

# COTBC Re-Entry Program

## Competence Confirmation Practicum Information Guide



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### Information for Competence Confirmation Candidates and their Supervising Therapists

COTBC Bylaws require that occupational therapists maintain minimum *currency hours* to be eligible for full registration. Individuals who have been graduated for longer than 18 months must have practiced a minimum of 600 hours in the last 3 years. Applicants with insufficient currency hours may apply to the Registration Committee of COTBC to become a Provisional Registrant for the purpose of completing a Re-entry program.

### Purpose:

The purpose of the Competence Confirmation program is to ensure that the applicant is able to demonstrate the entry-level knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required to practice safely, effectively and ethically as outlined in the [Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada \(2021\)](#). While it is expected that new learning will occur, unlike a student practicum, this should not be viewed as a training program, but rather an opportunity for the applicant to brush up skills and knowledge while demonstrating entry-level competence.

### Competence Confirmation Program:

The Competence Confirmation program is comprised of a practicum of supervised practice review. All Competence Confirmation Practicum proposals must be approved by the COTBC Registration Committee prior to commencing.

The length of the practicum is determined by the length of time the applicant has been away from the profession:

- Applicants with 1 to 599 hours in the last 3 years, must complete 150 hours of supervised practice within 90 days
- Applicants with 0 hours in the last 3 years, but who have some hours in the last 5 years must complete a minimum of 300 hours of supervised practice within 180 days
- Applicants who have not practiced within the last 5 years, but have practiced in the last 10 years must complete 600 hours of supervised practice within the College stated time frame (one year)
- Applicants who have not practiced within the last 10 years must complete 600 hours of supervised competence confirmation practicum within the College stated time frame and complete the College approved examination

It is the responsibility of the applicant to complete the College application process and to secure a supervising occupational therapist who will participate in the development of the Competence

Confirmation Practicum Proposal (using the COTBC form) and provide the practicum of supervised practice.

### **The supervising Occupational Therapist must have:**

- Full registration and be a member in good standing with COTBC
- A minimum of one year full-time practice of occupational therapy or equivalent part time experience of 1800 hours in the past 3 years
- At least 6 months working experience in BC or satisfy the Registration Committee that they understand the regulatory requirements affecting practice in BC.

### **The supervising therapist is expected to:**

- Provide the applicant with a letter confirming the practicum
- Work with the applicant to develop a Competence Confirmation Practicum Proposal (using the COTBC form) which should demonstrate the availability of adequate supervision, the progression of independence within practice and the opportunities for self evaluation and reflective practice
- Ensure adequate supervision of the applicant throughout the practicum
- Ensure that the COTBC Registration Committee is notified of significant changes to the supervision plan or practicum content.
- Complete the Competence Confirmation Practicum Evaluation at the end of practicum (use of the evaluation tool at the mid-point of the practicum is strongly encouraged but submission to the College is not required)

### **Approval of Supervised Practicum's:**

The Registration Committee must approve the applicant's Competence Confirmation program. The applicant must submit to the Committee:

- A completed application for registration or registration reinstatement
- A Competence Confirmation Practicum Proposal as per the guidelines
- A signed Supervisor and Employer Acknowledgment Form
- A signed Letter of Undertaking for the practicum

### **Evaluation:**

Once the practicum is completed the applicant must submit the completed Competence Confirmation Practicum Evaluation to the Registration Committee of COTBC.

The College must receive the completed evaluation form indicating successful completion of the practicum before the applicant will be considered for Full registration.

The applicant must meet the currency hour standard within 18 months of completing the supervised practice review. The Competence Confirmation program hours may not be counted when determining currency hours for renewal of registration.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

1. How do I find a therapist to supervise my practicum?

It is suggested that you first think about your areas of skill and interest and then approach facilities or therapists whose scope of practice best match with your interests. Ensure that you are prepared to let the facility or therapist know about your previous experiences so they can determine how providing you with a Competence Confirmation practicum may benefit their organization. Don't be surprised if you need to approach a number of facilities/therapists before you are successful.

2. Do I get paid?

Maybe, it depends on the organization's policies and resources. You will need to explore this aspect with the organizations you approach. You may need to look to other government programs for funding.

3. Can I do the practicum as a volunteer?

There may be union issues in some organizations, you will need to ensure that the union views you as supernumerary not a replacement worker. Whether you get paid or not, you must be allowed to practice as an Occupational Therapist and you must be covered by WCB.

4. Can I be supervised by more than one therapist?

Yes, although it must be clear to the COTBC Registration Committee, how each will be responsible for your supervision and evaluation. If two OT's are providing supervision each OT must sign a Supervisor and Employer Acknowledgment Form, and complete the Declaration of Successful Completion.

5. Can my practicum be done in more than one organization?

Yes, it is sometimes difficult to find a practicum for the full 600 hours. COTBC requires that all components of the practicum must be a minimum of 200 hours and two rather than three sites are recommended. A practicum of less than 200 hours will not be considered by the Registration Committee.

6. What if I need to withdraw partway through a practicum, would those hours count later on?

If you had completed a minimum of 200 hours and if COTBC received a completed Competence Confirmation Program Evaluation from your supervising therapist, the Registration Committee

would take the completed hours into consideration when reviewing any future Competence Confirmation Program proposals. Practicums where less than 200 hours have been completed or where competence to practice independently at entry level has not been demonstrated, will not be considered as partial completion of a Competence Confirmation program.

7. What if the Competence Confirmation program can't proceed as planned?

Any significant changes to the supervision plan or practicum content must be approved by the COTBC Registration Committee before the practicum can proceed.

8. How will my practicum be evaluated?

COTBC has developed an evaluation form for the Competence Confirmation Program which is based on [Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada \(2021\)](#). You must demonstrate that you have the entry level knowledge, skills and attitudes in **ALL** of these competencies for your practicum to be successful.

9. What happens if there are aspects of my practicum that are not going well?

You should communicate with your supervising therapist throughout your practicum and engage in self evaluation and reflection to ensure that you are aware of areas where additional work is needed. Most Competence Confirmation applicants will need to spend time outside of work hours to ensure that they are acquiring the new learning needed to be successful.

10. What happens if my practicum is not successful?

You will need to work with your supervising therapist to identify the areas where you are not yet able to demonstrate entry-level competence. You will need to make application to the COTBC Registration Committee with any new proposals for continuation of your Competence Confirmation program. You may need to seek out refresher education or arrange additional practicum hours. Until you are assessed to be demonstrating entry-level competence, you will not be eligible to register with COTBC to practice as an occupational therapist.

11. Will the supervising therapist be held accountable for the practice of the applicant after they have completed their Competence Confirmation program?

No, the supervising therapist is responsible for ensuring the Competence Confirmation applicant is able to demonstrate the entry-level knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required to practice safely, effectively and ethically as outlined in the [Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada \(2021\)](#).

The supervising therapist is not responsible for any misconduct by the Competence Confirmation applicant after the completion of the practicum.