

The WFOT
Student Guide
for
International
Practice
Placements

2018



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Welcome from the President

The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) acknowledges that the world of international education and work experiences is complicated. It is becoming a leading topic of interest in many health professions and professional educational programs, including occupational therapy programs. Occupational therapists and students need to work with communities in a collaborative manner and strive to meet their needs while still considering the existing infrastructure and the sustainability of the interventions upon leaving the country (WFOT, 2016a).

One of WFOT's most frequently asked questions relates to international fieldwork education as many occupational therapy students seek to undertake an international practice placement. For many years WFOT has provided relevant information to students and as part of WFOT's ongoing collaboration with McMaster University, Canada, a team of faculty, students and new graduates designed this comprehensive student guidebook. To ensure global relevance, WFOT also convened an International Review Team of occupational therapists within different regions to review the draft document.

One of the aims of the WFOT Education Programme is to support '... access for students to quality occupational therapy education and the opportunity for exchange' (WFOT, 2016b). The recently revised WFOT Minimum Standards for the Education of Occupational Therapists (MSEOT) 2016 (WFOT, 2016c) supports the consistency and recognition of occupational therapy qualifications internationally. The MSEOT (Revised 2016) also confirms that 'Practice education is central to the educational process', and that 'Students experience a range of practice education that require them to integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes to practice with a range of different people who have different needs, and in different contexts (WFOT, 2016c, page 48).

On behalf of WFOT I would like to personally thank everyone involved in the development of the WFOT Student Guide for International Practice Placement 2017. This could not have been achieved without the commitment, time and expertise that they have all contributed.

To you the students who undertake an international practice placement I wish you every success and trust that you find this guide a useful and inspiring resource as you move forward with your occupational therapy career.

Marilyn Pattison

President

Development of this Guide

This Guide is derived from the '*Targeting the Globe*' research project initiated in 2013 examining students' and educators' perspectives about preparation for global placement and practice in occupational therapy.

Through surveys and interviews, an understanding was gained regarding what students and educators in occupational therapy internationally perceived to be current gaps in the area of knowledge about and preparation for an international practice placement.

This Guide then, is the evidence-based culmination of the wisdom and perspectives the student and educator participants shared with the research team in the '*Targeting the Globe*' investigations. We would like to convey very warm gratitude to our important participants through these research phases.

We sincerely hope that *The WFOT Student Guide for International Practice Placement* meets student occupational therapists' needs as you thoughtfully consider learning in another country in meaningful, contributory ways.

This work is ultimately about reciprocity and accessibility for mutual learning and contributions that benefit people of all countries through occupation. When student occupational therapists effectively and conscientiously target the globe, rich, new learning and practice emerges for all who engage.

The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) sincerely thank the research group of the student occupational therapists who developed this Guide. The group was comprised of Hanin Al-Helo, Danielle Kandel-Lieberman, Mara Kremenovic, and Kimberly Roorda, as they completed second year Evidence-Based Projects (EBPs) in the Master of Science – Occupational Therapy Program at McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada. Faculty supervision was provided by Assistant Professor Lorie Shimmell and Professor Sue Baptiste (School of Rehabilitation Science, McMaster University), with expert consultation provided by Sandra Bressler and Ritchard Ledgerd (WFOT). From its initial development, this group continued to work as graduated occupational therapists to finalise the Guide into its current form, using evidence from several phases of research conducted previously, which included student occupational therapists Kellea Demille and Markie Ryckman.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This guide has been created for the purpose of providing relevant information to students who are considering International Practice Placements.

International Practice Placement: This guide aims to inform and assist student occupational therapists with the international practice placement process.

In the context of this document, the term “international” is interpreted to include all high, medium and low income countries (World Bank, 2017). Student occupational therapists who meet specified criteria (as outlined by their academic institution) are often provided with the opportunity to experience a practice placement in an international setting. These learning experiences should assist the student in understanding the occupational therapy profession as part of the international health community.

A Practice Placement refers to the time students spend interpreting specific person-occupation-environment relationships and their relationship to health and well-being, establishing and evaluating therapeutic and professional relationships, implementing an occupational therapy process (or some aspect of it), demonstrating professional reasoning and behaviours, and generating or using **knowledge of the contexts of professional practice with and for real live people.** (WFOT, 2016c, page 71).

What are the benefits of an International Practice Placement?

Research has suggested that International Practice Placements equip students with important skills related to appreciating cultural diversity, understanding global issues, enhancing problem solving skills, and increasing awareness of global health and social determinants of health (Simonelis et al., 2011; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2012; Green, Johannson, Rosser, Tengnah & Segrott, 2008).

If you are looking to challenge yourself at both a personal and professional level, an International Practice Placement experience could provide you with a unique learning opportunity that combines cultural diversity, global education and acquisition of unique professional skills.

How many students complete International Practice Placements?

While many occupational therapy programmes value the importance of International Practice Placements, the number of participants completing International Practice Placements varies greatly worldwide.

In a recent study, results indicated that of the surveyed individuals 34% reported that their academic institutions did not support international placements (Shimmell et al, 2016).

Contact your educational institution for more details regarding whether International Practice Placements are an option.

How can I use this guide as a tool to support my International Practice Placement?

This guide is intended to be a resource to assist you in all stages of International Practice Placement experiences, including: **researching background information, determining whether or not you're ready, determining what needs to be completed prior, during and following a placement, in addition to providing you with helpful tools: decision tree, evaluation tools, etc.**

2. IS AN INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE PLACEMENT RIGHT FOR ME?

Determining Fit

International Practice Placement experiences are unique learning opportunities that have numerous personal and professional benefits; however, they may not be right for everyone. When considering

whether or not to participate in an International Practice Placement, it is important to reflect on the fit between your personal and academic needs, what the opportunity has to offer you, and what you may be able to offer to those with whom you work in an International Practice Placement.

There are many factors that must be taken into consideration to ensure that an International Practice Placement will result in a successful experience. These factors may include personal characteristics, such as your learning style, adaptability, and communication skills. Additional factors to consider are related to organisational aspects of an International Practice Placement, such as the placement site or supervision models that are used.

Questions to help determine if an International Practice Placement is the right choice for you
Interest and Motivation

Are you someone who enjoys being challenged personally and academically?

What are your placement goals? Could an International Practice Placement meet your goals?

What skills and competencies are you hoping to gain?

In what practice setting do you want to learn and work?

With what populations would you be interested in partnering?

Is there an International Practice Placement opportunity available to you that could foster a dynamic and supportive environment to work towards these goals?

Learning Style

Are you a hands-on learner? Do you learn best by observing and/or direct teaching?

Do you require a stable routine or do you prefer variability?

Are you an independent learner? Is it important that your placement site has certain specific learning resources available to you?

How can an International Practice Placement add to your knowledge and skills?

Practice placement supervision

Do you excel with direct supervision from a preceptor/supervisor? Is indirect supervision/more independence more beneficial for your learning?

Travel Experience

What was travelling like for you?

Are you interested in seeing different parts of the world?

Are you interested / do you have experience in learning about and immersing yourself in a new and different culture from what you are used to?

What is the expected length of the placement? Are you comfortable being away from your home for this length of time?

Do you have any family (or other) responsibilities that may limit how long you can spend away?

Are there any International Practice Placements available in the area of the world that you like to travel to?

Are you able to obtain a travel visa for the country of your International Practice Placement?

What support systems do you have in place should you encounter any visa difficulties?

Health

Do you have any health and/or accessibility needs that could impact your ability to travel?

Or to participate in an International Practice Placements?

How will you manage these?

Finance

Have you considered the financial requirements of completing an International Practice Placement (e.g., travel, accommodations, visas, etc.)?

Have you considered how you would fund your experience?

Are there any scholarships/bursaries that are available to you?

Language

Are you comfortable with the various languages and cultures you may encounter on an International Practice Placement?

This question depends on what country you are considering. Consider what languages you speak and how this will influence your ability to communicate with your preceptor, peers, and the individuals and communities in the host country. The language(s) you speak may even determine what country you choose for your placement.

Traveling to a country where you do not speak the language can be a barrier to a successful placement experience. However, this challenge can also create the opportunity for major enhancement in communication skills.

Would you be comfortable using alternative communication strategies, such as translators? However, it is important to consider taking language classes prior to your placement, so that you can have some basic communication skills in your host country. This shows respect for the host culture and a desire to learn and immerse in the new context.

Social support

What are your social support needs?

Would you be comfortable embarking on an International Practice Placement independently?

Or would you prefer having a group of your student peers with you? Having the social support of other students can be beneficial for the International Practice Placement experience. Consider if this factor would impact your decision and/or experience.

Would you consider a host country where you already have a social support network?

Is there a system in place in your host country, in which social support is provided?

Returning home

From your earliest planning, anticipating how it will be to come back to your home country is important: It is helpful to keep in mind in advance that upon return you may face some adjustments. Reviewing the Section 9. *I'M HOME – NOW WHAT?* at this early stage of your considerations may be a very important planning and preparation tool!

After reflecting on whether or not an International Practice Placement would be a good fit for you, you may have decided that it is *not in fact right for you*. That's okay! Every individual has unique needs, values, and expectations and it is important to be able to self-assess what is right for you.

3. WHAT ARE MY FIRST STEPS?

After reflecting on the questions above, you have decided that an International Practice Placement could be right for you. However, now that you have identified a good fit ... what do you do next?

Planning and organising an International Practice Placement can be a lengthy and multi-phase process. The process varies significantly between academic institutions and across countries.

The application process may include any combination of the following:

- a transcript of your grades
- some form of statement of interest
- reference letters
- your resumé
- an interview

Some Occupational Therapy Education Programmes have policies that dictate at what point in your academic programme an International Practice Placement opportunity is available to you. In order to ensure you have all of the most up-to date information, there are some key steps you can take.

Firstly, if your academic programme has a *website*, you may consider starting your quest for knowledge there. If there is information available online, it could be a helpful starting point for determining what unanswered questions you may have. If your academic institution does not have a website or there is no information pertaining to International Practice Placement available online, make an appointment to talk with the fieldwork/ placement coordinator

The practice placement coordinator may have a different title in your education programme, but this person will be the individual who addresses any and all issues related to placements. Speaking with this person will give you a much clearer idea of what opportunities for International Practice Placements are available to you, what the application process looks like, and what your next steps will be. It can also be an opportunity for you to ask specific questions related to your personal journey.

The practice placement coordinator may be able to connect you with other students who have gone through the process of planning for/completing an International Practice Placement. They may be able to advise you if any pre-existing relationships exist between your academic institution and International Practice Placement sites. They will be able to direct you to other pertinent resources/contacts and can offer support as you begin to plan and prepare for the challenges of an International Practice Placement.

The next stop on your voyage for information should be the Occupational Therapy International Online Network (OTION). This is an online resource (<http://otion.wfot.org/>) that allows occupational therapists around the world to connect and communicate through open forums on various topics related to international practice and placements. You are able to access and utilise this web based forum at no cost once you register. Here you will be able to ask questions and engage in conversation about international education/placements/education programmes/practice settings and more with people across the globe. Others using the OTION forum may be practicing occupational therapists, clinical educators, and student occupational therapists. You can ask questions, contribute to/read existing threads, and/or start your own new topic or conversation thread.

4. HOW DO I SECURE AN INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENT **THAT'S RIGHT FOR ME?**

If your education programme has had previous student occupational therapists complete International Practice Placements, begin by talking with your **programme's** practice placement

coordinator (or equivalent) who will be able to share information about past sites, preceptors, and countries where students have had previous placements.

You can discuss your hopes and ideas, and begin to learn about previous connections made through your education programme. While these previous experiences may be different than the ideas you have, this step may also trigger you to think about other possibilities, and hear about the kinds of practice opportunities other students have had.

Even if your education programme has not previously had students who have completed International Practice Placements, a meeting with your education programme's practice placement coordinator (or equivalent) is helpful for asking questions you may have about the international practice placement process.

In either case, it is important to discuss with one another what restrictions there may be regarding geographical location and/or practice areas or clinical focus.

Generally, ongoing discussions between you and the practice placement coordinator will be important in order to consult about points such as: who will be initiating contact with potential placement sites, maintaining culture and socially appropriate communication with potential sites.

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

1. Have I visited the OTION website (<http://otion.wfot.org/>)?
 - For country specific information regarding completing an international practice placement
 - To explore the (non-exhaustive) list of placement sites willing to take on international students (in each country)
2. Have I talked to my practice placement coordinator about potential countries and sites that may be available to me?
3. Have I conducted my own independent research about possible placement sites? (hospitals, private clinics, school boards, etc.) in the countries of interest?
 - In this era of online access, discovering specific health and other sites that potentially employ occupational therapists in each country is feasible.
 - Try to focus on one country at a time to uncover the possibilities that exist in each before moving on.
 - Discuss with your practice placement coordinator about who may be the appropriate person to contact in placement sites of interest to gain additional information that can assist you in making your decision.
4. Have I contacted the occupational therapy associations in the countries of interest? (Details are available at www.wfot.org)
 - This is a very important step as there may be limitations on the number of student occupational therapists a country/host site is willing to accept. This is typically due to their primary responsibility to local student therapists and the common struggle to obtain **a sufficient number of placements to meet student's** programme requirements.
 - It would be disappointing for you to work hard to find a placement only to learn that these were not available to you as a student being educated in another country.
 - You will also learn what rules apply to students trying to recruit a placement: for example, some countries will not permit students to approach and arrange a placement for themselves and therefore in those cases, contact is made through a teacher or member of the programme staff at your university. When doing this, ensure that your email is professional, respectful and courteous. Cultural values regarding professional communications vary, and you want to ensure your professionalism comes across. You

may want your practice placement coordinator to give you feedback on a draft email before sending it.

Helpful Tips:

- Keep organised notes on your explorations and the information you gather
- Initially keep all avenues open. As you gather more information and begin to see a “fit” between yourself and certain areas of practice, and/or certain countries, narrow down and begin to prioritise the possibilities

Based on your academic institution, the method of obtaining the placement will differ. Your academic institution may have its own set of requirements that must be met for a placement site to be deemed appropriate and to obtain the final stamp of approval.

Once you have acquired an International Practice Placement, it is time to begin the planning process. In the next section we will discuss the various considerations when planning a successful International Practice Placement and the challenges that you may encounter during this process.

5. HOW DO I PREPARE FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE PLACEMENT?

Preparation for an International Practice Placement varies greatly and is dependent on the country to which you are travelling, your placement site, and personal factors. There are several essential WFOT documents (Position Statements) (available at www.wfot.org) that you will find extremely helpful in your preparation:

- Diversity and Culture
- Environmental Sustainability: Sustainable Practice within Occupational Therapy
- Global Health: Informing Occupational Therapy Practice
- Human Rights
- International Professionalism
- Use of Social Media

The following questions are intended to guide your efforts to prepare for your International Practice Placement and the potential challenges you may encounter.

- A. Have I made arrangements for travel, accommodations, health insurance, and any visas I may require?
 - Organising your accommodations in the host country can be confusing and difficult when doing so remotely.
 - It may be beneficial to talk to a student/former student from your institution who has completed an International Practice Placement in the same country.
 - If this is not an option, try to connect with a reliable source in the host country who may be able to advise you on safe locations, pricing, rental opportunities, etc. These resources may include a local rental accommodation brokerage, your preceptor in the host country, placement coordinator at your host site, and current students.
- B. Have I familiarised myself with the host country's health care system and relevant laws governing occupational therapy practice?
- C. Am I familiar with the relevant models of practice in the host country and organisation?
- D. Am I prepared for the unique cultural expectations/norms in the host country?
 - Through independent research, educational courses, or discussion with experienced students.
 - Or simply through members of that cultural community who can tell me about life in that country

- E. Have I acquired the necessary foundational knowledge needed to partner with the individuals and/or populations with whom I will be working?
- F. Have I identified any language barriers that exist and how will I be addressing these?
 - o Have I completed additional training to assist with overcoming communication barriers, how to work with translators, language courses, etc.?
- G. Have I completed a budget of all the necessary costs associated with engaging in an International Practice Placement?
 - o This may include things such as rent, travel to and from the host country, transportation within the host country, travel and health insurance, and vaccinations and travel insurance if needed
 - o Groceries, leisure activities, travel and/or work/student visas if required, etc.
- H. Have I established the expectations for my placement with both my school programme and host site?
 - o How much contact will you have with your home institution? How will this communication occur (e.g. Skype, telephone, email, etc.)?
 - o Have you received orientation information from your host site prior to the start of the International Practice Placement?
 - i. Organisational policies, information on the practice setting, clear expectations of the student and supervisor, model of supervision that will be used, dress code, work hours, organisational culture, etc.
 - o It is essential to ensure that your education programme and host site are in communication in order to clarify expectations in advance.
- I. How will I establish a method of peer support while I am away (e.g., going on placement in pair/group, establishing relationships with student occupational therapists from education programmes in the host country, etc.)?
- J. Have I familiarised myself with the phases of cultural adjustment e.g. initial phase, gaining perspective, feeling at home?
- K. How can I communicate with family and relations back home for support including emotional support?
 - o Learn about the telecommunication and internet access systems, and the social media applications that are mostly used in the country you are going to, to ensure that you can remain connected to your family and others in your home country.

6A. AM I READY: IS EVERYTHING IN PLACE?

Self-Questionnaire: Complete this questionnaire to help track your planning and actions are and ensure everything is in place to start your international practice placement.

	Yes	No	Notes
I have reviewed and completed my university's requirements for attending an International Practice Placement.			
I have completed my research on the languages spoken in the host country.			
I will be able to communicate in this language			

If I will not be able to communicate in this language, will there be interpreters/alternate methods of communication that are culturally appropriate when needed to complete interactions with clients/others?			
I/my academic institution have ensured that I will have appropriate preceptorship/supervision for the duration of my placement.			
I/my academic institution have ensured that my preceptor/supervisor and I will be able to communicate effectively both <i>verbally and in written form</i> .			
My host organisation/preceptor/supervisor are aware of the preceptor's/supervisor's responsibilities and have been provided with any necessary evaluation criteria.			
If I require a laptop (or other IT device), I have researched the availability of internet access; and I am aware of power/current conversions.			
I have verified that I am able to have access to internet at my residence, a nearby internet café or have secured other ways/media to be able to communicate with my host institution at the agreed upon frequency.			
I have inquired into whether my host organisation requires me to provide any additional documentation (i.e. a letter from my academic institution, specific forms, etc.), or additional fees.			
I have researched the expenses related to an International Practice Placement (e.g., travel expenses, medical and travel insurance).			The approximate costs are:
I have researched transportation options for while I am on International Practice Placement			How will I get to and from my International Practice Placement?
I have researched/secured room and board for the duration of my International Practice Placement.			The approximate costs are:
I have researched the approximate cost of any associated courses.			The approximate costs are:

I have investigated potential scholarships / bursaries which will help finance my trip.			Name/Amount of Scholarship:
I have visited and registered my trip with the appropriate Government Department in my home country (e.g. Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade)			Indicate what kinds of precautions are stated for my setting? (i.e., is this setting a high risk travel area?)
I have inquired about visa requirements for my destination country.			What is the cost of a VISA application for my destination and by what date will I have to apply for my VISA?
I have contacted a travel clinic or health clinic to determine the immunisations I will need before I travel to my host country.			Immunisations required:
Is there any possibility that I will be working with people with communicable diseases?			If YES, what precautions have I taken/researched to ensure my safety?
Is there any possibility that patients/clients or occasionally other staff could treat me differently because of my background?			If YES what precautions have I taken/researched to manage the situation?

6B. AM I READY: PERSONALLY?

Consider the following questions, and you will likely have others. Use the spaces provided to track your thinking, planning and strategies.

- **Things don't always go as planned.** Am I prepared to be flexible? What steps have I taken in the past when I needed to be flexible due to the unexpected? Were these steps helpful or a barrier to managing the situation? What new steps and strategies could I use?
- Do I have any preconceived ideas about the host country? If so, are they going to impact my ability to be flexible and adapt within the placement?
- Do I have supports in place to help work through any issues that may arise? Who, what and where are these supports? How will I access them? What alternative supports can I put in place in case my original support plans do not work?
- What can I anticipate and what have I learned about the differences between my culture and the culture of my host country? Am I prepared to emotionally and intellectually manage these differences? How will I manage these?
- Do I have strategies to deal with the newness of the placement and host country? Have I researched in advance about the country? Am I prepared to immerse myself fully into the new culture?
- How will I spend my 'free time' when I am not at placement (i.e. evenings, weekends)?

- Does the current geopolitical situation of the host country facilitate a safe and learning-rich environment?
- Are there any “deal breakers”? Are there any issues or potential issues which would cause me to stop pursuing an International Practice Placement

7. HOW CAN I BE SUCCESSFUL ON INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE PLACEMENT?

What Tools Do I Need to Succeed on International Practice Placement?

- Peer support (e.g. electronically, in person)
- A way to provide and receive formalised feedback
- A clear understanding of what is expected of me
- A way to maintain communication with host site and school site
- A plan to manage work and life balance
 - Work-life balance is a key component of increasing organisation, productivity and engagement in work. This balance has also been shown to increase satisfaction with work life (Lazar, Osoian, & Ratiu, 2010).
- A method of *reflecting* about your placement experiences daily (e.g. journaling, speaking with peers)

The Role of Reflection:

Consistent reflective practices within a practice placement can:

- Promote further learning
- Increase integration of new and prior knowledge
- Increase self-awareness
- Develop emotional intelligence
- Enhance clinical reasoning
- Establish links between theory learned in the classroom and professional practice

In International Practice Placements, there are many experiences of newness in which active student reflection assists in tying your previous knowledge and competencies to unfamiliar expectations and experiences.

Reflection may also assist you to think about your new environment, events and team members in a 360 degree way:

- How will my reactions and interactions be received by others?
- How can I ensure that I am being sensitive to differences in practice, customs, and ways of being?
- How will I balance the ways I have learned to practice and share these effectively, while respecting practices in my host country and facility?

Criteria for Measuring Success in an International Practice Placement:

- Student’s achievement of learning goals
- Student’s successful passing of level-specific competencies using School evaluation method from the student’s occupational therapy programme
- Changes in cultural competence
- Benefits or drawbacks of having this placement for student, clients, site, school
- Changes in knowledge, skills, competencies, processes, actions for student, site, clients, school, other stakeholders that resulted from placement
- To what extent will there be a future for the site and School partnership based on this placement (sustainability)

8. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE PLACEMENT WAS SUCCESSFUL?

You will use several methods and criteria over the course of your International Practice Placement to help you, your education programme, placement supervisor and site measure the success of this placement.

- To what level of completeness and quality did I meet my learning goals?
- Did I meet the evaluation criteria specific to this level of placement?
- To what extent did I make gains in cultural competence?
- To what extent was the International Practice Placement mutually beneficial for site, clients, and me, as the student?
- What specific changes (both positive and negative) occurred as a result of this International Practice Placement partnership? (For me, site, clients, education programme, other stakeholders?)
- To what extent was sustainability addressed (will the placement partnership between my education programme and the site continue)?
- Completion of formal evaluation tools that measure outcomes such as:
 - cultural competency
 - global health awareness and competency
 - transformational learning and development

9. I'M HOME ... NOW WHAT?

Returning home after an international experience is often more of an adjustment than the one made to a new and different culture. Partly this is because we all expect to feel at home in our own country. However.....

You will have been changed by your experiences, but back home, your friends and family have not. People are initially interested in hearing about your experiences but may quickly lose interest. Friends may not be able to relate to the experience if they have never been in international settings.

It is helpful to keep in mind in advance that upon return you may face some adjustments. Debriefing provides an opportunity to explore ways you can use the experience to continue to broaden your horizons and seek out others with similar interests and experiences. Reflection upon your experience gives you the opportunity to put your experience into perspective and provides an opportunity to integrate your experience with life back in your home country. It can serve as a positive conclusion to your placement. It may even enable you to begin to think of what comes next for you in your career plan and ongoing development as an occupational therapist.

Considering the following questions may be part of an effective debriefing process upon your return.

What resources and supports are in place to help me adjust to being back home? (i.e. a reflection tool).

Is there a method of post-placement debriefing with my education programme?

What are my education programme policies/procedures upon return?

What kind of relationship can/should be maintained with the placement site? How? Who?

How can I be involved in supporting other students on International Practice Placement? (E.g. presentations, peer support, advice, answer questions)

How can I use my International Practice Placement experience to enhance my clinical practice?

Specific debriefing and self-questioning may include:

These questions take into consideration all placement-related aspects of the International Practice Placement: student learning, student's contributions to site, supervision, support, evaluation, etc.; you can also reflect on all non-placement related aspects as well: travel arrangements, residential accommodations, safety and security, communications, etc.)

1. What went well?
2. What successes did I have?
3. What would I change if I were to be part of the same placement experience?
4. How have I changed?
5. What impacts has this experience had on me professionally?
6. What impacts has this experience had on me personally?
7. What support systems do I have in place to assist with reintegration? Family? Friends? Other students?
8. Building from question # 7, above, are there aspects (i.e., emotional, etc.) about my experiences for which I feel I need additional support and/or assistance to manage or work through? From whom/where will I seek assistance?
9. How can I share and express my experience in my community, workplace and personal life?

10. FINAL THOUGHTS

As student occupational therapists, you may have the opportunity to engage in a placement in another country. Embarking on this experience can result in extraordinary change professionally and personally.

The time and considerations invested in preparing oneself for a positive and rich learning experience are important and essential to your outcomes.

There are many supports available through your School programme, and through the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) (www.wfot.org) and the Occupational Therapy International Online Network (OTION) (<http://otion.wfot.org/>).

By the very nature of occupational therapy, you can also use inquisitiveness, initiative and problem-solving to learn more about the places and practices you hope to experience in this world.

The WFOT Student Guide for International Practice Placement is intended to help you pose questions that trigger your thinking, planning, and, yes, curiosity about internationalisation in the practice of our occupational therapy profession.

Finally, while you may decide to physically experience a new country through an international practice placement experience, much of the *Student Guide* may also be used by student occupational therapists who seek to expand their thinking about global practice and apply this in their home countries.

Globalisation and multicultural living are the realities of our world, and thoughtful preparation for intercultural understanding can occur in and within any country.

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