

AOTA Model Technical Standards for Occupational Therapy and Occupational Therapy Assistant Education Programs

According to federal guidance on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, “the term *technical standards* refers to all nonacademic admissions criteria that are essential to participation in the program in question” (34 C.F.R. pt. 104, app. A, 1980).

This Commission on Education resource document serves as a model of Technical Standards that may be used and adapted to define the essential nonacademic abilities required for successful participation in an occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant education program. These standards ensure that all qualified students can meet program requirements with or without reasonable accommodation(s).

The domains reflect the requirements and attributes expected of students in occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant programs. The language used is consistent with the profession’s *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: 4th Edition (OTPF-4)* (American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2020). This document is intended to serve as a guide that may be adapted by programs to meet their specific needs.

Students must be able to do the following, with or without reasonable accommodation(s):

Knowledge Acquisition & Application

- Learn and apply foundational and practice knowledge
- Recognize, define, analyze, synthesize, and apply information using sound judgment and problem-solving skills
- Notice, respond to, and adjust to dynamic situations as they occur
- Plan, sequence, and coordinate tasks

Communication & Collaboration

- Communicate effectively and respectfully with a variety of audiences
- Respect varying viewpoints using professional language across all interactions
- Produce communication in a clear, concise, and accurate manner
- Apply basic technological skills in educational programs
- Verbal and nonverbal communication may occur through spoken language, writing, digital formats, or through augmentative devices, interpreters, or other means

Professional & Ethical Conduct

- Initiate, maintain, and conclude social interactions appropriately
- Demonstrate ethical behavior, reliability, and integrity
- Adapt behavior based on feedback from others and learned experiences
- Self-initiate actions to meet personal and educational needs
- Identify and reflect on personal strengths and needs while respecting those of others
- Demonstrate consistent and timely management of educational responsibilities
- Follow published policies and procedures

Functional Performance & Motor Coordination

- Safely engage in or direct tasks that involve positioning, movement, and/or material handling
- Move and transport objects of varying sizes and weights
- Safely navigate within a variety of environments

Health & Safety

- Engage in practices that prioritize the safety and well-being of self and others
- Notice, respond to, and adjust to unsafe situations as they occur
- Adhere to infection control standards and universal precautions

Summary Statement for Program

All qualified students must be able to perform the technical standards of the **{insert institution name}** occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program, with or without reasonable accommodations. These Technical Standards are inclusive of diverse abilities and are grounded in the values of equity, access, and professional excellence.

Statement on Access and Inclusion

Occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant education programs are committed to providing equitable access to education for all qualified students in accordance with the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In addition, the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment ensures that individuals are not denied equal protection under the law, including students with disabilities.

Students who disclose a disability and request reasonable accommodation(s) will be supported through reasonable, effective, individualized, and timely accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the program or create an undue burden.

{Insert institution's reasonable accommodation process or link here}

{Student/Applicant} attests that they have reviewed and can meet the above technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations.

Student Signature

Date

References

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). *Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain and process* (4th ed.). *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 74(2), 7412410010p1–7412410010p87. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001>

U.S. Department of Education. (1980). *Nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance* (34 C.F.R. Part 104, App. A). <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-I/part-104>

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