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# Fact Sheet / Career Map - Internationally Educated

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## Occupational Therapists



College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario  
Ordre des ergothérapeutes de l'Ontario



Ontario

## Access to the occupational therapy profession in Ontario

This document was updated in May 2011 in collaboration with the Access to Professions and Trades Unit, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Requirements may have changed by the time you apply. Please contact the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario before you complete your application.

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Occupational therapists in Ontario are regulated by the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario (the College). You cannot call yourself an 'occupational therapist' or hold yourself out to be an occupational therapist unless you are registered with the College.

Occupational therapists are health care professionals who assist individuals to develop or maintain life roles and activities at home, in the community and at the workplace when they are experiencing difficulties in functioning on their own because of accident, disability, emotional problems, developmental difficulties or disease. Occupational therapists use a variety of assessment and treatment techniques. Their work may include training clients in daily living activity and community life skills; prescribing specialised equipment; evaluating and modifying home, work or school environments; and education and counselling.

Occupational therapists work in a variety of settings including hospitals, schools, long-term care facilities, community agencies, private homes, and vocational evaluation/training centres. Many occupational therapists also have their own private practice.

### REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS IN ONTARIO

To practise occupational therapy in Ontario, you must be a registered member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario (the College). All applicants applying for registration must meet the following requirements:

- be legally entitled to work in Canada
- be a graduate from an occupational therapy program from a school, college or university approved by the College
- meet the current practice hours required by the College
- meet the good conduct requirement of the College
- pass the examination approved by the College (see Step 3 below)
- be fluent in English or French
- have professional liability insurance which includes a sexual abuse therapy and counselling fund endorsement

## REGISTRATION APPLICATION PROCESS

### STEP 1 – Proof of English or French Language Fluency

If your first language is English or French, or you completed your occupational therapy education in English or French, you do not need to provide proof of language fluency. Otherwise you must get an acceptable score on a standardised English or French fluency test (both written and spoken) that is recognised in Canada and approved by the College. You must have your results sent directly to the College by the test agency. Please refer to the table below for a list of the Language Tests and minimum scores the College accepts. Please note that this information may change over time. Visit the College web site, [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org) for the most up-to-date information.

| Test   | Details   | Minimum Score     |        |
|--|---|-------------------|--------|
| 1a) Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)                          | i) Internet based test (iBT)                      | Speaking          | 26/30  |
|  |   | Writing           | 22/30  |
|  |   | Reading           | 22/30  |
|  |   | Listening         | 22/30  |
|  |   | Overall score     | 92/120 |
|  |   |                   |        |
| 1b) Part 1 - TOEFL   | i) Computer Based Test (CBT)                      | 230               |        |
|  | ii) Paper based test (PBT)                        | 580               |        |
| 1b) Part 2 - Test of Spoken English (TSE)                                  | Oral test (in conjunction with TOEFL CBT and PBT) | 50                |        |
|  |   |                   |        |
| 2) Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)                    | Written component of test                         | 85                |        |
|  | Oral component of test                            | 4 -               |        |
|  |   |                   |        |
| 3) International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (academic stream) | Written component of test (overall band)          | 7.5               |        |
|  | Oral test   | 7.5               |        |
|  |   |                   |        |
| 4. TestCan   | Test of French language fluency                   | 5 on each section |        |

### STEP 2 - Send Application Documents to the College

Contact the College for the *Registration Application Form* or print it from the web site: [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org) >Registration >Internationally Educated. Complete this form and pay the required fees. Fees are listed at the end of this document and on the College web site. You will also need to send the following information with your application:

- photocopy of your legal work status document (Canadian Citizenship, Canadian Passport, Canadian Birth Certificate, Record of Landing, Permanent Resident Card or work authorization permit)

- copy of transcripts from your educational institution
- a document-by-document credential assessment report sent directly from a College-approved credential agency to the College. This is a requirement for all applicants who have obtained their OT qualification outside of Canada. For more information refer to the College website at: [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org) >Registration> Internationally Educated.
- If you completed your education and fieldwork more than 18 months before applying for registration, you must show that you have completed:
  - 750 hours of professional practice within the last 3 years

or

- 1550 hours of professional practice within the last 5 years

or

- a refresher or upgrading program in Occupational Therapy, approved by the College, within the last 18 months.
- documentation stating you have purchased professional liability insurance that includes a sexual abuse therapy and counselling fund endorsement. You can get this insurance in Ontario through the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) or from the Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists (OSOT).
- a completed Employer Acknowledgement Form (if applying for a provisional certificate)
- confirmation that you have passed the CAOT national certification exam (if applying for a general certificate) or confirmation that you have registered to take the CAOT exam (if applying for a provisional certificate)
- Regulatory History Forms completed and forwarded directly to the College from every jurisdiction in which you have held an OT license or registration. The Regulatory History Form is available on the College website at [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org) > Registration > Internationally Educated. Please note that some regulatory authorities may charge a fee for this service.

If you do not yet meet all of the above requirements, you can still start the application process by submitting your Registration Application Form, application fee, academic documents, and any other documentation available at the time of submission.

The Registration Committee of the College will require an Academic Equivalency Review if the program you graduated from has not been approved by the College. Applicants who require an Academic Equivalency Review will need to provide the College with their transcripts, along with valid course descriptions including the names, content, and hour breakdown of the courses in their program. In these situations, the College will notify you of specific requirements and fees.

If you meet the education and currency hour requirements, the College will inform you with a written statement of eligibility. You will then be able to go on to apply to write the national certification examination administered by the CAOT.

### **Provisional Practising Certificate**

While you are waiting to write the exam, the College may grant you a provisional practising certificate. This certificate will allow you to practise as an occupational therapist with the conditions that you practise under the supervision of a general practising OT, and that you write the first available CAOT exam from your date of registration. Refer to the pamphlet, *Provisional Practising Certificate of*

*Registration – Responsibilities and Requirements* found on the College web site at [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org) > *Registration > Internationally Educated.*

### **STEP 3 - Take the CAOT National Certification Examination**

All candidates who want to become registered as occupational therapists in Ontario must pass an examination. The exam the College requires you to pass is the National Certification Examination administered by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT). You will need to contact the CAOT to take this exam. Their address and telephone number are listed at the end of this document.

The examination is 4 hours long. It includes questions that test your knowledge of specific areas of Canadian occupational therapy practice and theory. The examination is offered twice a year, in July and November. The CAOT will be able to provide you with all other relevant information regarding the exam.

The College strongly encourages all internationally educated applicants to participate in the Occupational Therapy Examination and Practice Preparation (OTepp) Program. This program was developed to assist internationally educated OTs as they seek to transition into practice in Canada . The project is led by the School of Rehabilitation Science at McMaster University in partnership with the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT). For more information, please visit the OTepp website at [www.otepp.ca](http://www.otepp.ca).

#### **Currency Refresher Program**

If you do not meet the currency hours for registration (current practice experience), you will be required to complete a Refresher Program prior to being eligible for a certificate of registration. A Refresher Program consists of completing volunteer, supervised clinical hours. The College will notify you of the number of hours you will be required to complete and explain the Refresher Program. You will be required to secure a clinical setting to complete the volunteer hours under the supervision of a registered occupational therapist. An evaluation of your performance during the review period is required. A Practice Supervisor Agreement Form and Learning Contract will need to be completed by you and approved by the College before starting the volunteer practice hours.

The Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists (OSOT) may have resources to assist you in your pursuit of a Refresher Program. Many facilities require group accident insurance, which is available through OSOT. You can contact OSOT for more information. Their address is listed at the end of this document. While completing a Refresher Program you will not need to secure individual professional liability insurance as you will be covered for this under your supervising therapist.

### **REQUESTS FOR REVIEW**

Applicants who do not meet the registration requirements as specified may request a review by the Registration Committee of the College. Decisions of the Registration Committee may be appealed to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB). More information about HPARB can be found at [www.hparb.on.ca](http://www.hparb.on.ca)

#### **Health Boards Secretariat**

Health Professions Appeal and Review Board  
151 Bloor St. West, 9th Floor

Toronto, ON M5S 2T5

## LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

There is a continuing demand for occupational therapists because of an ageing population, increased attention to the needs of persons with disabilities and an increase in home care services. Areas of employment include health care, educational institutions, social agencies, private business and industry. Job growth may be found in the area of home based care.

For information about working conditions, wages and job descriptions for occupational therapists see the Ontario Job Futures web site, [www.ontariojobfutures.ca](http://www.ontariojobfutures.ca). You will find additional resources at the Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) web site, [www.hrsdc.gc.ca](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca). This information is also available at public libraries or HRSDC Employment Resource Centres in Ontario.

Also visit HealthForce Ontario, [www.healthforceontario.ca](http://www.healthforceontario.ca) for valuable information on living in Ontario, working in Ontario and on the health professions in Ontario.

The professional associations for occupational therapy may also provide assistance in finding a job. Visit the websites of OSOT and CAOT at [www.osot.on.ca](http://www.osot.on.ca) and [www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca) to access a list of current job opportunities.

## COLLEGE FEES (in Canadian dollars):

- Initial Registration Application fee ..... \$ 226.00 (incl. HST)
- Registration Fee (pro-rated quarterly) ..... \$ 743.03 (incl. HST)
- Annual Registration Renewal Fee ..... \$ 743.03 (incl. HST)
- Academic Equivalency Review.....\$ 169.50 (incl. HST)

## ADDITIONAL FEES:

- Document by document Academic Credential Assessment Report .....\$ 140 (approximate)
- CAOT National Certification Exam fee ..... \$ 440 + HST (approximate)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**For further information about applying to register as an occupational therapist in Ontario, please contact:**

Lara Thacker  
Manager, Registration  
College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario  
20 Bay Street, Suite 900, PO Box 78  
Toronto ON M5J 2N8  
CANADA  
Tel: 416-214-1177 ext. 229  
Toll Free: 1-800-890-6570 ( N. America)  
Fax: 416-214-0851  
E-mail: [registration@coto.org](mailto:registration@coto.org)  
Website: [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org)

**For information on obtaining a credential assessment report of your academic credential, please contact:**

World Education Services  
45 Charles St. East Suite 700  
Toronto ON M4Y 1S2  
CANADA  
Tel: 416-972-0070  
Fax: 416-972-9004  
E-mail: [inquiryca@wes.org](mailto:inquiryca@wes.org)  
Website: [www.wes.org/ca](http://www.wes.org/ca)

**For information on the CAOT National Certification Exam, please contact:**

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists  
Carleton Technology and Training Centre  
Suite 3400 , Carleton University  
1125 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa ON K1S 5R1  
CANADA  
Tel: 613-523-2268  
Fax: 613-523-2552  
Toll Free: 1-800-434-2268 (in Canada and continental U.S.A. only)  
E-mail: [caot@caot.ca](mailto:caot@caot.ca)  
Website: [www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca)

**For information on resources to assist with a re-entry program, please contact:**

Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists  
55 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 210  
Toronto, ON M4N 1G8  
CANADA  
Tel: 416-322-3011  
Fax: 416-322-6705

Toll free: 1-877-676-6768  
E-mail: [osot@osot.on.ca](mailto:osot@osot.on.ca)  
Website: [www.osot.on.ca](http://www.osot.on.ca)

**For a government contact about accessing health related professions in Ontario please contact:**

Health Force Ontario  
163 Queen St E  
Toronto ON M5A 1S1  
Tel: 416-862-2200 or 1-800-596-4046  
TTY: 416-598-5964  
Fax: 416-598-5968  
E-Mail: [accesscentre@healthforceontario.ca](mailto:accesscentre@healthforceontario.ca)  
Website: [www.healthforceontario.ca](http://www.healthforceontario.ca)

**For information on where and how to get help with settlement in Ontario please visit [www.settlement.org](http://www.settlement.org)**

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)  
110 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 200  
Toronto, ON M4R 1A3  
CANADA  
Telephone: 416-322-4950  
Fax: 416-322-8084  
E-mail: [generalmail@ocasi.org](mailto:generalmail@ocasi.org)  
Website: [www.ocasi.org](http://www.ocasi.org)

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### **Access to the Occupational Therapy Profession in Ontario**

