



# Becoming a Fieldwork Educator

## MOT Program Overview

The Master of Occupational Therapy Program is a two-year full time program for students studying to become Occupational Therapists. Students coming into the program have already completed a Bachelor's degree and pre-requisite courses. As of 2017, there are 56 students enrolled in each year of the program—the need for fieldwork educators has never been greater!

## What does being a Fieldwork Educator involve?

During the two years of the MOT program, students complete a total of 31 weeks of physical dysfunction/mental health fieldwork education over five fieldwork placements (two in year one and three in year two) in practice settings such as acute, outpatient, rehab, community, school, home, private practice, long term care, transitional care, complex care, etc. As a Fieldwork Educator you will work in collaboration with the student, design a learning experience, and provide overall supervision and evaluation of their learning.

## What are some of the benefits of becoming a Fieldwork Educator?

- Personal satisfaction.
- Opportunity for Professional Development.
- Exposure to new ideas and evidence-based practice.
- The potential to become a Clinical Faculty Member and develop increased linkage with the Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy and the UBC community.
- Increased recognition.
- Giving back to the profession.

## For more information

**Please contact:** Donna Drynan  
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and Clinical Associate Professor  
Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy, UBC  
604-822-7415 | [donna.drynan@ubc.ca](mailto:donna.drynan@ubc.ca) | [osot.ubc.ca](http://osot.ubc.ca)

## What resources and support are available to me as a Fieldwork Educator?

The UBC Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy provides introductory workshops for clinicians who are interested in becoming Fieldwork Educators. These workshops are free and are held on a regular basis throughout the province. There are also excellent resources on the internet which are free and which can be accessed by anyone who is interested in becoming a Fieldwork Educator or in planning a placement. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (or designate) is also available for facility in-services, to assist with questions or concerns during the placement, and to provide individual coaching or assistance as required.

## I'm interested! How do I sign up?

- Talk to your supervisor to obtain facility support for your role as a Fieldwork Educator.
- The contact person who liaises with UBC fieldwork education can assist in having a student assigned to you.
- If you are working sole charge or if your facility has never taken a student before, please contact the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at UBC ([donna.drynan@ubc.ca](mailto:donna.drynan@ubc.ca)).

Useful Resources for Fieldwork Educators:  
[www.preceptor.ca](http://www.preceptor.ca)  
[www.practiceeducation.ca](http://www.practiceeducation.ca)

# FAQs

## **Are there any special qualifications required to become a Fieldwork Educator?**

Yes — enthusiasm and an interest in education, plus a desire to help develop the next generation of Occupational Therapists! The only qualifications that are needed are that you must be a qualified Occupational Therapist who has full registration with the College of Occupational Therapists of BC. You do not need to have a Master's degree to supervise a student.

## **I work part-time. Is that a problem?**

Not necessarily. Students can complete a combination of experience in different fieldwork areas or with more than one supervisor.

## **I'd like to take a student but I work irregular hours. Can students complete their placements on weekends and evenings?**

Yes. It is important that the student know prior to starting their placements what their schedule will be, but weekends and evening hours are acceptable.

## **I'm a new graduate and would like to take a student. I've heard that you have to have a year's experience. Is this true?**

Not necessarily, although it may be recommended in some fieldwork situations. Some facilities have their own policies, and we recommended that you have some experience in the fieldwork area you will be supervising in, but it is not a UBC requirement that you have one year's experience. Often some of the best educators are new graduates as they have a better understanding of the challenges of being a student. If you have questions regarding your level of experience, please contact the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, Donna Drynan.

## **I would like to take a student but am not sure I have enough clients for them to see. Can students be involved in other aspects of patient care such as developing patient education materials?**

We recognize that fieldwork caseloads fluctuate and are often outside the control of the supervising therapist. The students do need to have as much opportunity as possible for "hands on" experience during their placement, so if the student can be reassigned to another clinical area or to another therapist this is the preferred option. However if there are short quiet periods during the day it is very appropriate to discuss with the student what the best "non-patient-related" activities might be to fulfill their learning objectives.

## **How will I know what skills and knowledge the student will have at different stages during their program?**

Prior to the student's arrival, you will receive information on what has been covered in the curriculum to date, and whether this material was covered theoretically or practiced in a lab setting.

## **I've heard people talk about "2:1" or "12:3" placements. What does this mean?**

Often, one student is placed with one Fieldwork Educator ("1:1"). In some fieldwork settings an educator may have multiple students ("1:2" or "1:3" etc.), or multiple supervisors may be assigned multiple students ("12:3"). Support is provided by UBC for these "multiple" placement models. Usually, if it is the first time you have taken a student, you will be using the 1:1 model.