

# Comments on the “Draft Guidelines for the World Federation of Occupational Therapists Process for the Approval of Educational Programmes”.

Submitted by the Japanese Association of Occupational Therapists  
March 1, 2004

First of all, we would like to thank Clare Hocking (New Zealand Delegate) and Nils Erik Ness (Norwegian First Alternate) for their hard work of preparing the draft. We will follow the focus points for feedback.

## 1. Does the Approval Process we have developed achieve the things we have outlined here?

Yes. Basically we support your background thinking; the approval process based on documents, rather than a site visits, relying on professional trust among international colleagues. However, the guidelines for submitting documentations to program evaluators need clarification. Regarding “what language is to be used”, a free descriptive documentation is rather difficult for those whose first language is not English to write.

### If not, how can we improve it?

We would suggest that the WFOT develops a general but a unified format for documentation with key words or relevant questions in relation to Minimum Standards. For example:

#### a. Document One: Local Context (p22)

Various points to be included in 5 sections could be expressed in more concrete questionnaire and/or lists to be filled out with additional comments as needed.

#### b. Document Two: Curriculum

This is a major portion of the documentation required by paraphrasing so many contents described in the Minimum (the pages of 13-27). We suggest charts and/or survey forms to be developed, with additional descriptive comments. This could document more clearly the sequence and general contents of curriculum. It might be easier to write a simple syllabus for major OT subjects. The JAOT made a standard form for document submission (by compromising the Government, WFOT, and national association’s requirements). We also include a site visit for the first-time accreditation. Thus makes us a fair and accurate evaluation of the educational programs despite the cost.

#### c. Document Three: Self Evaluation

We support the idea of including a self-evaluation report. However, the volume for this

portion can be reduced; a maximum of 5 pages would be good enough for descriptive summary. References may be a person to be contacted for further information.

## 2. Are there other considerations that we need to take into account?

It is better to include a national and/or school credential system to issue a certificate/diploma in a local context system.

## 3. Do you support the notion of continual approval of programmes by the WFOT Executive, rather than biannual approval at the Council Meeting? (Note that this would require a change to the WFOT Constitution).

If the WFOT develops a standard forms with free descriptive comments for on-line submission via inter-net, it will reduce the costs and time for communication delays. The approval of a new school and/or new association is a very important function of the council meeting, and the date of approval can be backdated to the time when the Education and Research programme coordinator recommended the approval to the executives. There is no need to change the WFOT Constitution now.

## 4. Will we need to develop some standard forms for the WFOT Programme Evaluators to use?

The WFOT should develop the standard forms and/or content items to be included for document submission, so that each program can be modified to its own convenience. If we only use free descriptive documentation, it will be difficult for program evaluators to develop any standard forms.

**Practicalities: There are a few things we have not addressed that we need guidance about. These are:**

- **What language(s) programmes can submit documentation.**

The official languages of the WFOT (English, Spanish, French and German) are accepted; though this will limit the selection of program evaluators.

- **Exactly where submissions should be sent.**

To the WFOT Office (i.e. to the Education and Research Program Coordinator)

- **How many copies? (one for each Programme Evaluator, one for E&R Programme:**

Regarding inter-net submission: one original files can be forwarded as needed

- **Timeframes: What do you advise about these things?**

The most important factor for time frames is a smooth and effective communication within a team of program evaluators.

## 1. Do you agree with the Education and Research Programme Coordinator being given responsibility to recruit and appoint the Programme Evaluators?

Yes, the E/R Research Program Coordinator should be responsible for recruiting and

appointing three program evaluators. One evaluator should be nominated from the member of the national association (or, from the collaborative OT educational programs) involved. (This is crucial to implement on-going monitoring systems after the national association becomes a full WFOT member association). It is desirable that two other evaluators are also appointed from member associations with common cultural contexts.

Focus for Feedback:

**2. What do you advise about having programmes approved and evaluated by another country's Association? Do you have any other suggestions?**

This suggestion sounds rather strange to us. WFOT encourages the national association to be responsible for monitoring and maintaining the quality of basic education to keep professional practices in good quality. We would not oppose the idea, if sub-contracting the monitoring system with another country's association facilitates international collaborations among countries, with similar language and cultural contexts. The inevitable translation work would make the sub-contracting work overload JAOT.

**3. Is it necessary to train the Programme Evaluators?**

We don't think so; we assume every association has a pool of occupational therapists with enough experience in OT education, and awareness of WFOT minimum standards. To have an Experience as a program evaluator, with an experienced evaluator, would be the best training by itself.