review existing and plan potential new ways to use resources to meet children's needs most effectively;
3. Identify how to demonstrate the impact of services delivered;
4. Evaluate your current and future practice in relation to analysing the right occupational therapy intervention at the right time and place for children, to improve the quality of your practice and service delivery.