

2020 COTA Matrix Study



COTA

2020 NBCOT COTA MATRIX STUDY

To meet academic requirements, each NBCOT certification candidate must be a graduate, or meet educational comparability standards, from a program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®). ACOTE is an associated advisory council of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA®) executive board. It is “recognized as the accrediting agency for occupational therapy education by the United States Department of Education (USDE) and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)” (ACOTE, n.d.-a). ACOTE’s mission “ensures quality occupational therapy education by developing accreditation standards and verifying implementation to support the preparation of competent occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants” (ACOTE, n.d.-b).

ACOTE reviews its accreditation standards on a routine basis. The revised and adopted 2018 standards (effective July 31, 2020) were used to complete this Matrix Study (ACOTE, n.d.-c).

NBCOT develops certification exams that assess the knowledge required for entry-level occupational therapy practice. The content standards of these exams are aligned to an exam content outline

developed from the results of a practice analysis study. Practice analysis is the critical foundation for developing a psychometrically sound and legally defensible credentialing exam. The primary goal of a practice analysis study is to collect data that describes current practice to provide a linkage between exam content and practice.

In 2017, NBCOT completed the latest COTA practice analysis study with COTA entry-level certificants (0-36 months from initial certification) across the country. Survey respondents were asked to consider job requirements for a COTA in terms of domains, tasks, and knowledge. Domains are the major areas of responsibilities or activities of a job or profession. Tasks are the individual functions, whether mental or physical, required for certain aspects of a job or profession. Tasks are essentially a description of critical duties performed. Knowledge statements describe in detail how to do a task. They include information, actions, or other learnable skills that an individual must possess in order to perform a task. The results of this practice analysis study led to the development of the 2018 Validated Domain, Task, Knowledge Statements for the COTA Examination, which serves as a guide to the exam content outline

for the COTA certification exams beginning with administrations in January 2019 (NBCOT, 2018).

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

From an occupational therapy educator perspective, the completion of the NBCOT practice analysis study and the review of the current ACOTE Accreditation Standards are a timely reminder of the factors influencing curriculum development. While distinct missions drive both entities, it is the occupational therapy educational community who strives to meet the ACOTE standards as well as help prepare their students for the NBCOT COTA certification exam.

This report is a comparative review of NBCOT's 2018 Validated Domain, Task, Knowledge Statements for the COTA Examination, and the 2018 ACOTE Accreditation Standards (effective July 31, 2020). The results may help to serve as a basis for discussion during curriculum review.

Using this resource alone or with other resources does not guarantee a passing score on the certification examination.

METHOD

Using the 2018 Validated Domain, Task, Knowledge Statements for the COTA Examination as the anchor document, a cross-tabulation process was completed by comparing the knowledge statements from the NBCOT anchor document to "Section B: Content Requirements" from the 2018 ACOTE Accreditation Standards for a Baccalaureate-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant, and Accreditation Standards for an Associate-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant.

Acknowledging that the terminology and ordering/sequencing of statements across the documents are not uniform, a level of interpretation was necessary in order to align statements with the anchor document.

The matrix appearing in Table 1 records areas of alignment between the NBCOT anchor document and Section B of the ACOTE standards.

Domains are specified in bold with a two-digit number, tasks are grouped under each domain (four-digit number), and the knowledge statements associated with each task are listed with a six-digit number.

Table 1: Summary of Results

DOMAIN	COLLABORATING AND GATHERING INFORMATION
01	

Assist the OTR to acquire information regarding factors that influence occupational performance on an ongoing basis throughout the occupational therapy process.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0101	Recognize the influence of development; body functions and body structures; and values, beliefs, and spirituality on a client’s occupational performance.	
010101	Impact of typical development and aging on occupational performance, health, and wellness across the life span	B.1.1., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.4.4.
010102	Expected patterns, progressions, and prognoses associated with conditions that limit occupational performance	B.1.1., B.1.3., B.3.5., B.3.7., B.4.4., B.4.6.
010103	Impact of body functions, body structures, and values, beliefs, and spirituality on occupational performance	B.1.1., B.3.7., B.4.4.
Task 0102	Acquire information by using available resources about a client’s functional skills, roles, culture, performance context, and prioritized needs in order to contribute to the development and update of an occupational profile.	
010201	Resources for acquiring information about the client’s current condition and occupational performance	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.3.5., B.4.4.
010202	Purpose, advantages, limitations, and service competency needs related to the administration of commonly used standardized assessments and non-standardized screening as a means of acquiring client information	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.4.4.
010203	Internal and external factors influencing a client’s meaningful engagement in occupation related to typical habits, roles, routines, and rituals, and the level and type of assistance required	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.3.5., B.3.6., B.3.7., B.4.4., B.4.6., B.4.18., B.4.22., B.5.1.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0103	Provide information regarding the influence of current conditions, contexts, and task demands on occupational performance in order to assist the OTR in planning interventions and monitoring progress as guided by the practice setting and theoretical construct.	
010301	Influence of theoretical approaches, models of practice, and frames of reference on information-gathering and the intervention process	B.2.1., B.3.1.. B.4.4.
010302	Task analysis in relation to a client’s performance skills, the occupational profile, practice setting, stage of occupational therapy process, areas of occupation, and activity demands	B.1.1., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.3.5., B.3.6., B.4.4., B.4.6., B.4.10., B.4.18.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0104	Collaborate with the client, the client’s relevant others, occupational therapy colleagues, and other professionals and staff by using a culturally sensitive, client-centered approach and therapeutic use of self to provide quality services guided by evidence, scope of practice, service competence, and principles of best practice.	
010401	Characteristics and functions of interprofessional teams for coordinating client care and providing efficient and effective services consistent with specific core competencies, expertise, unique contributions, team roles, and context of the organization	B.3.3., B.4.1., B.4.19., B.4.20., B.4.21., B.4.22., B.4.23., B.4.24., B.4.25., B.4.26., B.4.28., B.5.2., B.5.3., B.5.6., B.5.8., B.7.1., B.7.3., B.7.5.
010402	Coordination of occupational therapy services related to collaborative client-centered intervention plans, Individualized Education Program plans, and transition plans based on client skills, abilities, and expected outcomes in relation to available resources, level of service delivery, and frequency and duration of intervention	B.1.1., B.3.3., B.4.1., B.4.3., B.4.4., B.4.6., B.4.19., B.4.20., B.4.21., B.4.22., B.4.23., B.4.24., B.4.25., B.4.27., B.4.28., B.5.1., B.5.8., B.7.1., B.7.3.
010403	Collaborative processes and procedures for prioritizing intervention goals and activities based on client needs, wants, developmental skills, abilities, progress, and expected outcomes in relation to level of service delivery as well as frequency and duration of intervention	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.3.3., B.3.4., B.4.4., B.4.6., B.4.18., B.4.20., B.4.22., B.4.25., B.4.26., B.4.28.
010404	Fundamental strategies used for addressing health literacy to enhance non-verbal and verbal interactions with a client and relevant others in order to promote positive health behaviors, enable informed decisions, maximize safety of care, and promote carry-over of the intervention to support positive outcomes	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.4.1., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.4., B.4.9., B.4.21., B.4.22., B.4.28.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0105	Monitor the intervention plan and progress toward goals in collaboration with the OTR by using clinical reasoning, therapeutic use of self, and cultural sensitivity to make decisions about the intervention approach, context, or goals based on client needs, priorities, response to intervention, status changes, reevaluation results, and targeted outcomes.	
010501	Factors related to determining the context and type of individual and group activities for effectively supporting intervention goals and objectives	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.3.2., B.3.5., B.3.6., B.4.1., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.6., B.4.10., B.4.11., B.4.16., B.4.22., B.5.1.
010502	Methods for monitoring the effectiveness of individual and group intervention in order to keep the OTR informed about continuation of skilled services or opportunities to modify the intervention, intervention approach, context, or goals based on client needs, responses to intervention, and progress toward goals	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.3.6., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.4., B.4.6., B.4.16., B.4.19., B.4.20., B.4.22., B.4.23., B.4.24., B.4.25., B.4.26., B.5.1., B.5.8.
010503	Clinical decision-making for implementing modifications to the intervention plan and prioritization of goals under the supervision of the OTR in response to physiological changes, behavioral reaction, emotion regulation, and developmental needs of the client	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.3.4., B.3.6., B.3.7., B.4.1., B.4.4., B.4.6., B.4.18., B.4.20., B.4.22., B.4.28., B.5.1.

DOMAIN**SELECTING AND IMPLEMENTING INTERVENTIONS****02**

Implement interventions under the supervision of the OTR in accordance with the intervention plan and level of service competence to support client participation in areas of occupation throughout the occupational therapy process.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0201	Incorporate methods and techniques as an adjunct to interventions in order to facilitate healing and enhance engagement in occupation-based activities.	
020101	Methods for selecting, preparing, and adapting the intervention technique and environment to support optimal engagement in the intervention and promote goal achievement	B.1.1., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.3.4., B.3.6., B.4.1., B.4.3., B.4.9., B.4.14., B.4.18., B.4.27.
020102	Technical level indications, contraindications, and precautions associated with wound management, considering the characteristics of a wound, the stage of wound healing, and the influence of the wound on engagement in occupation as guided by evidence, best practice standards, scope of practice, and state licensure practice acts in order to support functional outcomes	B.1.1., B.3.2., B.3.4., B.3.5., B.3.7., B.4.10., B.5.5., B.5.8.
020103	Technical level indications, contraindications, precautions, and appropriate clinical application of superficial thermal agents as guided by evidence, best practice standards, scope of practice, and state licensure practice acts	B.1.1., B.3.2., B.3.4., B.3.5., B.3.7., B.4.10., B.4.17., B.5.5., B.5.8.
020104	Technical level indications, contraindications, precautions, and appropriate clinical application of deep thermal, mechanical, and electrotherapeutic physical agent modalities as guided by evidence, best practice standards, scope of practice, and state licensure practice acts	B.1.1., B.3.2., B.3.4., B.3.5., B.3.7., B.4.10., B.4.17., B.5.5., B.5.8.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0202	Implement developmental, remedial, and adaptive occupation-based strategies to support participation in activities of daily living (ADL), instrumental activities of daily living (IADL), rest and sleep, education, work, play, leisure, and social participation across the life span.	
020201	Intervention methods for supporting leisure and play-based exploration and participation consistent with client interests, needs, goals, and context	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.3.2., B.4.2., B.4.4.
020202	Methods for grading an activity, task, or technique based on level of development, client status, response to intervention, and client needs	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.3.6., B.4.1., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.9., B.4.10., B.4.18., B.4.22.
020203	Methods for facilitating individual and group participation in shared tasks or activities consistent with the type, function, format, context, goals, and stage of the group	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.4.1., B.4.2., B.4.9., B.4.10., B.4.18.
020204	Intervention methods and activities to support optimal sensory arousal and visual motor, cognitive, or perceptual processing for supporting engagement in occupations based on current level of development, abilities, task characteristics, and environmental demands	B.1.1., B.2.1., B.3.2., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.9., B.4.10.
020205	Compensatory and remedial interventions for managing cognitive and perceptual deficits or intellectual disabilities	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.2.1., B.3.2., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.9., B.4.10., B.4.18.
020206	Adaptive and preventive interventions for optimal engagement in occupation consistent with developmental level, neuromotor status, and condition	B.1.1., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.10., B.4.18.
020207	Technical level intervention strategies and techniques used to facilitate oral motor skills for drinking, eating, and swallowing consistent with developmental level, client condition, caregiver interaction, and mealtime environment and context	B.1.1., B.3.7., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.16.
020208	Prevocational, vocational, and transitional services, options, and resources for supporting strengths, interests, employment, and lifestyle goals of the adolescent, middle-aged, and older adult client	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.3.2., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.10., B.4.19., B.4.20., B.4.27.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0203	Implement interventions for improving range of motion, strength, activity tolerance, sensation, postural control, and balance based on neuromotor status, cardiopulmonary response, and current stage of recovery or condition in order to support occupational performance.	
020301	Methods for grading various types of therapeutic exercise and conditioning programs consistent with indications and precautions for strengthening muscles, increasing endurance, improving range of motion and coordination, and increasing joint flexibility in relation to task demands	B.1.1., B.3.2., B.3.7., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.10.
020302	Technical level techniques for implementing sensory and motor reeducation, desensitization, pain management, edema reduction, and scar management programs	B.1.1., B.3.7., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.10.
020303	Technical level techniques and activities for promoting or improving postural stability, facilitating dynamic balance, and teaching proper body mechanics and efficient breathing patterns during functional tasks to support engagement in occupation	B.1.1., B.3.7., B.4.13., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.10.
Task 0204	Apply anatomical, physiological, biomechanical, and healing principles to select or fabricate orthotic devices, and provide training in the use of orthotic and prosthetic devices by using critical thinking and problem-solving as related to a specific congenital anomaly or type of injury, current condition, or disease process in order to support functional outcomes.	
020401	Types and functions of immobilization, mobilization, restriction, and non-articular orthoses for managing specific conditions	B.1.1., B.4.10., B.4.12.
020402	Influence of general anatomical, physiological, biomechanical, and healing principles on orthotic selection, design, fabrication, and modification	B.1.1., B.4.2., B.4.10., B.4.12.
020403	Training methods regarding the safe and effective use of orthotic and prosthetic devices consistent with the client's prioritized needs, goals, and task demands in order to optimize or enhance function	B.1.1., B.4.2., B.4.10., B.4.12.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0205	Integrate assistive technology options, adaptive devices, mobility aids, and other durable medical equipment into the intervention, considering the client’s developmental, physical, functional, cognitive, and mental health status; prioritized needs; task demands; and context to enable participation in meaningful occupation.	
020501	Factors related to measuring, selecting, monitoring fit of, and recommending modifications to seating systems, positioning devices, and mobility aids	B.1.1., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.11., B.4.13., B.4.14.
020502	Characteristics and features of commonly used high- and low-tech assistive technology for supporting engagement in meaningful occupation	B.1.1., B.4.9., B.4.10., B.4.11., B.4.18.
020503	Types of commonly used mobility options, vehicle adaptations, and alternative devices for supporting participation in community mobility	B.1.1., B.4.2., B.4.10., B.4.14., B.4.18., B.4.27.
020504	Training methods and other factors influencing successful use and maintenance of commonly used assistive technology options, adaptive devices, and durable medical equipment	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.4.2., B.4.10., B.4.11., B.4.15.
Task 0206	Implement environmental modifications guided by an occupation-based model, disability discrimination legislation, and accessibility guidelines and standards to support participation in occupation consistent with a client’s physical needs; cognitive, mental health, and developmental status; context; and task demands.	
020601	Fundamental principles of ergonomics and universal design for identifying, recommending, and implementing reasonable accommodations and features in the workplace, home, and public spaces in order to optimize accessibility and usability	B.1.1., B.1.3., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.10., B.4.18.
020602	Processes and procedures for identifying, recommending, and implementing modifications in the workplace, home, and public spaces, considering the interaction among client factors, contexts, roles, task demands, and resources	B.1.1., B.1.2., B.1.3., B.4.2., B.4.3., B.4.10., B.4.14., B.4.18., B.4.27.

DOMAIN**UPHOLDING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES****03**

Uphold professional standards and responsibilities by achieving service competence and applying evidence-based interventions to promote quality in practice.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0301	Engage in professional development and competency assessment activities by using evidence-based strategies and approaches to provide safe, effective, and efficient services relevant to the job role, practice setting, scope of practice, and professional certification standards.	
030101	Methods for locating, reviewing, and interpreting scholarly research in occupational therapy to guide and support professional competence and practice-relevant decision-making	B.3.4., B.6.1., B.6.2., B.6.3., B.7.4.
030102	Methods for contributing to continuous quality improvement processes and procedures related to occupational therapy service delivery	B.5.2., B.5.3., B.5.4., B.5.6., B.5.7., B.5.8., B.7.4., B.7.5.
030103	Methods for identifying, documenting, and monitoring service competency and professional development needs based on scope of practice and certification standards for occupational therapy	B.3.7., B.4.24., B.4.25., B.5.5., B.5.7., B.5.8., B.6.3., B.7.1., B.7.4., B.7.5.
030104	Types of evidence-based programming for advancing positive population health outcomes	B.1.2., B.1.3., B.2.1., B.3.3., B.3.4., B.5.3., B.5.6., B.6.1., B.6.2., B.7.4.
030105	Application of ethical decision-making and professional behaviors guided by the NBCOT standards of practice and Code of Conduct	B.5.5., B.5.8., B.7.1.

Classification Code	Classification Code Description	ACOTE Standards
Task 0302	Incorporate risk management techniques at an individual and practice-setting level by using standard operating procedures, safety principles, best practice guidelines, and relevant compliance trainings to protect clients, self, and staff from injury or harm during interventions.	
030201	Precautions or contraindications associated with a client condition or stage of recovery	B.1.1., B.1.3., B.2.1., B.3.5., B.3.7.
030202	Standard infection control procedures and universal precautions for reducing transmission of contaminants	B.1.1., B.1.3., B.2.1., B.3.5., B.3.7.
030203	Basic first aid in response to minor injuries and adverse reactions	B.1.1., B.2.1., B.3.5., B.3.7.
030204	Essential safety procedures to integrate into the intervention activities	B.1.1., B.2.1., B.3.5., B.3.7.
030205	Preventive measures for minimizing risk in the intervention environment	B.1.1., B.1.3., B.2.1., B.3.5., B.3.7.
Task 0303	Provide occupational therapy service in accordance with laws, regulations, state occupational therapy practice acts, and accreditation guidelines in order to protect consumers and meet applicable reimbursement requirements in relation to the service delivery setting.	
030301	Methods for identifying, locating, and integrating federal regulations, facility policies, and accreditation guidelines related to service delivery across occupational therapy practice settings	B.5.1., B.5.4., B.5.5., B.5.8., B.7.1., B.7.5.
030302	Influence of reimbursement policies and guidelines related to skilled and medically necessary occupational therapy service delivery	B.4.29., B.5.1., B.5.4., B.5.5., B.7.1., B.7.5.
030303	Accountability processes and procedures using relevant practice terminology, abbreviations, and information technology for justifying, tracking, and monitoring outcomes related to occupational therapy service delivery	B.4.15., B.4.29., B.5.7., B.5.8., B.7.1., B.7.5.

The cross-tabulation process demonstrated that there is a strong linkage between the NBCOT and ACOTE documents. All knowledge statements in the NBCOT anchor document are reflected in the ACOTE standards. Given the purposes of the two documents, however, it is logical to expect some differences. **Table 2** lists the ACOTE standards that do not appear in the NBCOT anchor document.

Table 2: ACOTE Standards That Do Not Appear in the NBCOT COTA Content Outline

ACOTE Standard	Description
B.2.2.	Define the process of theory development and its importance to occupational therapy. Define the process of theory development and its importance to occupational therapy.
B.6.6.	Understand the principles of instructional design and teaching and learning in preparation for work in an academic setting. Understand the principles of teaching and learning in preparation for work in an academic setting.
B.7.2.	Demonstrate knowledge of how the role of a professional is enhanced by participating in and engaging in local, national, and international leadership positions in organizations or agencies. Demonstrate knowledge of how the role of a professional is enhanced by participating in and engaging in local, national, and international leadership positions in organizations or agencies.

*Baccalaureate-Degree-Level Standard

*Associate-Degree-Level Standard

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