

# Formal Assessment Instruments used in Occupational Therapy

## Preamble

This document is aligned with the Occupational Therapy Scope of Profession document (Scope); assessment instruments are therefore classified in accordance with domains used in the Scope. Each assessment instrument is classified according to a rating scale that was developed to provide a summary overview of the assessment. The South African context is diverse in nature, for this reason an assumption cannot be made that rating scale is accurate to all contexts; assessments were deemed contextually relevant when it was judged to have relevance to at least one section of South Africa occupational therapy practice.

The term 'formal assessment instruments' includes *standardised tests*. A standardised test is one that has;

- a format/structure that include standardised instructions and/or scoring and/or interpretations of results,
- an existing scoring system,
- a particular name,
- been developed by a person/group that can be 'traced',
- evidence of validity and reliability.

## Glossary of terms

Assessment: Specific tools and instruments used during the evaluation process.<sup>1</sup>

Evaluation: The process of obtaining and interpreting findings from interviews, observations, screening and assessments necessary for describing or predicting performance, planning intervention, follow-up or re-assessments.

Instrument: A specific tool, gauge, meter, appliance, mechanism used for a specific purpose, for example to assess a component or construct of occupational performance.

Measurement: quantifying amounts, length, height, depth, strength, range, volume, mileage etc.

Occupational categories: Occupational categories as defined in the Occupational Therapy Scope of Profession.

Pre-occupational categories: Components of function that are required for successful performance of occupation.

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<sup>1</sup> AOTA. 2014. Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process (3rd ed.). American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 68 (Suppl.1), S1 - S48 .<http://dx.doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2014.682006>

Screening: Review of a client case to determine if services are necessary.<sup>2</sup>

Standardised test: instruments with specific norms or criteria, a standardised format of administration procedure and interpreting findings.

## Assessment Instruments:

For the purpose of this document assessment instruments are grouped into three separate categories, namely;

- instruments used to assess more than one occupational category,
- instruments used to assess occupational categories and
- Instruments used to assess pre-occupational categories.

### Occupational Categories:

**Personal and Community Living:** All occupations necessary for the care of self, dependents and the lived environment. They include those occupations that facilitate community and civic participation. Activities related to rest and sleep are also included.

**Leisure:** Discretionary occupations to meet recreational and social needs.

**Work:** Contracted occupations for formal and informal income generation and volunteerism.

**Play:** That which is done in structured and unstructured ludic engagements, that may or may not involve playfulness; which refers to player disposition or attitude.

**Education and learning:** Committed occupations for the advancement of human skills and potential.

**Social participation:** Occupations that constitute interactions with family, peers, friend/s and community members.

### Pre-occupational Categories:

**Biomechanical, Musculoskeletal and Neurological factors;**

**Psycho-social (including cognition, volition and affect) factors;**

**Sensory and Perceptual factors; and/or**

**Interpersonal factors.**

## Qualification requirements for use of assessment instruments

In South Africa the registrable occupational therapy qualification is at Bachelor's level. It is also at this level that programmes are accredited in accordance with minimum standards and exit level competencies stipulated by the Health Professions Council of South Africa and

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<sup>2</sup> Jacobs, J., Jacobs, L. 2004. Quick Reference Dictionary for Occupational Therapy. Thorofare: Slack Incorporated.

the World Federation of Occupational Therapists. Occupational therapy technicians (OTTs) register with the Health Professions Council following a two-year qualification. This document relates to both occupational therapists and occupational therapy technicians.

Bachelor level occupational therapy programmes are required to include content that will equip occupational therapists to select, apply and interpret the results of relevant assessment instruments in occupational therapy practice. To this end the content stipulated in Table I below will be included in all programmes. Additionally, students will be introduced (have the opportunity to administer and interpret) at least two assessment instruments in each of the three sections.

### Assessment competencies

A competent test administrator will use assessment instruments appropriately, professionally and in an ethical manner, with consideration of the needs and rights of those involved in the testing process, the reason for testing and the broader context in which testing takes place. To this end the test administrator has to ensure that he/she has the necessary competencies required to administer the assessment instrument, score accurately and interpret the results.

In order to achieve the above, occupational therapists have:

A minimum of 2 years of Psychology which includes psychometrics and neuropsychology.

Modules in performance deficits affecting occupational performance (contained in pre-occupational categories).

Modules in anatomy, physiology, medical/surgical, neurological, orthopaedic and psychiatric conditions.

Training in the administration, scoring and interpretation of tests that are relevant to Occupational Therapy (detail provided in Table 1).

Table I: Foundational concepts in standardised assessments included in occupational therapy education programmes

The Evaluation Process	
Methods of Assessment	
Concept of Standardisation and norms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Standard error of measurement</li> <li>● Procedures for establishing norms</li> </ul>	
Using assessment instruments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Selection of instrument (including the clinical utility of instruments)</li> <li>● Administration of instruments</li> <li>● Scoring</li> <li>● Interpretation</li> <li>● Limitations of testing</li> </ul>	
Psychometric properties	

Reliability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reliability coefficient</li> <li>● Consistency</li> </ul> Validity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Face validity</li> <li>● Content validity</li> <li>● Construct validity</li> <li>● Criterion-related validity             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Concurrent and congruent validity</li> <li>○ Predictive validity</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Cross-cultural validity (including issues of translation)</li> </ul>	
Identify potential sources and implications of bias	
Basic principles of assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Principles of test administration</li> <li>● Data management</li> <li>● Data analysis (including different ways to transform raw scores)</li> <li>● Interpretation of test findings</li> <li>● Report writing</li> </ul>	
Ethical conduct specific to testing (administer tests in accordance with specific guidelines and with consideration of licensing and copyright).	
Practical implementation of testing in the clinical setting under supervision.	

## Qualification Codes

Differentiation is made between measurement instruments used by occupational therapists and occupational therapy technicians. Occupational therapists educated in South Africa have competencies that will ensure proficiency in administering and interpreting tests that are equivalent to CL2 on the Pearson's Assessment Classification<sup>3</sup>. Occupational therapy technicians will be able to use selected instruments classified as CL3 on the same classification. Pearson Assessment differentiate assessment products by classifying them as CL1, CL2, CL2R or CL3 instruments. This code was developed with US training codes in mind, some detail provided below for ease of reference.

**UNAS:** Unassigned tests are available to all users, no qualifications are required in order to be able to purchase these tests.

**CL3 tests** in general, are those which do not require an individual to have advanced training in assessment and interpretation. Qualified teachers would be given this code.

**CL2R tests** require qualified teaching status and a further Post Graduate Qualification in SEN ie Post Graduate Diploma or Masters. This qualification would need to be in SEN, SpLD or a relevant field.

CL2 tests may be purchased by individuals who are certified by a professional organisation recognised

<sup>3</sup> Pearson Website. Available at: <http://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk/information/qualificationcodes.aspx>

by Pearson Assessment or have a graduate and/or postgraduate qualification relevant to their profession. This qualification code would encompass all psychologists other than those mentioned for CL1, speech or occupational therapists, mental health professionals and health practitioners with appropriate Graduate and professional qualifications in their field of practice.

**CL1 tests** can be used by:

- Anyone who is registered with the HCPC as a Practitioner Psychologist and/or is a Chartered Psychologist with the BPS.
- Anyone who is registered with the HCPC as a Practitioner Psychologist and also has the protected titles of Clinical Psychologist, Forensic Psychologist, Counselling Psychologist or Educational Psychologist.

**NB** Practitioner Psychologists registered with the HCPC, but who have no protected title or the protected titles of Health Psychologist or Sports and Exercise Psychologist, will be given a CL2 status.

### **Future maintenance and new lists:**

Standardised measurement instruments will be a standing item on the agenda of the Education Committee of the Professional Board. When necessary, the Education Committee will recruit experts in the relevant field on an *ad hoc* basis to appraise tests for inclusion onto the list. The Education Committee will review the list once per term of office and disseminate information to stakeholders via the Board Newsletter.

### **Process to add tests to the list:**

From time to time practitioners may come across new tests, or updated versions of tests and may wish to suggest additions or amendments to the list. Suggestions should be sent to the Board via the secretariat. Requests can be made by email to the Board Manager, [OCPBoard@hpcsa.co.za](mailto:OCPBoard@hpcsa.co.za)

### **Instruments will be presented in such a way as to include;**

- Instructions
- Norms
- Test experience

### **Purposes for Testing:**

- o Baseline evaluations in practice (to determine deficits)
- o Outcome of practice
- o Research

### **Elements that will be considered in 'reporting' the assessments:**

- o Contextual relevance
- o Clinical utility
- o Intended use (purpose)
  - Descriptive
  - Predictive
  - Evaluative
  - Measuring outcome

- o Relevance to scope
  - Regional measures
  - Patient-perspective
  - Self-report
  - Performance-based
- o Norm reference vs criteria reference
- o Who can administer