

CPD@RCOT Short Course

Group Session – Facilitator’s Guide

Occupational therapy with children: Introduction to universal, targeted, specialist services



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: Introduction to universal, targeted and specialist services'.

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 – Why do we need to do things differently?** (Slide 6: 15 minutes)

Ask participants to refer to Activities 1 and 2 from the pre-group session (pages 3 and 4 of the workbook) and encourage them to consider in their answers to questions 1 and 2:

- Service demand vs capacity;
- Using resources wisely;
- Ways to ensure children receive the right help, at the right time and in the right place;
- Early intervention as a way of reducing the need for more costly specialist interventions later on.

** Ask the timekeeper to warn the group when 13 minutes have passed, so the 2 remaining minutes can be used to summarise the debate.**

► **Activity 2 – Identifying what you currently offer** (Slide 7 – 8: 15 minutes)

“ Collate one list of interventions that you currently offer in your service(s) and categorise these as universal, targeted or specialist interventions.”

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

Provide groups with sticky-notes and a piece of flipchart. Draw a triangle onto the flipchart paper and divide this into three sections illustrating universal, targeted and specialist interventions. Ask participants to write an intervention down on a sticky-note and place it on the flipchart next to the relevant tier category (universal interventions can be accessed by anyone for example).

Sometimes the clinical reasoning behind an intervention might mean it fits into one tier or another. Encourage learners to debate amongst themselves to decide where to place their intervention.

If attendees work in different areas and/or scopes of practice, emphasize that answers may vary because the interventions that are currently offered in their services can differ.

** Ask the timekeeper to warn the group when 13 minutes have passed, so the 2 remaining minutes can be used to summarise the debate.**

** Keep the piece of flip-chart to record and circulate later.**

► **Activity 3 – Identifying potential gaps in service provision** (Slide 9: 30 minutes)

“Does your service offer a balance of provision? List potential gaps in your service across the tiers.”

Often there will be more sticky notes in one section of the triangle compared to the others. This can generate debate about why a service has historically prioritised interventions at one level compared to the others. As a facilitator you may need to encourage learners to look forward (what could be done to address the imbalance) rather than spend too long reflecting on the past.

Sometimes occupational therapists will identify gaps in their service provision which can be upsetting. Reassure learners that identifying a problem is the first step towards addressing it. The next activity (identifying potential partners to expand the range of provision) and the companion course (Right intervention, right time, right place) will help learners consider how they can develop their service to provide more support for children across all levels.

** 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.**

► **Activity 4 – Potential partners for service provision** (Slide 10: 15 minutes)

“Delivering services in partnership with others. Who might your partners be?”

Working in partnership with others means we can extend the reach of occupational therapy to more children and young people.

Suggest the group focuses on developing partnerships for targeted interventions.

What could they offer at this level to address the needs of the children referred?
Consider as possible partners:

- Schools
- Sports groups
- Charities
- Community organisations.

Some people might feel anxious about ‘letting go’ of interventions they have traditionally delivered. Consider the following:

- The number of children with additional needs is increasing. We can’t see all children whose development, health and well-being are at risk.
- Developing interventions with partners means occupational therapists can focus on those with more complex needs/circumstances

- Partners need to have access to an occupational therapist if the intervention raises concerns about a child's development, health or well-being.

** Ask the timekeeper to warn the group when 13 minutes have passed, so the 2 remaining minutes can be used to summarise the debate.**

► **Conclusion** (Slide 11: 10 minutes)

1. Concluding points to offer:

- Demand for occupational therapy is increasing and resources are being stretched further. Rather than just asking for more resources we need to think differently about how we use the resources that we have.
- Working in partnership with others means more children can benefit from occupational therapy skills and expertise.

2. Remind participants there are further resources provided on pages 9 and 10 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. Invite them to consider a case study for later analysis. Encourage them to return to page 8 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: Introduction to universal, targeted, specialist services

Date of course	
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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: Introduction to universal, targeted, specialist services

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: Introduction to universal, targeted, specialist services

The learning outcomes for this course are to:

1. Know the meaning of the tiered (universal, targeted and specialist) model of service provision
2. Map current service provision and identify how it fits into the tiered model
3. Identify gaps in current service provision
4. Evaluate your current and future practice in relation to the universal, targeted and specialist models of service to children, to improve the quality of your practice and service delivery