

A Coming of Age for the HNC Occupational Therapy Support

The HNC Occupational Therapy Support (SCQF Level 7) was first validated in 1991. It was initiated and developed by the Scottish Committee of COT. This relationship has continued with joint Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)/COT certification. Over the past 21 years stakeholder partnership and regular revalidation has ensured that the programme continues to be fit for purpose. The HNC was initially offered as a day

release route for support workers within OT. It is currently delivered at Langside College, Glasgow through an open/distance learning route for support workers within the OT sector and on a full time basis for individuals who wish to enter OT as a career. Full time students spend 2 days a week in College and 2 days a week over 6 months on placement within an OT setting.

Number of Graduates: 1991- 2012

Day release: 240
Full time: 170
Open/Distance Learning: 95

Workplace/Placement Settings

Health: 55%
Social Care: 35%
Independent/Voluntary: 10%

What do the HNC graduates say?

"The HNC gave me the theory behind what I was doing."

"I have just completed the HNC OT Support distance learning and it was the most appropriate study I have ever done."

"I have acquired the skills and knowledge to work effectively and efficiently in any service within the profession."

"The study was a benefit to the service users and my workplace."

"My confidence has grown and I now mentor students on placement."

"I feel more able to contribute to service change."

"I am able to relate to clinical staff more easily and have now been given more responsibility in clinical session to support service delivery."

"I was a little frustrated by the cycle of in-house training...the HNC was exactly what I was needing."

Where do students come from?



What the sector says: How does the HNC meet current challenges?

"Staff feel more confident in undertaking tasks."

"It is crucial support workers participate in training that is stimulating, challenging, and enables progression in their career- the HNC meets all of this."

"The HNC allows support workers to gain a deeper understanding of specifically occupational based approaches to health and well-being."

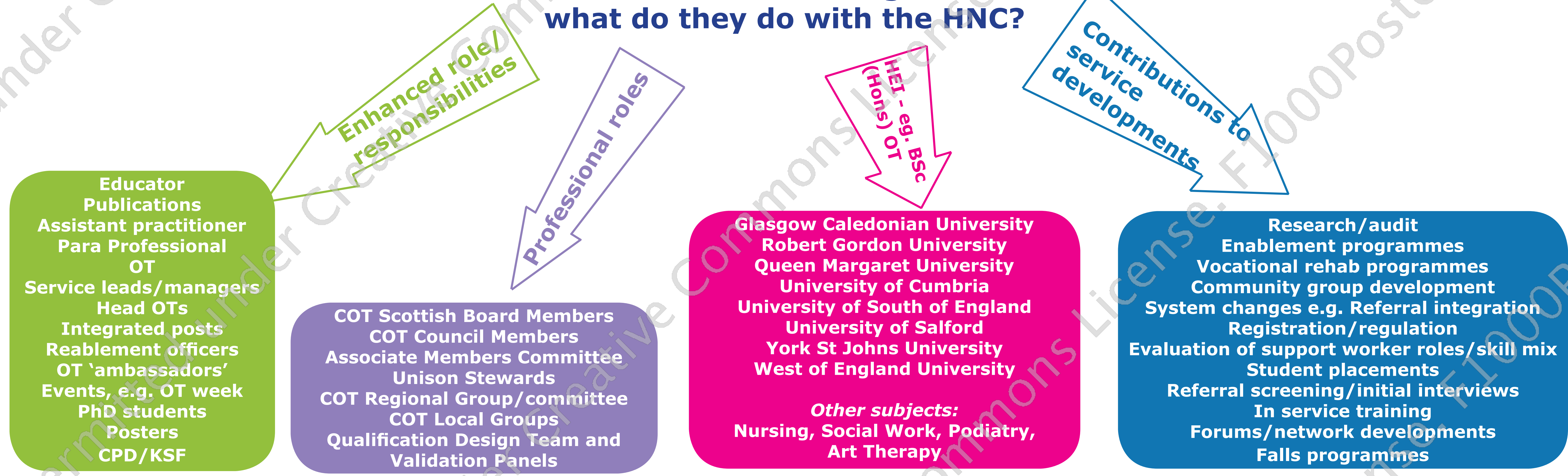
"The course is of value supporting staff in the context of the NHS Career Framework and evolving roles across the AHP workforce."

"The foundation is essential if we want staff who can work across health, social care and the voluntary sector."

"It is a model of good practice for all support workers."

"Having students to supervise helps me to continually reflect on my practice."

Where do students go and what do they do with the HNC?



What next? Further developments for Support Workers

Professional Development Awards (PDA) are recognised as flexible, cost effective approaches to learning with the potential to meet identified needs. The use of PDAs enables the cost effective clustering of units to support specific service and career development needs. These can be built upon to achieve further Higher National (HN) qualifications and therefore an

educational continuum or in isolation they provide an experience of a formalised education route with reduced resource requirements. From a learners perspective, this approach allows for "bite sized" learning which they can use to update and extend their skills. A number of these level 8 developments are currently underway. SQA have also agreed to QCF these qualifications to show relevance in England, Wales and NI.

PDA: Occupational Therapy Support (SCQF level 8) - 4 credit programme.

This development is in response to a number of key initiatives e.g. Changing Lives, Shifting the Balance of Care, Reablement, Integration agenda, NHS Career Frameworks and generic initiatives. The PDA has been accredited by COT and will be jointly certificated by SQA and COT. Candidates will study 2 credits dependant on their previous level 7 qualification and 2 credits specific to OT Concepts and Processes.

PDA: Facilitating Learning, Training and Assessment in the Workplace (SCQF level 8) - 3 credit programme.

Education and training within the workplace are central to AHP roles and support workers regularly contribute to numerous specific tasks associated with this. Varying levels of support exist for this role. This PDA provides appropriate formal recognition and the balance of theory and practical skills for support workers contributing to education within their workplaces.

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