THE AMERICAN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION
SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FIELDWORK EDUCATOR COMPETENCY
(SAFECOM)
REVISED 2023

Fieldwork education is a vital component in preparing students for entry level occupational therapy practice. The role of the fieldwork educator (FWE) is to facilitate the progression from occupational therapy student to entry-level practitioner. Competency in the role of the FWE promotes the practitioner's pursuit of excellence in working with students and ensures the advancement of the profession.

PURPOSE

The SAFECOM was designed to be utilized by FWEs as a tool to provide a structure for self-reflection and assessment of their perceived level of competence and to identify areas for further development and improvement of their skills. It reflects occupational therapy domain and process as outlined in the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process Fourth Edition. The SAFECOM can be utilized to support the development of the skills necessary for effective fieldwork supervision. Use of this assessment tool is intended to be the foundation from which FWEs can create a professional growth plan with specific improvement strategies and measurable outcomes to advance development in the role of FWE. The SAFECOM is intended to be used for professional development only. It is not intended to be used as a performance appraisal; however, the FWE may choose to include goals articulated in their fieldwork educator professional development plan in their annual professional goals.

WHO SHOULD USE THE TOOL

The SAFECOM is designed to be used by FWEs at all levels of expertise who supervise students. While the tool is primarily oriented toward occupational therapy practitioners (OTPs) who directly supervise occupational therapy assistant (OTA) students and/or occupational therapy (OT) students during level II fieldwork, it can easily be applied to the supervision of students during level I fieldwork and supervision of non-occupational therapy students. It can also be utilized by other professionals in preparation for and during clinical education supervision.

CONTENT

The SAFECOM includes the following features:

1. FWE competencies in the areas of professional practice, education, supervision, evaluation, and administration.
2. Likert scale to aid in self-assessment.
3. Comment section to articulate personalized strengths and areas that need improvement.
4. A professional development plan template which can be used to articulate goals, and record and track a plan of action for professional growth.

DIRECTIONS

FWEs should determine the relevance of each competency to the role of the OTP in their setting. Circle the number on the Likert scale (see below) that correlates with the perceived level of competence for each item. Some competency statements may not be applicable in every practice setting and/or state. Refer to state and local guidelines and AOTA resources such as "Guidelines for Supervision, Roles, and Responsibilities During the Delivery of Occupational Therapy Services. The comments section can be used to highlight strengths, areas that need improvements, etc. Once the competencies are assessed it is helpful to prioritize the competency areas that need improvement. Write objective goals with clear

timelines for each of the selected areas and identify realistic strategies that can be utilized to meet each of the goals.

Likert Scale:

5 = High level of competence: Extensive knowledge, ability, and skill in the identified area.
4 = Moderately high level of competence: Good knowledge, ability, and skill in the identified area.
3 = Average level of competence: Some knowledge, ability, and skill in the identified area.
2 = Low level of competence: Minimal knowledge, ability, and skill in the identified area.
1 = No level of competence: No knowledge, ability, and skill in the identified area.

Occupational therapy practitioners are adept in assessing, planning, and implementing practical and meaningful continuous quality improvement plans. It is this attribute, plus a desire to support the growth of future practitioners, that motivates OTPs to seek methods for gaining and maintaining their competence as FWE. We hope this tool is helpful in guiding fieldwork educators on a journey of self-appraisal and professional development. It meets the immediate need of defining basic competencies of fieldwork educators. It is in this spirit that the SAFECOM was drafted and offered as a means for better serving the needs of individuals and the future of occupational therapy education and practice.

Originally developed in 1997 by the COE Fieldwork Issues Committee.

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SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FIELDWORK EDUCATOR COMPETENCY

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE COMPETENCIES		Key Definition Statement: The FWE demonstrates competencies in professional knowledge, skills, and judgement in occupational therapy practice that supports the client's engagement in meaningful occupation.					
The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
1.	Uses a systematic approach to the occupational therapy process (evaluation, intervention, and outcomes) that is science-driven and focused on client factors, occupations, and contexts.	5	4	3	2	1	
2.	Skillfully collects, analyzes, and synthesizes information from the client's occupational profile and performance to develop client centered goals and intervention plans, to implement occupational therapy services, and to track and measure outcomes.	5	4	3	2	1	
3.	Considers occupational demands, contexts, environmental demands, and client factors when determining feasibility and appropriateness of interventions.	5	4	3	2	1	
4.	Understands clients' concerns, occupational performance issues, and safety factors when developing client-centered goals and for participation in intervention.	5	4	3	2	1	
5.	Articulates the rationale and theoretical model, frame of reference and/or therapeutic approach for occupational therapy services.	5	4	3	2	1	
6.	Integrates best available evidence, clinical, and professional reasoning, and the client's situation, preferences, and values, into occupational therapy practice.	5	4	3	2	1	
7.	Demonstrates intradisciplinary collaboration between the OT/OTA to provide evaluation, interpretation of data, intervention planning, intervention, discharge planning, and documentation.	5	4	3	2	1	
8.	Collaborates with clients, colleagues, family/support system, staff and other professions with respect, sensitivity, and professional judgement.	5	4	3	2	1	

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The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
9.	Works to establish a collaborative therapeutic relationship that values the client's perspective including culture, diversity, values, beliefs, health, and well-being as defined by the client.	5	4	3	2	1	
10.	Addresses psychosocial factors across practice settings as a reflection of a client-centered approach.	5	4	3	2	1	
11.	Effectively manages and prioritizes client-centered services (e.g., evaluation, intervention, documentation, team meetings, etc.) that support occupation-based outcomes.	5	4	3	2	1	
12.	Incorporates legal, ethical, and professional issues that influence practice (e.g., reimbursement, confidentiality, role delineation, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	
13.	Articulates and implements OTA/OT role delineations that are reflective of both the practice setting and state regulations.	5	4	3	2	1	
14.	Adheres to professional standards of practice and code of ethics as identified by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and state regulatory boards.	5	4	3	2	1	
15.	Assumes responsibility for and pursues professional development to expand knowledge and skills within the roles of clinician and fieldwork educator (e.g., AOTA, Commission on Education, Education Special Interest Section, continuing education, in-services, mentorship, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	
16.	Is knowledgeable regarding entry-level practice skills for the OTP.	5	4	3	2	1	
17.	Develops and implements a fieldwork educator professional development plan.	5	4	3	2	1	

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FIELDWORK EDUCATOR COMPETENCY

EDUCATION COMPETENCIES		Key Definition Statement: The FWE facilitates the student's development of professional clinical reasoning and its application to entry-level practice.					
The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
1.	Provides ongoing assessment of a student's individual learning needs based on review of the academic curriculum design, OTA/OT roles, prior professional experiences, and the student's current performance level.	5	4	3	2	1	
2.	Develops site specific learning goals through collaboration with the academic program.	5	4	3	2	1	
3.	Sequences learning experiences to grade progression toward entry-level practice.	5	4	3	2	1	
4.	Facilitates student-directed learning within the parameters of the fieldwork environment.	5	4	3	2	1	
5.	Maximizes opportunities for learning by using planned and unplanned experiences within the fieldwork environment.	5	4	3	2	1	
6.	Uses a variety of instructional strategies to facilitate students' clinical skills development, critical thinking, and professional reasoning (e.g., role modeling, co-intervention, videotaping, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	
7.	Adapts educational and teaching approaches to work effectively with all students, including students with disabilities and those requiring accommodations.	5	4	3	2	1	
8.	Demonstrates an understanding of individual student learning styles to adapt teaching approaches for diverse student populations.	5	4	3	2	1	
9.	Guides student integration of therapeutic concepts and skills (e.g., facilitates discussions to elicit clinical/professional reasoning, convert practice situations into learning experiences, and/or to process personal feelings/values that interface with practice).	5	4	3	2	1	
10.	Identifies resources and provides reference materials to promote student professional development and use of evidence-based practice (e.g., publications, texts, videos, internet, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	

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The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
11.	Uses evidence-based research to guide student performance and learning as an effective teaching strategy.	5	4	3	2	1	
12.	Facilitates student self-reflection and self-assessment throughout fieldwork and the evaluation process to promote the development of empathy, acceptance, perspective, communication, and clinical reasoning.	5	4	3	2	1	

SUPERVISION COMPETENCIES		Key Definition Statement: The FWE student achievement of entry-level practice through a student-centered approach					
The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
1.	Understands and utilizes various supervision models to facilitate student performance and professional behaviors.	5	4	3	2	1	
2.	Presents clear expectations of performance, at the start and throughout the fieldwork experience, that is appropriate to entry level OT practice defined by respective OT/OTA role delineation, level of fieldwork placement, practice setting, etc.						
3.	Anticipates and prepares students for challenging situations found within the complexity of the current healthcare system, and multifaceted environments in which OTPs practice.						

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The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
4.	Provides the student with prompt, direct, specific, and constructive feedback throughout the fieldwork experience.						
5.	Provides and adapts the level of supervision to facilitate students' development and progression toward entry level competence as appropriate to the client and setting.						
6.	Explores and implements a variety of strategies to communicate with and provide feedback to promote student clinical and professional development.						
7.	Understands and self-reflects upon personal communication style and supervision approach and demonstrates the ability to adapt style and approach based on student's learning needs.						
8.	Recognizes potential issues of concerns in the supervisory relationship and initiates appropriate interactions to resolve conflict.						
9.	Creates an environment in which students feel safe to provide constructive feedback and voice concerns.						
10.	Recognizes when students are encountering learning challenges and collaborates with the student and academic fieldwork coordinator to modify learning goals and/or environments as needed to facilitate student success.						
11.	Models appropriate professional behaviors when interacting with students, clients, and peers.						
12.	Consults with academic programs, and other FWEs to develop creative learning experiences for the student.						
13.	Understands and abides by current federal, state, and local policies regarding supervision of students.						

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FIELDWORK EDUCATOR COMPETENCY

EVALUATION COMPETENCIES		Key Definition Statement: The FWE evaluates student performance to achieve entry-level practice in the fieldwork setting.					
The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
1.	Reviews expectations and evaluation methods with the student at the start of FW, midterm and at final. This includes review of fieldwork goals and objectives, and methods for assessing entry level practice readiness, (e.g., AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE) or alternative evaluation tool).	5	4	3	2	1	
2.	Assesses student according to performance standards based on objective information (e.g., direct observation, discussion with student, review of student's documentation, observation by others).	5	4	3	2	1	
3.	Assesses student's performance based on appropriate OTA/OT entry-level roles of the fieldwork practice setting.	5	4	3	2	1	
4.	Utilizes the evaluation process to advise and guide the student regarding opportunities for growth and progression towards meeting site-specific objectives and attaining entry level competency.	5	4	3	2	1	
5.	Understands the purpose, scope and scoring criteria of the current AOTA FWPE or other identified evaluation tool to objectively measure student performance and provide feedback.	5	4	3	2	1	
6.	Completes and reviews all evaluations regarding student performance (e.g., AOTA FWPE, Fieldwork Experience Assessment Tool, etc.) with the student at midterm and final evaluation in a timely manner.	5	4	3	2	1	

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The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
7.	Guides the student in the use of feedback provided by the supervisor on the fieldwork performance evaluation tool, as a method of promoting self-reflection, and continued professional growth and development.	5	4	3	2	1	
8.	Documents student's fieldwork performance recognizing ethical and legal rights (e.g., due process, confidentiality, American with Disabilities Act, integrity, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	

ADMINISTRATION COMPETENCIES		Key Definition Statement: The FWE develops and/or implements an organized fieldwork program in keeping with legal and professional standards and environmental factors (physical, social, and cultural).					
The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
1.	Communicates and collaborates with the academic programs to ensure consideration and integration of the academic curriculum design during fieldwork.	5	4	3	2	1	
2.	Implements a model fieldwork program that includes site specific student learning objectives and supports the curriculum of the academic program.	5	4	3	2	1	

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The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
3.	Collaborates with fieldwork site administration and staff to develop and implement the student fieldwork program.	5	4	3	2	1	
4.	Designs and implements the fieldwork program in collaboration with the academic programs served and in accordance with current ACOTE standards for Level I and Level II fieldwork.	5	4	3	2	1	
5.	Ensures that the fieldwork program respects student diversity, promotes equitable access, and provides the necessary support to foster the full participation of all students.	5	4	3	2	1	
6.	Documents and provides students with an organized, systematic fieldwork program (e.g., fieldwork manual, student expectations & goals, assignments, weekly sequence of expectations, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	
7.	Ensures the provision of regularly scheduled meetings with the student to guide the fieldwork experience, (e.g., provide feedback, discuss performance, and expectations).	5	4	3	2	1	
8.	Is knowledgeable in legal and health care policies that directly influence fieldwork within the practice setting.	5	4	3	2	1	
9.	Defines the roles, essential functions and/or technical standards of a fieldwork student, in compliance with legal and accreditation standards (e.g., ADA, Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, Joint Commission, fieldwork agreement, reimbursement mechanism, state regulations, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	
10.	Ensures that student work areas are safe, accessible, and appropriate to the fieldwork site.	5	4	3	2	1	

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The FWE:		Competence Level					Comments
		High	Moderate	Average	Low	None	
11.	Provides students with a complete orientation to the fieldwork site (e.g., policies, procedures, student expectations, and responsibilities, etc.) at the start of the fieldwork experience.	5	4	3	2	1	
12.	Requires student compliance with the fieldwork site policies and procedures (HIPAA, OSHA regulations), mission, goals, philosophy, and safety standards.	5	4	3	2	1	
13.	Submits all required fieldwork documents to the academic program in a timely manner to ensure current data is available (e.g., fieldwork evaluation, fieldwork agreements, fieldwork data form, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	
14.	Conducts ongoing fieldwork program evaluations and monitors changes in the program with student and staff input (e.g., Student Evaluation of Fieldwork Experience, Self-Assessment Tool for Fieldwork Competencies, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1	

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FIELDWORK EDUCATOR COMPETENCY

FIELDWORK EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name: _____ Date: _____

Identified Strengths: _____ _____ _____ Areas for Potential Growth: _____ _____ _____			Planned Activities to Address Identified Goals								
			ENGAGING IN INDEPENDENT STUDY	ENROLLING IN FORMAL ACADEMIC COURSEWORK	ATTENDING CONTINUING EDUCATION	COLLABORATION WITH AFWC	DEVELOP/DELIVER PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION	ENGAGING IN SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES/PUBLICATIONS	MENTORING OR SEEKING MENTORSHIP	PARTICIPATION IN VARIOUS SUPERVISION MODELS	OTHER
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE COMPETENCY GOALS:	Target Date	Completion Date									
EDUCATION COMPETENCY GOALS:	Target Date	Completion Date									

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FIELDWORK EDUCATOR COMPETENCY

SUPERVISION COMPETENCY GOALS:	Target Date	Completion Date									
EVALUATION COMPETENCY GOALS:	Target Date	Completion Date									
ADMINISTRATION COMPETENCY GOALS:	Target Date	Completion Date									

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