Occupational Therapy
Board of New Zealand
TE POARI WHAKAORA NGANGAHAU O AOTEAROA

FOSTERING FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE PROFESSION

ePortfolio
Handbook
a guide for practitioners

May 2017
To be reviewed April 2018

Contents

Welcome

Welcome to this handbook, which guides you through the process of using the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand's (OTBNZ) on-line continuing professional development tool – ePortfolio.

In order to remain certified, all occupational therapists practising in New Zealand must provide evidence that they are competent in a range of areas relating to their professional practice.

The OTBNZ defines competence as the ability to consistently apply professional knowledge, skills, judgment and diligence in response to ever changing situations in the workplace.

The OTBNZ has developed the ePortfolio to allow practising occupational therapists to provide evidence of their continued competence and as a practical, living tool for professional development.

The ePortfolio is recognised as a recertification programme as described in section 41 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA). The Board has made the ePortfolio a mandatory requirement for all registered practitioners holding a current licence to pratice.

This guide is intended to help you, as a practising occupational therapist, to:

- Understand the purpose of the ePortfolio.
- Successfully fulfill the minimum requirements of the ePortfolio.
- Competently use the ePortfolio to provide evidence of your continued competence.

> **Please note: Only practising occupational therapists are required to participate in the ePortfolio.**

This handbook is available electronically on the OTBNZ website at www.otboard.org.nz and the Home page of ePortfolio itself.

Also available to assist you in using the ePortfolio tool is an instructional video found on the ePortfolio website's home page.

We welcome your feedback on this handbook and on the ePortfolio tool.

Andrew Charnock

Chief Executive/Registrar
Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand
February 2016

Introduction

What is the ePortfolio?

The OTBNZ is the regulatory body for the occupational therapy profession in New Zealand. It is responsible for overseeing the:

• Practice of occupational therapy in New Zealand.

• Registration and certification of occupational therapists.

• Safety of consumers of occupational therapy services.

• Professional development and continuing competence of practising occupational therapists in the many spheres of practice that draw on occupational therapy knowledge and practice.

The ePortfolio is a self-directed process that gives you the opportunity to demonstrate your competence, provide evidence of your professional development and update your own records through a secure on-line tool.

You must provide evidence of your continuing competence on at least a yearly basis, linked to the renewal process for your licence to practice.

The ePortfolio also allows the OTBNZ to monitor the ongoing competence of all New Zealand registered practising occupational therapists through regular audit and review processes.

The ePortfolio emphasises individual practitioner responsibility, flexibility and choice. You are required to engage in ongoing reflection of your practice, to ensure you provide an ethical and high-quality service. The ePortfolio on-line tool is where you capture your reflective process.

The ePortfolio also helps you to identify when an area of your practice could fall below the expected standard of the Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice and for you to do something to address this.

Competence to practice is ever-evolving, requiring you to apply professional knowledge to ever-changing situations.

The ePortfolio process is based around five key competency areas, under each of which you are expected to develop a professional development plan based on reflection, defined goals and development activities. The process provides for critical reflection on the outcomes of each goal. The OTBNZ expects the goals and related development activities to reflect and be appropriate to your level of experience, in your current role and practice context.

This handbook outlines the requirements in more detail and provides ideas of how you can provide evidence in each of the five competency areas.

ePortfolio handbook overview

Figure 1: ePortfolio Overview

HPCAA
Sec. 41
Renewal
Programme

Code of Ethics
Competencies
Scope of practice
Supervision

ePortfolio

Accountability
Adaptability
Commitment
Engagement
Partnership
Protection
Self-directed learner

Process

Supervision

1
Self-Assessment

2
Goal

3
Development activities

4
Outcome

5
Critical Reflection

Self-declaration
Third-party attestation

Licence renewal

Audit
Every 5 years.
General or Target.

How to use this handbook

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- OTBNZ Code of Ethics (2015)

- OTBNZ Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice as an Occupational Therapist (2015)

- OTBNZ documents on supervision requirements.

Section 1: Covers relevant legislation and the core principles relating to continued competence.

Section 2: Provides information about the key foundations of the ePortfolio.

Section 3: Outlines the ePortfolio cycle in more detail and will help practitioners to master the ePortfolio requirements.

Section 4: Outlines the ePortfolio audit process and standards.

Section 5: Provides useful references.

Section 6: Provides appendices, including a glossary of terms.

Key messages

- The OTBNZ sets standards for clinical competence and fitness to practice under the HPCAA 2003.

- To gain their licence to practice, occupational therapists must demonstrate the required standard through professional development activities and critical reflection, appropriate to their level of experience and practice setting.

- The OTBNZ has developed a continuing competence framework and on-line tool to allow practitioners to provide evidence of their ongoing competence. This process is known as the ePortfolio. The ePortfolio also allows the OTBNZ to audit, monitor and review the competence of its practitioners.

- Only practising occupational therapists are required to participate in the ePortfolio.

- Occupational therapists must engage in the ePortfolio at an appropriate level in the five competency areas.

- Occupational therapists are encouraged to identify areas for development or enhancing and address them through the ePortfolio.

- It's ok to say 'I don't know about an area of my practice, but I'm going to address these through the ePortfolio'.

SECTION 1

Legislation
and core principles

Legislation and core principles

The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003

The OTBNZ is required by HPCAA to protect public health & safety by monitoring and ensuring the professional competence and fitness to practice of all registered practitioners. This includes setting standards for clinical competence, cultural competence and ethical conduct.

Three key requirements for practitioner competence are covered by the HPCAA:

- Demonstrating ongoing competence to practice.

- Notifying relevant authorities of any concerns about practice.

- Maintaining an individual's mental and physical fitness to practice.

Standards for competence and ethical conduct

The OTBNZ has set the standards for clinical competence, cultural competence and ethical conduct through the *Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice as an Occupational Therapist:*

- **Competency 1 –** *Applying occupational therapy knowledge, skills and values.*

- **Competency 2 –** *Practising appropriately for bicultural Aotearoa New Zealand.*

- **Competency 3 –** *Building partnerships and collaborating.*

- **Competency 4 –** *Practising in a safe, legal, ethical and culturally competent way.*

- **Competency 5 –** *Engaging with and being responsible for your profession.*

Each competency includes:

- A desired outcome; a summary of what the OTBNZ expects you to achieve as threshold competence for practice.

- A number of specific **performance indicators** that reflect the abilities and actions you must demonstrate.

To become registered, new graduates, overseas qualified registrants and practitioners returning to practice in New Zealand must demonstrate that they meet the threshold of competence in all five competencies.

Once registered, you must maintain the required standard in each competency and provide evidence of engaging in this process on an annual basis. Evidence of continuing competence can be recorded through the *ePortfolio*.

The ePortfolio is not something that is only done during the licence renewal renewal period, but an activity that should be carried out throughout the practising year.

All practising occupational therapists must participate in the ePortfolio.

Legislation and core principles

Underlying principles

The ePortfolio is based on the following principles:

Accountability – The ultimate responsibility for maintaining and demonstrating professional competence to practice lies with you as an accountable health professional, guided by a range of professional standards, codes of practice, and conduct.

Adaptability – The goals and development activities selected by yourself to demonstrate your continued competence will vary according to your learning style, identified needs, experience, and practice context. Goals and development activities selected should be able to be integrated with regular workplace requirements and professional tasks and roles, rather than being special in nature.

Other life experiences may also contribute to professional competence and may be recorded within the ePortfolio if they relate to a professional development goal.

Commitment – Continued competence requires ongoing learning and adaptation to changes in practice environments and roles, professional developments and societal and consumer needs.

Engagement – As a practising occupational therapist you **must** engage in the ePortfolio process. Where practitioners are employees, it is expected that their employer will also help and encourage them to maintain their competence through a range of professional development activities. However you are ultimately responsible for your own engagement and driving your own learning.

Learning and development – The ePortfolio can be used as a tool to identify areas of knowledge and experience that should be developed. Once identified it is important to ensure a plan is in place so gaps can be addressed.

Monitoring and review – The OTBNZ is committed to protecting public safety through systems that monitor and review the professional competence and fitness to practice of all practising occupational therapists.

Partnership – The OTBNZ works in partnership with the occupational therapy profession and professional bodies in the best interests of the public.

Protection – The ePortfolio ensures the protection of public interests, as required by the HPCA Act and governed by the OTBNZ.

Self-Directed learner – The ePortfolio process assumes that you have the attributes for, and skills to manage your own ongoing learning.

Key messages

- The OTBNZ sets standards for clinical competence and fitness to practice under the HPCAA 2003.

- The HPCAA covers three key aspects:
    - Demonstrating ongoing competence to practice.
    - Notification of concerns about practice.
    - Maintaining an individual's mental and physical fitness to practice.

- Demonstrating continuing competence using the ePortfolio is mandatory for all practising occupational therapists in New Zealand.

SECTION 2

Foundations for
the ePortfolio

Foundations for the ePortfolio

The ePortfolio is based on these foundations:

1. General Scope of Practice: Occupational Therapy

2. Code of Ethics for Occupational Therapists (2015)

3. Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice as an Occupational Therapist (2015)

4. Readiness to be a self-directed learner

5. The demonstration of continued competence and critical reflection, using the ePortfolio

6. Self-declaration (completed annually on-line) by practitioners, plus third-party attestation (completed annually on-line)

7. ePortfolio audit process (completed at least once every 5 years via targeted and random sampling)

1. General Scope of Practice: Occupational Therapy

The ePortfolio is designed for the General Scope of Practice: Occupational Therapy.

Occupational therapists are registered health professionals, who use processes of **enabling occupation** to optimise human activity and participation in all **life domains** across the lifespan, and thus promote the health and well-being of individuals, groups, and communities.

These **life domains** include: learning and applying knowledge; general tasks and demands; communication; mobility; self-care; domestic life; interpersonal interaction and relationships; major life areas; and community, social and civic life.

Enabling occupation incorporates the application of knowledge, principles, methods and procedures related to understanding, predicting, ameliorating or influencing peoples' participation in occupations within these life domains. Such practice is evidence-based, undertaken in accordance with the Occupational Therapy Board's prescribed Competencies and Code of Ethics, and within the individual therapist's area and level of expertise.

The ePortfolio therefore applies to practitioners who have direct client contact and to those in non-traditional, emerging roles, education and management roles, and applicable specialist areas of practice.

2. Code of Ethics for Occupational Therapists (2015)

The OTBNZ Code of Ethics for Occupational Therapists sets down the standards of conduct expected of all Occupational therapists registered to practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Code adheres to the provisions, spirit and intent of Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi and exemplifies the core professional values and behaviours expected in commonly encountered ethical considerations in practice.

The Code cannot address every possible ethical issue. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant legislation, policies, procedures and standards relating to professional practice and conduct in this profession, including the Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice as an Occupational Therapist (2015).

The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to:

- Inform and protect consumers of occupational therapy services.

- Protect the integrity of the occupational therapy profession.

3. Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice as an Occupational Therapist (2015)

The five competencies listed earlier in Section 1 of this handbook form the basis of the ePortfolio.

You may wish to use the competency title, outcome statements or the performance indicators for each competency as a guide when developing self-assessments and setting goals and development activities.

Foundations for the ePortfolio

4. Readiness to be a self-directed learner

An underlying assumption in the ePortfolio is that you have the attributes and skills to manage your own continued learning.

There are a number of factors that influence your on-going learning. These include whether you consider yourself as a learner, the reflecting you do on your learning, and thinking about how you learn. There are also other things that can influence your engagement such as the time you have available to you, your workplace support, financial and geographical factors. Being aware of these and factoring these in to your learning plans are important to your learning success.

You may need to undertake some preparatory learning to enable you to get the best out of your on-going professional development by ensuring you are ready to engage in the process.

Being ready to be a self-directed learner incorporates:

• The ability to determine your learning needs.

• Your ability to organise the learning process.

• Your understanding of your personal learning style and preferences.

You may need to develop or find strategies to enable the above. Supervision is often a good place to start these discussions, but you are welcome to chat with us at the OTBNZ too.

For the ePortfolio to be truly meaningful and therefore valuable to individual members of the profession, finding ways to ensure that you are able to maximise your use of it is important. By being aware of the ways in which you learn best and therefore how you are able to create the right learning environment to enable your learning, you will find that you are able to follow the ePortfolio cycle in ways that suit you as an individual.

Above all a willingness to engage in the process, to take responsibility for your learning and maintaining your professional currency, is an essential part of this process.

5. The cycle of critical reflection

Self-reflection using the on-line ePortfolio tool is an essential part of the process for determining continuing competence in your practice.

You must reflect on and assess your own practice in relation to the *Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice as an Occupational Therapist (2015)* at least annually.

Practitioners are also required to:

• Set professional development goals in relation to their self-assessment.

• Develop a plan of development activities to achieve these goals.

• Select and provide evidence of having undertaken those goals and development activities.

• Evaluate the extent to which they maintain and enhance competence, through critical reflection.

• The cycle will occur at least once for each competency area across the 2 year ePortfolio cycle.

• The process of reflecting as part of the process of assessing your performance in the competencies. It is an important step in the cycle.

6. Self-declaration and attestation

There are two types of attestation processes within the ePortfolio. These are part of the yearly renewal of your licence to practice (see Section 3, *Declarations for renewal* for further details).

6.1 Self-declaration

Practitioner self-declaration forms part of the process for applying for your licence to practice.

6.2. Third party attestation/declaration

The term 'third party' refers to a person who attests to an occupational therapist's competence on the renewal declaration. A third party **must** be a registered occupational therapist with a current licence to practice, with **no** conditions on their scope of practice. A third party needs to have sighted and discussed your ePortfolio with you.

Foundations for the ePortfolio

7. Professional portfolio

You are **not** required by the OTBNZ to keep a portfolio of hard copy evidence to support your ePortfolio. It is however good practice to keep a professional portfolio[12-13], and many employers require this as part of their performance management system.

The OTBNZ does not require a hard copy portfolio (folder) in the ePortfolio process because all the information required by the Board to assess whether you are maintaining your competence can be found in the ePortfolio tool. Any gaps in the ePortfolio can be addressed by direct communication with yourself.

Separating a personal professional portfolio from the requirements of the ePortfolio means that you can maintain a personal portfolio that represents the breadth and depth of your practice for professional, career and employment purposes, rather than providing just a sample of your achievements and learning. The ePortfolio represents a window into the practice of each occupational therapist, and is not intended to be a **full** record of your work, achievements or critical reflections.

The following key documents previously mentioned in the handbook can also be accessed on the OTBNZ's Website

1. *Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice as an Occupational Therapist (2015)*

2. *Code of Ethics for Occupational Therapists (2015)*

3. *ePortfolio Handbook (this handbook)*

4. *ePortfolio Users Guide*

Key messages

- The ePortfolio is based on these foundations: scope of practice, codes of ethics and conduct, five competencies for registration and continuing practice as an occupational therapist, attestation, audit and review.

- Practitioners are expected to provide evidence of their ongoing competence through the ePortfolio.

- The ePortfolio allows the OTBNZ to perform audits and review of practitioners' ongoing competence.

- Practitioners are not required to keep a specific hard copy professional development portfolio to support their ePortfolio. However, they may choose to do so for professional, career and employment purposes.

SECTION 3

The ePortfolio cycle

The ePortfolio cycle

The ePortfolio captures each practising occupational therapist's professional development evidence over time as it relates to each competency.

You should base your ePortfolio around identified areas for growth or development. The outcomes you wish to achieve for your own professional growth, will link to these identified areas and consider things like your area of practice, and available resources. They may be revised and updated at any time by logging-in to your secure link on the OTBNZ's website.

You should also discuss your ePortfolio with your supervisor/s. Nominated supervisors will be given read-only access to your online information, so they are able to have informed discussions with you.

The ePortfolio is based on ongoing critical self-reflection against each of the five competencies listed in Section 1.

There are five key parts to the reflective cycle for continued competence:

1 Competency **self-assessment.**

2 Creation of **goal/s** for continuing competence.

3 **Developmental Activities.**

4 Documentation on **outcomes.**

5 **Critical reflection** on outcomes of goals.

Each ePortfolio cycle occurs across two years and you are required to engage in each competency area within this time. This means a self-assessment, goal, related developmental activities, outcomes and reflections will occur for each competency area within this cycle. Whilst you will develop your plan at the beginning of the cycle, there is flexibility to implement this plan according to what works for each practitioner. Things that may influence where in the cycle you actively pursue different goals might be:

• Priority of addressing the identified goal.

• Maintaining a balance of goals across the two years (i.e. one every 6 months).

• Identification of the appropriate learning opportunities you have identified, to acheive your goal.

• Professional and personal commitments.

You are expected to continuously engage in professional development for Competency 1: Applying occupational therapy knowledge, skills and values. This may be in the form of several shorter goals or one more significant area of work that will occur across a greater period of time (i.e. the two years).

The flexibility and the time provided to engage in and complete goals should allow you to ensure that your goals are meaningful, and both enhance and further your continuing competence as a health professional.
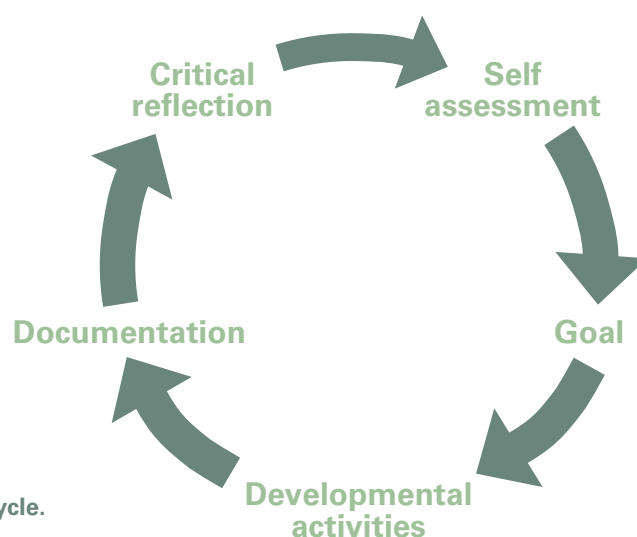

Figure 2 Outlines the cycle.

The ePortfolio cycle

While the expectation is that you will always have an active goal for Competency One, you are only expected to complete one goal in the remaining competency areas within the 2 year cycle.

You should review your ePortfolio, on average, three to four times a year to keep it up to date and ensure that your plans are clear and achievable.

Self-Assessment

There should be a self-assessment for each of the five competency areas. This is where you 'take stock' of where you are with each Competency area – either in its broad sense, or by drilling down into a specific performance indicator. ePortfolio has a self-audit tool which you can make use of when preparing to write your self-assessment. This tool is there to help you figure out what areas you wish to use in developing your self-assessment and goals. Although it is not compulsory we recommend that you use this tool for at least the first cycle of the ePortfolio that you undertake.

Thinking about your strengths and weakness, reflecting on your practice, and what you might need to do to improve can also be part of the self-assessment. Consideration of any changes in your role, practice area developments, work and client expectations may be part of the self-assessment.

Although it is called a 'self' assessment, this is not only about your own thoughts; you should be taking into consideration feedback from a variety of other sources. This might include a recent performance appraisal at work, feedback from a peer, colleague or client. Discussions with your supervisor are expected and will also assist you in formulating your self-assessment.

When writing the self-assessment you will usually identify an area or areas within a competency that you need or wish to develop further.
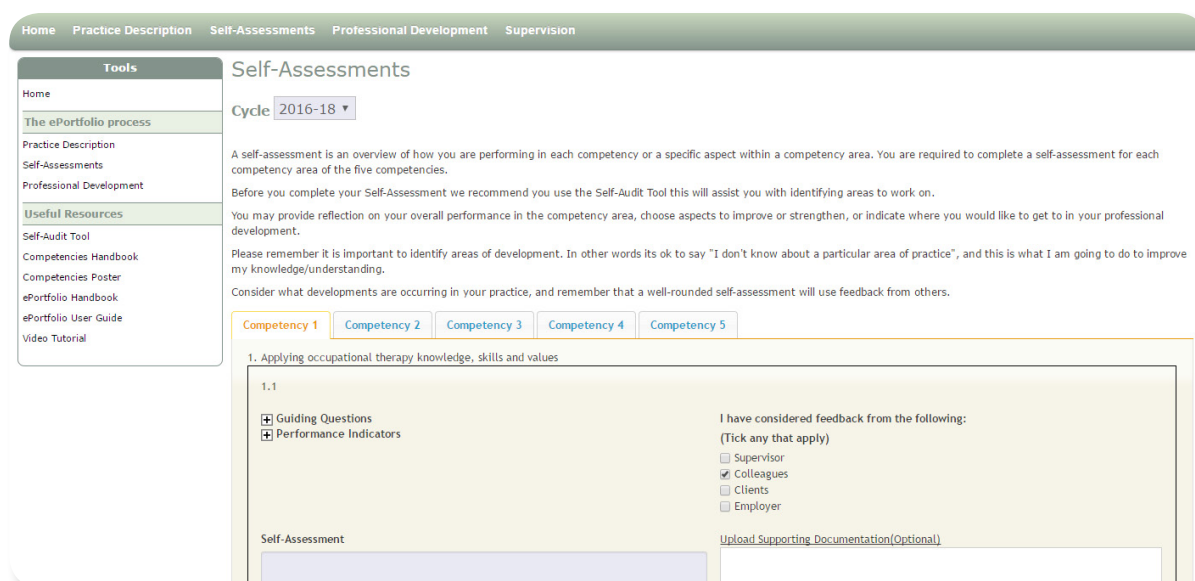
You will develop a self-assessment for each competency area at the beginning of the cycle.

The goal for each competency should 'fall out of' the self-assessment, as it leads you into what they plan to focus on. Through self-assessment, you are expected to review and evaluate your own performance and identify your own individual needs in relation to knowledge, skills, judgment or diligence, in each of the five competency areas.

Where relevant, the self-assessment may be integrated with workplace goals and activities. This is to reduce duplication and unnecessary work. For example, employer requirements (related to key accountabilities, tasks, roles and overall performance), as well as career and salary progression objectives, can be taken into account, along with available resources.

There should be one self-assessment within each competency area, developed at the beginning of the two year cycle.

Screen shot of Self-Assessments from ePortfolio

The ePortfolio cycle

Setting goals

The goal is what you are wanting to achieve, and should be clearly linked to your self-assessment. It should 'fall out' of the self-assessment. The goals are identified at the beginning of the 2 year cycle, following completion of the self-assessment. You will identify if you are currently working on the goal by changing its status to 'In Progress'. Goals that are in progress will have identified Development activities. The goal should be meaningful to your practice and relate to your continuing competence in the profession. There will be a goal completed for each competency area over the two year cycle. It is expected that the goal for the competency (Applying occupational therapy knowledge, skills and values) will be substantial enough to take the two years, or consist of several smaller goals across the two years. There will be one goal completed within the two year cycle for each of the remaining competency areas. The ePortfolio is flexible to allow completion of these goals concurrently, one after the other or in any other way that best suits individuals.

ePortfolio goals:

- Should be based on results that are identified from the self-assessment, with an appropriate goal completed in **each** of the five core competency areas over the two year cycle.
- May also be consistent with work activity/ies, such as those in the employer's performance appraisal and career and salary progression.

- Will be appropriate to the individual practitioner's level of experience and practice.
- Will be developmental in nature.

The **outcome** (What happened? What did I do?) of each completed goal should be recorded.
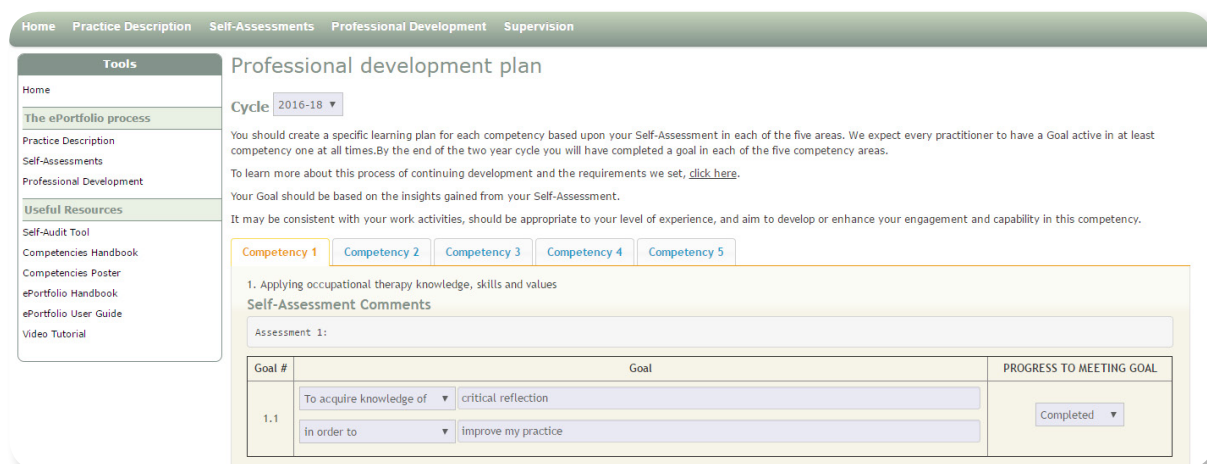
If there is any difficulty in identifying a meaningful goal in a particular competency, the practitioner should discuss this with his or her supervisor. If the difficulty still cannot be resolved, the practitioner should contact the OTBNZ office for support.

Once a goal has been achieved, another may be identified (or for competency areas 2-5 you may wait until the next 2 year cycle), continuing the cyclic process of the ePortfolio. The new goal may be generated as a result of the completed one and the resulting critical reflection, or have a completely new focus. Some goals may run for more than one year, while others will be more short-term.

You may revise and change your goals at any time. Reasons for the revision or change should be documented in your outcomes and critical reflections.

If a goal is discarded, you should record an outcome statement on what, if anything, was achieved and record a critical reflection on what was completed and/or why it was not appropriate to continue with the goal. This is necessary for audit and review purposes.

Screen shot of Professional Devlopment Plan in ePortfolio

The ePortfolio cycle

Developmental Activities: The 'how' component

Development activities reflect the steps ('plan of action') required to achieve your goals. Once your goal has been set down, you need to consider the desired outcome/s, availability of resources and different ways that goal might be achieved.

You may revise and change your developmental activities at any time.

Critical reflection on outcomes

Two key capabilities that shape the way practitioners think (that is, professional thinking) are *reflective practice*[15] and *evidence-based practice*, both of which are influenced and shaped by the context in which the practitioner works[16]. Reflective practice and evidence-based practice are most powerful when used together, enabling practitioners to creatively respond to challenges faced when providing services to clients[16].

The ePortfolio encourages you to engage in professional thinking. Insight into your own strengths and development needs are gained both through situations encountered in practice, and through critical reflection on the outcomes of goals.

Outcomes must be recorded for all goals. Outcomes are simply statements of what you did and what happened in relation to the goal.

Critical reflection should include consideration of whether a change in practice has occurred as a consequence of the professional development goals and developmental activities undertaken, and whether there is likely to be a consequent benefit to the client or community or other key stakeholders. Critical reflection may occur independently, in discussion with peers, and/or in supervision.

Guiding questions for Clinical Reflection

Below are some guiding questions that can help you reflect on the outcome of your goals and developmental activities.

Questions to guide critical reflection

These questions may be used when reflecting on one's own and/or during supervision:

- What was the nature of the event/experience?
- What aspect went well/was good about the event/experience?
- What did not go so well/was not so good?
- What were my feelings about what happened?
- What were the feelings of others?
- What have I learned from the experience?
- What can I learn from exploring these feelings about myself as a professional?
- What did others think I should learn?
- What do I need to do next?
- How can I use what I have learned in my practice?

Questions for examining impact on aspects of professional competence

- Has my attitude, perception or awareness changed?
- Has my knowledge been updated and/or refreshed?
- Have I added to or enhanced my knowledge base?
- Have I developed or enhanced my skills?
- Have I applied new knowledge/skills and continued to use these in my work area?

Questions to examine impact on outcomes for consumers/others

- Has this professional development impacted on outcomes for clients and/or others e.g. colleagues?
- Are there subjective or perceived positive impacts of outcomes?
- Has there been an observed positive impact of outcomes?
- Does feedback from clients and/or others confirm positive outcomes?

The ePortfolio cycle

Supervision

The OTBNZ's Code of Ethics for Occupational Therapists requires all occupational therapists to receive effective professional supervision relevant to their work.

Supervision is an important component both in the process of developing awareness of self and abilities, and in developing critical reflection. Supervision provides an opportunity to receive feedback and guidance and is a critical component of continuing competence. You are expected to discuss your ePortfolio within supervision.

Supervision and the ePortfolio

It is mandatory to have an ePortfolio supervisor.

The role of the ePortfolio supervisor is to support you to critically reflect on your work, and to provide feedback and guidance to help you maintain and develop your competence. Supervision for the ePortfolio should focus on ongoing competence.

An ePortfolio supervisor should be someone who has sufficient self-awareness, competence in dealing with others and knowledge of processes relevant to the area of practice of the practitioner they are supervising.

Supervisors of occupational therapists who do not have a condition (see next section) may be from another discipline (cross-discipline supervision). Practitioners in cross-discipline supervision have an obligation to ensure their supervisor understands the OTBNZ competency requirements.

Supervisors will be required to affirm your engagement in supervision and the ePortfolio requirements. This enables you to show that you are using supervision to maintain and develop your competence.

Where an ePortfolio supervisor also provides workplace-related supervision, both your supervisor and you need to be clear about when you are dealing with employment-related issues and when you are dealing with the ePortfolio. The supervision agreement is the place to document and support this.
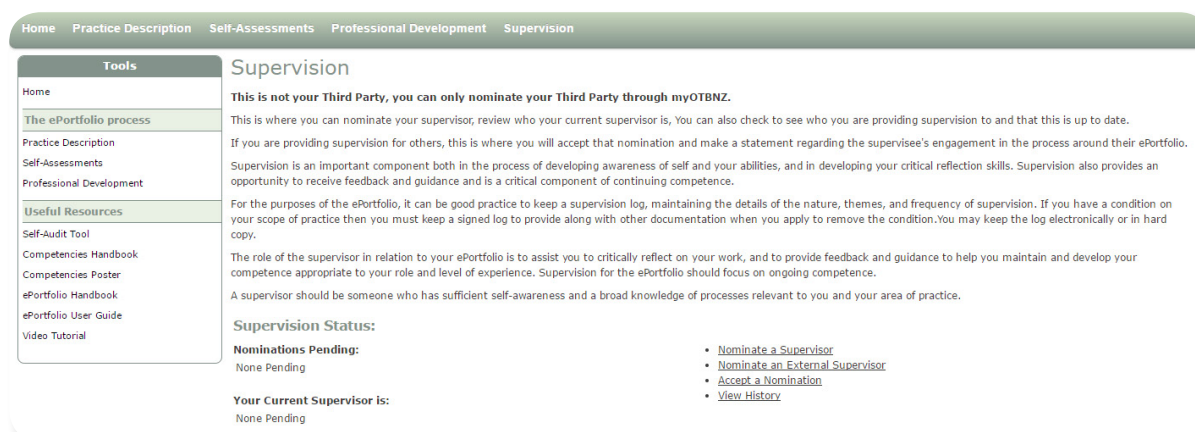
Supervision for a condition on scope of practice

Supervision for a condition (view further information here) is different from the supervision required for the ePortfolio. Practitioners with a standard condition include new graduates in their first year of practice, return-to-practice therapists and overseas-qualified registrants. In some cases, the standard condition is personalised.

The OTBNZ has set expectations for condition-related supervision, including the frequency, monitoring of and reporting on competence for these practitioners.

Practitioners with a condition are advised by letter of the OTBNZ requirements for supervision and reporting. Practitioners with a condition must ensure they obtain supervision from an occupational therapist that complies with that condition and that the OTBNZ supervisor reporting requirements are met in a timely way.

Screen shot of Supervision page on ePortfolio

The ePortfolio cycle

The supervisor for a practitioner with a condition must be a registered occupational therapist with a current licence to practice and **no condition** on their scope of practice. (Please refer to relevant and detailed documents on the OTBNZ website http://www.otboard.org.nz/documents/).

It is the responsibility of the practitioner with a condition to arrange for an appropriate supervisor. Ideally, supervision meetings should be face to face, but the Board is aware this is not always possible. Practitioners should ensure their supervisor is readily accessible.

Practitioners should not start practising until the required supervision has been arranged.

A supervision log (see below) should be maintained that records details of the nature, themes, and frequency of supervision, especially when there is a Condition on Scope of Practice (condition). The log may be kept electronically by the practitioner and/or in hard copy version.

Example of a supervision log

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SUPERVISION LOG
Supervisee: Jane Jane NZROT (50-0XXXX)
Workplace: Wellington School, Special Education Dept
Condition: New Graduate (2015)
Supervisor: Catherine Janeway NZROT (50-0XXXX))

Date	Time	Type	Themes/Topics	#
01/02/15	1 hr	Face-to-Face	Supervision negotiation & set-up	1
03/02/15	n/a	Email	Supervision agreement / overview; APC; OT Board; orientation to work setting	2
07/02/15	1 hr	Face-to-Face	Current activities; client group; expectations of OT; assessment; focus areas (handwriting; life skills; transition); assessment (top-down / bottom-up); ePortfolio	3
14/02/15	1 hr	Skype	Case discussion; writing individual education plan goals; issues with working alone	4

Declaration for renewals of licence

Self-declaration

When applying for renewal of your licence to practice, you must complete a self-declaration. The practitioner self-declaration is a statement by yourself that your professional knowledge, skills, judgment and diligence are such that you are competent to practice.

This self-declaration provides the OTBNZ with information about:

• Recent practice.

• Any recent convictions.

• Any current disciplinary proceedings or investigations relating to competence or conduct.

• Any issues that might impact on fitness to practice.

The self-declaration is made on-line and the practitioner must answer 'Yes' or 'No' to several specific statements. If the practitioner answers 'No', a pop-up box allows the reasons for this answer to be entered. The OTBNZ may contact the practitioner if more information is required on any aspect of their self-declaration.

The ePortfolio cycle

There are several steps to apply for renewal of your licence to practice.

- Up to date ePortfolio.
- Self-declaration (attestation).
- Supervisor confirmation of engagement in ePortfolio.
- Third-party declaration (attestation).
- Completed licence to practice renewal application form.
- Payment of the relevant fee.

Third-party attestation

You must arrange for a third party to complete an attestation as part of your renewal application. The term 'third party' refers to a person who attests to the practitioner's competence and fitness to practice.

A third party must be a registered occupational therapist with a licence to practice.

This person may be your professional supervisor, a peer or line manager, or another person specifically approached by you to provide a third-party attestation (They must have an understanding of your practice). Third-party attestations are carried out in good faith and, to the best of their knowledge, the third party attests to your fitness and competence to practice.

The third party is expected to attest that:

- They have sighted and discussed your ePortfolio.
- They are satisfied that your goals and developmental activities are appropriate for maintaining competence, relative to your level of seniority, experience and practice context.
- They are not aware of any mental or physical condition that may impact on your practice.
- To the best of their knowledge you are fit and competent to practice.

The third-party declaration is made online through their own myOTBNZ page and the third party must answer 'Yes' or 'No' to several statements. If the third party answers 'No' a pop-up box allows the reasons for this answer to be entered.

You are responsible for providing sufficient information within your ePortfolio to satisfy your third-party that you are is using the ePortfolio to demonstrate reflective practice and to maintain competence relevant to your role/s, level of experience and responsibility.

Both you and your third party are professionally bound to make true and accurate attestations.

The ePortfolio cycle

Key messages

- The ePortfolio is evidence of the practitioner's engagement in ongoing competence activities.

- It is not necessary to record all professional development undertaken in the ePortfolio.

- Practitioners should not delete completed or discarded goals and developmental activities – they are needed for audit and review purposes.

- There should be at least one goal completed for each of the five competency areas over the 2 year cycle. A goal, or series of goals should be evident for Competency 1.

- A self-assessment typically provides a brief and succinct overview of where the practitioner is at in each of the competency areas.

- A self-assessment takes into consideration feedback from a variety of sources.

- When writing the self-assessment practitioners will usually identify an area or areas within a competency that they need or wish to develop further.

- ePortfolio goals should be relevant to the practitioner's level of experience and practice context.

- Outcomes reflect what the practitioner did in relation to the goal.

- Critical reflections on goals should consider whether a change in practice has occurred and whether there has been any benefit to consumers or others.

- All practitioners should receive supervision. It is **mandatory** to have an ePortfolio supervisor.

- Practitioners with a condition on their scope of practice engage in more frequent supervision, which must comply with the OTBNZ supervisor reporting requirements.

- Supervision for occupational therapists with a condition on their scope of practice can only be provided by registered occupational therapists with **no** condition on their scope and with a current licence to practice.

- Renewal of licence to practice requires successful attestation of the practitioner's competence and fitness to practice, including a self-declaration and third-party declaration.

- A third party must be a registered occupational therapist with a licence to practice and no conditions on their scope of practice.

SECTION 4

ePortfolio
Audit

ePortfolio Audit

The HPCAA permits regulatory authorities to review health practitioners' competence, whether as part of a wider competence programme or as a specific review stimulated by particular behaviour.

Under section 43 of the HPCAA, the OTBNZ can take a number of actions in respect of occupational therapists who do not participate in the ePortfolio. These actions could include altering, or including conditions on, an occupational therapist's scope of practice until the OTBNZ is satisfied that they have met their ePortfolio requirements.

Audit activity enables the OTBNZ to fulfill one of its statutory responsibilities under the HPCAA, which is to promote and ensure the competence of practitioners on its register.

The ePortfolio audit is not a test of competence and is not disciplinary or punitive in nature. It is intended to be a supportive and educative exercise, *ensuring appropriate active engagement* in a continuing competence process with feedback intended to assist practitioners to use the ePortfolio effectively.

Purpose of ePortfolio audits

The purpose of the ePortfolio audit is to provide assurance to the OTBNZ that practising occupational therapists are using the ePortfolio to engage in professional development to maintain and evidence their continuing competence to practice.

The audit process

ePortfolio audits are undertaken electronically; the auditor will not need to see a hard copy portfolio. The audit process examines an individual practitioner's ePortfolio and makes an assessment on the evidence that the practitioner is maintaining competence to practice. Auditors will communicate feedback directly to practitioners by email.

Practitioners can expect to be audited at least once every 5 years by OTBNZ-appointed auditors. It is possible that a practitioner may be audited twice in that time via:

- General audit – practitioners are randomly selected

- Target audit – practitioners are selected from specifically targeted groups.

While the selection of practitioners for audit is generally random, some audits will be targeted at specific groups of occupational therapists, and may, from time to time include audit of specific individuals.

Notice is given to the practitioner that they will be audited at a given date, allowing them time to prepare for the audit.

It is vital that you ensure your details are up to date on your myOTBNZ online account so that you are able to receive OTBNZ communications.

Practitioners who have been selected for audit will be given the name of their allocated auditor and the opportunity to raise any conflict of interest. Where a conflict exists, auditing will be allocated to another auditor.

All audits are conducted in the strictest confidence, with integrity and professionalism. The ePortfolio auditors are provided with the names of the occupational therapists they are to audit, and must declare any conflict of interest before the audit commences.

Who are the ePortfolio auditors?

Auditors are appointed by the OTBNZ via a call for expressions of interest. They are practising occupational therapists, contracted to and trained by the OTBNZ.

Auditors are required to declare any conflicts of interest. Auditors must not audit any practitioner who may be a colleague, supervisor or practitioner being supervised, third party, friend or relative.

Training in ePortfolio auditing includes the audit standards and audit tool. The OTBNZ provides ongoing monitoring and review of the audit process.

ePortfolio Audit

ePortfolio audit standards

The OTBNZ has developed a set of standards, listed below, against which practitioners are audited. Practitioners may review their own ePortfolio against the standards criteria:

- Self-assessments are completed for all five competencies.

- ePortfolio is up to date.

- Employment history is entered into myOTBNZ for the past 5 years, and current employment details are entered.

- Goals and developmental activities are appropriate for the practitioner's position, level of experience and/or practice context.

- Self-assessments provide a brief picture of the occupational therapist's professional journey to date, relevant to the goals and developmental activity/ies.

- There is evidence within the self-assessment for scope to develop higher levels of effectiveness, efficiency and growth in current and future plans.

- There is an appropriate planned or completed goal in each area of competence.

- Completed goals are recorded in full, with outcomes and critical reflections.

- There is clear connection between goal and developmental activity/ies, which relate to the self-assessment.

- Outcomes are written as a statement of completion of the goal.

- Critical reflections show consideration of impacts on practice and/or self and others ways of practising.

- Critical reflections are distinct from the outcomes.

- Outcome statements and critical reflections are specific to each competency area.

- Engagement in the supervisory relationship is evidenced by the following:
  - A supervisor has been nominated and accepted.
  - Supervisor statements are evident.

- ePortfolio entries are current in relation to the occupational therapist's achievement/completion dates specified.

- Acronyms or jargon are referred to in full when first used.

- There is evidence of progression in the use of the ePortfolio over time.

Practitioner preparation for audit

You should ensure that your ePortfolio is up to date, including your contact and employment details for the last 5 years. These details are edited in myOTBNZ. Self-assessments, goals and developmental activities must be appropriate for your role and experience, and outcomes and critical reflections must be up to date. Progression in the use of the ePortfolio over time should be evident.

What if a practitioner does not meet the standard?

The ePortfolio auditors will provide practitioners with individual feedback on their ePortfolio. This feedback is intended to be supportive, enabling the individual to use the ePortfolio most effectively.

Auditors may occasionally request further evidence from a practitioner. The practitioner will have 10 working days to supply this additional evidence.

When the audit standard is *not met*, the practitioner may be referred to the OTBNZ Professional Advisor for coaching. Following this the practitioner is referred back to the auditor to complete the audit.

Compliance with ePortfolio audits

It is mandatory for practitioners to comply with the ePortfolio audit process and with any tasks that auditors may request them to complete.

Under section 43 of the HPCA Act, the OTBNZ can take action in respect of occupational therapists who do not comply with the ePortfolio process. This could include altering, or including conditions on, an occupational therapist's scope of practice until the OTBNZ is satisfied that they have met their ePortfolio requirements.

The ePortfolio cycle

Key messages

- ePortfolio audits provide assurance to the OTBNZ that practising occupational therapists are using the ePortfolio to maintain and evidence their continuing competence.

- The audit process is not a test of competence.

- Practitioners must comply with the ePortfolio audit process and with any tasks that auditors may request them to complete.

- When the audit standard is not met, the practitioner may be referred to the OTBNZ Professional Advisor for coaching.

- Auditors are appointed, contracted and trained in auditing by the OTBNZ.

- Practitioners are informed by the OTBNZ of any pending audit, giving them time to prepare.

- Practitioners must ensure their email contact details in myOTBNZ are up to date.

- ePortfolio audits are conducted against set standards; practitioners may review their own ePortfolio against these standards.

- Experience in the use of the ePortfolio over time should be evident in the practitioner's ePortfolio.

SECTION 5

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Acknowledgments

SECTION 6

Appendices

Competencies – The five broad areas you must be competent in, defined by the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand.

Competent – Having the necessary ability or skills to do something well or well enough to meet a set professional standard, as measured at a particular point in time and place.

Competence – Competence incorporates the individual's ability to consistently apply professional knowledge, skills, judgment and diligence in response to ever-changing situations in the workplace. Thus in any one day as the service user group changes, the work environment changes, underpinning knowledge develops, evidence is created, practice expertise is shared. Through this the practitioner moves through cycles of reflection, new learning, consolidation and expansion of their knowledge, skills and attitudes for effective performance in response to the dynamic environments in which they work[17].

Competence is not a state that is reached and then does not change, rather it is fluid and dynamic, a state that is ongoing and ever-evolving across a practitioner's career.

Competence indicates sufficiency of knowledge and skills that enable someone to act in a wide variety of situations. Because each level of responsibility has its own requirements, competence can occur in any period of a person's life or at any stage of his or her career. *(business dictionary.com).*[1]

Diligent – Careful, thoughtful and persistent effort to completing something. A diligent occupational therapist seeks out professional standards and guidelines that identify the knowledge, skills and judgment essential to their practice. Being diligent also incorporates self-awareness of any personal or situational circumstances that might diminish one's competence.

Diligence – in the occupational therapy profession involves consistently paying attention to one's knowledge, skills and judgment in one's professional activities, and giving priority to the client's needs. Diligence involves a willingness to work hard to provide the best service possible for each and every consumer, honestly evaluating one's own skills and seeking additional training when appropriate.

Judgment – The ability to make a decision, or form an opinion objectively, sensibly and wisely; knowing when to apply which skills under what circumstances. It also involves critically reflecting on how one's own values,

attitudes, experiences and social context influence one's actions, interpretations, choices and recommendations.

Good judgment increases the likelihood that one's actions will benefit and not harm the client, and ensures that all conduct and performance meets professional expectations and standards.

Knowledge – Understanding and application of information. In the occupational therapy profession knowledge covers a continuum from basic information gained in an initial qualification to specific knowledge for specialised areas of practice. Knowledge is a necessary foundation for competence but is not sufficient on its own. It must be coupled with skill, judgment, diligence and reflective practice.

Performance – The measurable and visible output of an action; the accomplishment of a given task. Measurement of performance assesses how well a practitioner is working. The impact of activities that assist in promoting competence can be measured in two key ways – 'Did this activity change my practice in any way?' 'Did this activity benefit the outcome for the client?'

Practitioner – for the purposes of this handbook, a 'practitioner' is a practising occupational therapist with a current licence to practice.

Reflective practice[15-16] **–** A process that allows one to look over one's work and at oneself in a particular situation, and critically examine how certain actions have affected oneself and others.

The process of reflection requires practitioners to address their feelings and moral beliefs alongside professional standards of conduct about what is right and wrong, and good. Through reflection, practitioners may analyse their actions in their setting and make decisions about whether they would react differently if they were faced with a similar situation in the future.

Skill – The ability to do something well, usually gained through training or experience; the ability to effectively apply knowledge in actual practice.

As with knowledge, skills cover a continuum from basic/novice clinical skills to advanced technical proficiency and mastery of an aspect of practice.

Supervisor – For the purposes of this handbook, a 'supervisor' is an ePortfolio supervisor.

(Some definitions have been adapted from: *College of Alberta Psychologists*[1].)

Appendix 2: Potential goals for different career stages

What about conditions on scope of practice?

A **new graduate** may have goals that address:

- Contributing effectively to multidisciplinary team meetings.

- Use of supervision.

- Learning a specific skill or assessment in the new work setting.

- Evidencing bi-cultural responsiveness.

- Completing the mental health post-graduate certificate as an intern.

- Identifying occupation-aligned aspects of the role and setting and articulating.

An **overseas-trained practitioner** with some experience may have goals that address:

- Becoming familiar with the New Zealand health legislation and context.

- Applying bicultural practice in their setting.

- Becoming competent in prescribing and obtaining equipment in New Zealand.

- Understanding recommended best practice guidelines.

- Understanding the New Zealand Mental Health Act.

- Understanding the recovery model applied in mental health settings.

A **return to practice practitioner** returning after a gap may have goals that address:

- Learning about changes to legislation and health service contracts relative to the current work setting.

- Updating on occupation-focused theoretical models and applying them to practice.

- Becoming competent in administering current standardised assessments in the setting.

- Using supervision to support return-to-practice transition.

- Re-connecting with applying bicultural practice.

- Implementing the NZ Disability Strategy.

Experienced practitioners in **non-traditional roles** may have goals that address:

- Learning a new theoretical model of practice and doing some reflective writing on this.

- Developing evidence-based practice guidelines for the role.

- Evaluating outcomes of occupational therapy intervention in the setting.

- Identifying occupation-aligned aspects of the role and setting and articulating and promoting this in writing / in the practice.

- Facilitating occupation indirectly e.g. a rest home manager, community care coordinator.

- Enabling healthy housing as a case manager for Housing New Zealand.

- Facilitating access to services.

What about returning to work after parental leave?

Practitioners who have taken parental leave may have goals that address:

- Re-familiarising with changes in the work setting.

- Using new systems in place, for example, student placement model, peer review process, mandatory training, audit, documentation.

- Learning about any changes to legislation and health service contracts relative to the work setting.

- Re-connecting with and updating on theoretical models and applying them to the specific practice setting/caseload.

- Becoming competent in administering current standardised assessments.

- Using supervision to support return-to-practice transition.

Appendix 2: Goals and different career stages

What about changing jobs or roles?

Practitioners who change jobs, practice settings and/or roles will need to review and revise their ePortfolio to reflect the changes. The first step is to apply the principle of common sense.

- Can the goals be transferred? If so, continue with them.

- Are the activities still relevant to the goal? If so, continue.

- If not, can the goal/s and/or developmental activity/ies be altered in some way to fit the new context/role? If so, do so!

- If not, submit them as completed and in the outcome section write why you did not continue with the goal/developmental activity. Include a critical reflection of what was learned/gained and/or reasons for why it was an appropriate goal/developmental activity at the time but not now.

- If, in hindsight the goal and/or developmental activity/ies appear inappropriate and/or are no longer valid, document why, and submit them as completed. This is important as it is considered by the OTBNZ as all part of learning and self-monitoring, which is an aspect of reflective practice, and ongoing learning and continuing competence.

> **Note: Practitioners should not delete goals and activities that are no longer relevant as they represent one's thought processes and situation at the time.**

Remember to:

- Update your employment history and change of contact details.

- Reflect the change in a new self-assessment.

- Create new goals and development activities relevant to your change in circumstances.