

# The Sum is more than its parts: Creating a Course.

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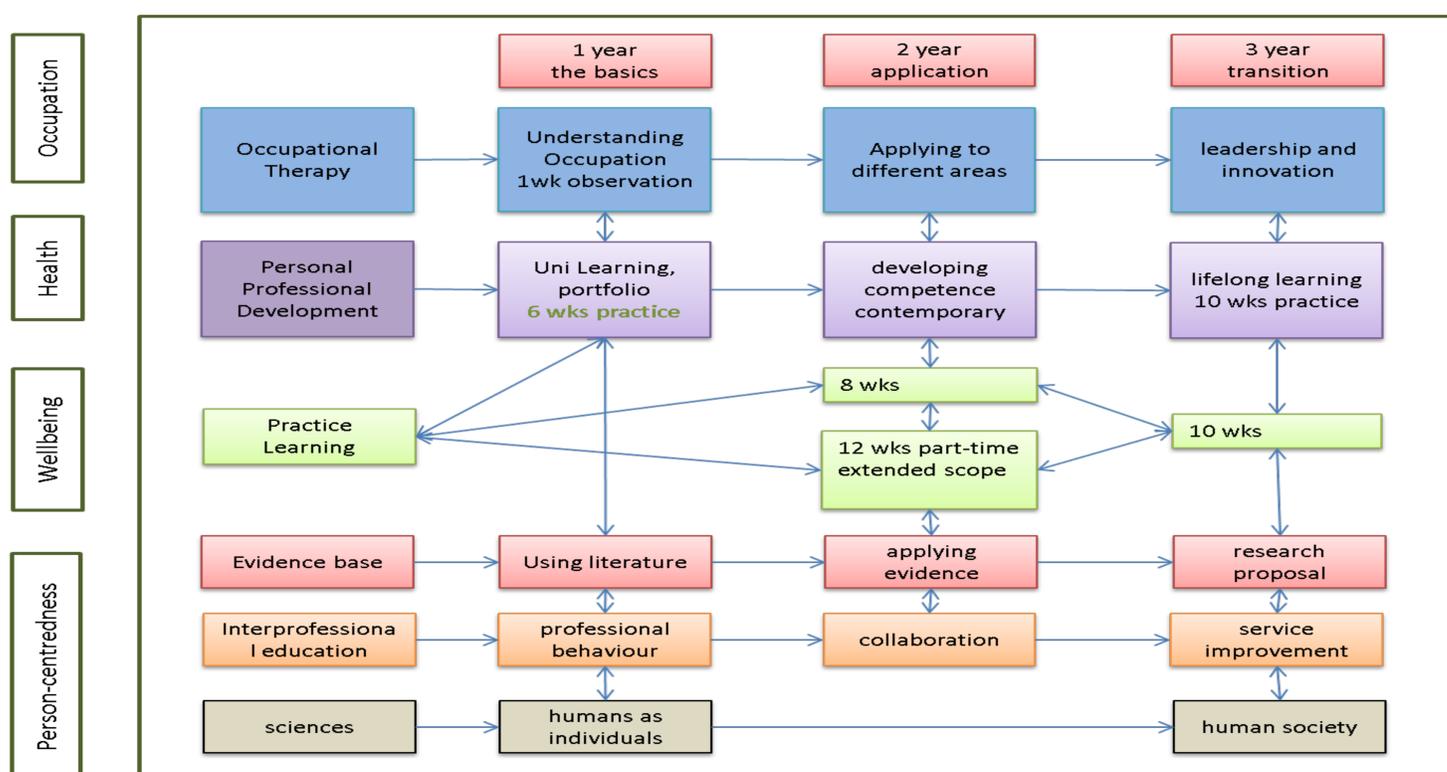
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## Background

As part of the recent re-approval of our BSc(Hons) in Occupational Therapy, we have aimed at developing a more integrated course programme. Student and teaching staff feedback suggested that learners were not making the links between practice and theory easily nor integrating the learning between different modules. This led to a 'silo'ed perception of their learning, viewing each module as a stand alone learning experience. Personal and professional development was also something that needed strengthening within the learners throughout their whole course and in preparation for life long learning rather than something they did to pass a module at the end of the course.

## What we did

The programme was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders (2014 HEA; 2012 HCPC). In part to satisfy professional body requirements (2013 HEA; 2004 Knight and Yorke) but importantly; with a view to ensure graduates are ready to join the ever changing health-care community upon graduation and are ready to meet life-long learning. We developed six strands that re-occur throughout each of the three years to create horizontal consistency. Vertical integration of modules was achieved within each year by module leaders, under the guidance of a year tutor. Assessments and assessment types have been an integral part of this development.



## Outcomes

We have now delivered the first year of the new course and for staff there is a much more integrated feel to the course. Students will have only experienced one year of the three year course so far so the effects will not be evident until next year and the year after. There is much more discussion and planning of timetabling issues, teaching content and assessment tasks through the different strands and across the different years so we are working much better at achieving cohesive and integrated learning through the course, both vertically and horizontally. Personal and Professional Development is being delivered as a strand that runs through all three years and is aimed at ensuring our students become autonomous and reflective practitioners on graduation. The assessment tasks for PPD include developing a portfolio (through PebblePad) in year 1, completing the HCPC audit statement in year 2 and a PPDP viva (mock interview) in year 3.

Alongside this we have attempted to improve the feeling of belonging to the programme in our students. We have created Facebook pages for all of our cohorts and are using social media (twitter in particular) as part of our teaching. We continue to and work closely with our SHOUT group. SHOUT is run by students and hosts monthly talks by experts in the field for local clinicians, students and staff; as well as organising other extra-curricular opportunities for students.

Learning spaces are encouraged to be used differently by moving away from traditional lectures and using a "flipped classroom" approach (2013 Critz & Knight; 2013 Misseldine et al). As part of this change staff are developing technological skills to enable them to create on-line resources to facilitate the "flipped classroom" and whilst this is being done where it fits, there are still aspects of more traditional workshop learning.

## References

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