

Regulations on
the Specialist Scheme of the Danish
Association of Occupational Therapists

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1. Purpose of the Specialist Scheme

The purpose of the Danish Association of Occupational Therapists' Specialist Scheme is to enable occupational therapists to be approved as highly qualified for the performance and development of occupational therapy within areas where the basic training and general practice experience do not provide adequate qualifications.

The Danish Association of Occupational Therapists (Etf) defines an occupational therapy specialist as a theoretically and methodically highly trained practitioner within a delimited occupational therapy field, who has extensive clinical/practical experience and theoretical knowledge at a scientific level.

(2) An occupational therapy specialist is characterised by:

- being a particularly knowledgeable practitioner at a high level,
- having specialist knowledge on theory, methodology, research and development with the specialist field,
- being able to assess new knowledge with a view to implementation in the specialist field, if relevant,
- being able to launch clinical/practical projects in connection with quality assurance, development work and research,
- being able to develop professional competence within the specialist field,
- having an extended repertoire of intervention options,
- being a particularly knowledgeable clinical/practical problem solver,
- being able to launch and work in highly specialised interdisciplinary teams,
- being able to communicate the theory and methodology of the specialist field to occupational therapists and other trade groups.

(3) Criteria for approval of new specialist fields:

A specialist field for occupational therapists must have history, weight, volume and relevance in order to have development and research prospects in theory and practice. Consequently, it requires:

- A well-defined core field
- A description of the occupational therapy intervention within the field
- A documented interest in the field, e.g. a specialised network in Etf, or other activities in the field
- Examples of references to documentation and literature within the field
- An account of the benefits of the field for society
- An interest in the development of the field in the job market
- An account of international counterparties and any cooperative relations

(4) Creation and discontinuation of specialist fields

New specialist fields may only be created after 2004.
Any interested parties must submit their application to Etf.

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The discontinuation of specialist fields must be adopted by the Representative Assembly.

(5) Approved specialist fields

- Occupational health
- Children's health
- Elderly's health
- Hand therapy
- Mental health
- Brain damage
- Assistive technology provision

(6) Organisation of the specialist scheme

The Specialist Scheme is managed by a Specialist Council, which is a joint council for all specialist fields within occupational therapy. The chairman of the Specialist Council is the national chairman or vice-chairman of Etf. In addition, the Specialist Scheme includes Specialist Boards for each of the approved specialist fields (see fig. 1 below).

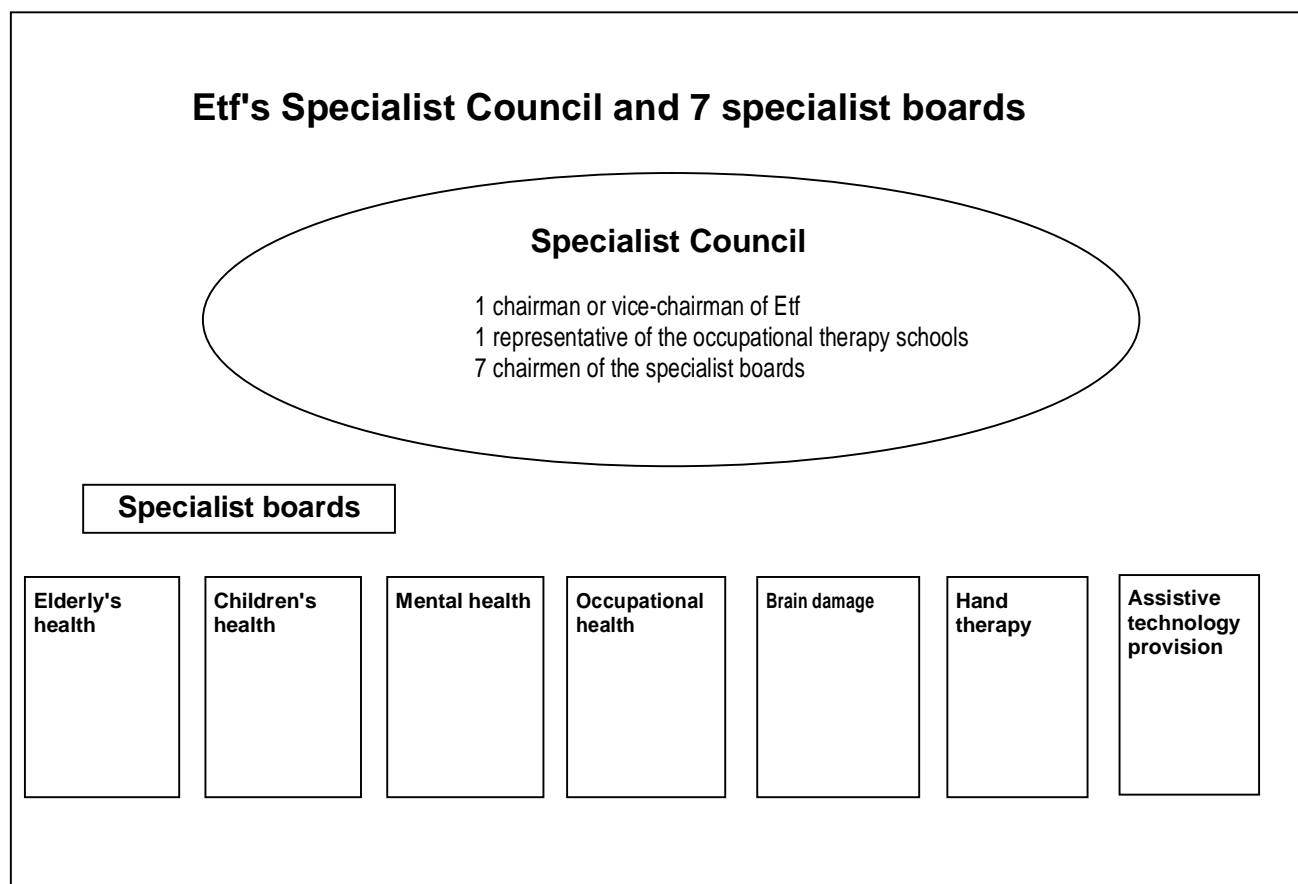


Figure 1

2. The Specialist Council

(1) Composition of the Specialist Council

The chairman of the Specialist Council is the national chairman or vice-chairman of Etf. In addition, the Specialist Council comprises the chairmen of the specialist boards and one representative of the occupational therapy schools appointed by the rectors' conference for a period of four years.

(2) Authority

Resolutions of the Council are passed by a simple majority of votes. In the event of an equality of votes, the chairman has the casting vote. The Specialist Council lays down rules of procedure.

(3) The Specialist Council is charged with:

- approving or rejecting the recommendations from the specialist boards on the approval of specialists;
- drafting reasoned rejections and approvals in respect of recommendations from the specialist boards;
- processing complaints from applicants who are not recommended for approval by the specialist boards (decisions of the Specialist Council are final);
- monitoring that the specialist boards observe the criteria defined in the Regulations regarding specialist fields and specialist approval;
- evaluating the Specialist Scheme and proposing changes, including amendments to the Regulations on the Specialist Scheme, for approval/adoption in the Executive Board;
- making reports to the Executive Board prior to the meeting of representatives;
- informing the Executive Board and the members of Etf about approved specialists;
- drafting an application form and a guide for specialist approval on the basis of the material available;
- drafting an application form and a guide for approval of new specialist fields on the basis of the material available;
- preparing reasoned recommendations on the creation of new specialist fields for approval by the Executive Board on the basis of applications from interested parties.

3. Specialist boards

The Executive Board sets up a specialist board for each of the following specialist fields: Occupational health, Children's health, Elderly's health, Hand therapy, Mental health, Brain damage and Assistive technology provision.

The specialist boards are anchored in the specialised networks, but not necessarily through the chairman of the individual networks. The Executive Board appoints the

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relevant network(s) for the specialist field. In the event that there is no clearly relevant network in the specialist field in question, the Executive Board appoints two occupational therapists, who are recognised in the relevant field, and a relevant institution.

(2) Composition of the specialist boards

- Each specialist board consists of three members: two occupational therapists and one expert within the field.
- The chairman of the board – the first occupational therapy representative – is recommended by the network and approved by the Executive Board.
- The second occupational therapy representative is appointed by the relevant network. He or she does not have to be a member of the network boards. (Provided that there is a clearly relevant network within the field).
- The third member is appointed by a relevant institution. The network appoints the relevant institution, and the institution then appoints its representative. If the institution cannot or will not appoint a representative, the network will appoint an alternative institution.
- The chairmen of the seven boards are members of the Specialist Council.
- In the event that a member of a specialist board applies for specialist approval, such application will be processed by the Specialist Council. The two other members make their recommendation to the Council.
- From the autumn of 2010, the two occupational therapy members must be approved specialists.
- The specialist boards are appointed for a period of four years. They are eligible for reappointment. At the establishment of the specialist boards, one member is appointed for a period of two years.

(3) Authority

The specialist board forms a quorum when a majority of the members are present. In the event of an equality of votes, the chairman has the casting vote.

(4) The specialist boards are charged with:

- reviewing and assessing applications for specialist approval on the basis of the stipulated requirements and drafting reasoned recommendations to the Specialist Council – both in connection with approval and refusal of applications;
- following the development in the specialist field and, if required, proposing changes to the criteria for specialist approval;
- delimiting and defining the specialist field in accordance with the criteria described in Clause 6;
- drafting a positive list of approved seminars or courses for the inspiration of future applicants and submitting such list to the Joint Secretariat of Etf.

4. The secretariat function

(1) The secretariat function is handled by Etf's Joint Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- receiving and registering applications and forwarding such applications to the relevant specialist board;
- receiving, registering and forwarding complaints to the Specialist Council and the Executive Board;
- publishing a positive list of approved seminars in connection with the Specialist Scheme.

5. Application for specialist approval

Applications must be filed on the application form drafted by the Specialist Council. The deadline for applications is 15 October of every year. The applicant may expect to receive a reply approx. three months after the expiry of the deadline.

(2) Specialist approval fee

A fee is charged if the application is approved. The fee is currently DKK 1,500 for members and DKK 6,000 for non-members.

6. Criteria for approval of specialists

(1) Occupational therapist education.

A Danish occupational therapist authorisation.

(2) Two years of occupational therapist experience (corresponding to full-time employment)

Such experience must have been gained from specialised and interdisciplinary work on the basis of the occupational therapy course in the public or the private sector.

Declaration of intent: Importance is attached to a certain breadth within work functions and work places.

(3) Experience as an occupational therapist corresponding to four years within the relevant specialist field

Such experience within the specialist field must be acquired with an employment rate of at least 75 per cent.

The following seven specialist fields have been approved:

- Occupational health

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- Children's health
- Elderly's health
- Hand therapy
- Mental health
- Brain damage
- Assistive technology provision

(4) Guidance/supervision (25 hours)

The applicant must have received guidance from an approved specialist within the specialist field or guidance from his or her own or other trade groups having specialist competence within the relevant field at specialist, Master's or postgraduate level. Parts of such guidance may consist of supervision from colleagues or unpaid traineeships with guidance in the specialist field.

The applicant must have supplementary training in guidance/educational theory or comprehensive experience in guidance in the specialist field or documented work beyond the requirements listed in (8).

(5) Supplementary training (300 hours) (15 ECTS points)

It is a condition that the applicant has participated in seminars, conferences, conventions, elements of supplementary training and unpaid traineeships within the past ten years. It must be assessed whether seminars completed more than ten years ago are up-to-date.

The 300 hours must be distributed with 100 hours on each of the following:

A. Occupational therapy supplementary training

Seminars for and given by occupational therapists dealing with occupational therapy theory and methodology, e.g. seminars in AMPS, A-ONE, MoHo, the Canadian Model, special treatment methods.

B. Specific subjects within the specialist field

Seminars in subjects of current interest within the specialist field, e.g. general health, children, the elderly, mental and somatic health, occupational health and prevention. Or specific occupational therapy seminars in the relevant specialist field, e.g. A-ONE in relation to neurology.

C. General relevant supplementary training

Seminars in academic guidance, trainee guidance, research, project methodology, statistics, data, sector knowledge or activity seminars and organisation seminars.

**(6) Further training (1 year)
(60 ECTS points)**

An additional one year of further training is required in addition to the minimum requirement of 300 hours, cf. (5). Such further training must be recognised and relevant to the specialist field and may be a combination of the examples below:

- University subjects of relevance to the specialist field.
- Relevant one-year university courses.
- Several relevant subjects with an exam may be combined, corresponding to one year.
- Major independent occupational therapy development projects.
- Planning of and participation in relevant seminars, conferences, international work and the like.
- Major independent research and development work.
- Considerable publishing on occupational therapy (in addition to the requirements in (8)).

**(7) Research methodology
(3 ECTS points)**

The total further and supplementary training activities ((5) and (6)) must include a course of at least 60 hours on research methodology.

(8) Oral and written dissemination

The target group must be at a medium-cycle study programme level or higher.

Scope:

A. 30 hours of oral dissemination within the specialist field

Examples of oral dissemination, weighted to 30 hours:

- 30 hours of teaching.
- Trainee guidance corresponding to a 30-week traineeship.
- 12 hours of academic guidance.
- Presentations and lectures at conventions.

B. 15 pages of written dissemination within the specialist subject

Examples of written dissemination:

- A 15-page published article.
- 15-page project plans/reports.
- 15-page planning and development work.
- Posters or websites corresponding to 15 pages.

7. Complaints

- Complaints from applicants regarding the specialist board's decision must be directed to and processed by the Specialist Council. The decision of the Specialist Council is final.
- Complaints from the specialist board regarding the Specialist Council's decisions must be heard by the Executive Board. The Executive Board's decision is final.
- All complaints must be submitted to Etf's Joint Secretariat within 14 days of the reply from the Specialist Council.

8. Other provisions

The Specialist Council is responsible for having the Specialist Scheme evaluated with a view to making any adjustments required at the meetings of representatives.

(2) Economy in respect of the annual meetings

- The relevant network bears the costs incidental to travel/board for the second occupational therapy representative on the board, whom it has appointed.
- In the event that there is no clearly relevant network within the field, Etf bears the costs incidental to travel/board for all members on the specialist board.
- Etf bears the costs incidental to travel/board incurred by the chairmen of the specialist boards as well as the external representative.
- No financial compensation/refund for loss of income will be payable to the members of the Specialist Council and the specialist boards.

9. Commencement and term

The Specialist Scheme enters into force on 15 October 2002, the first deadline for applications for specialist approval being on that same date.

Any amendments to the present Regulations must be approved by the Executive Board. The discontinuation of the Specialist Scheme must be adopted by the Representative Assembly.