

Fair Registration Practices Report

Occupational Therapists (2008)

The answers that you submitted to OFC can be seen below.

Provision of Information About Registration Practices (1 / 13)

Describe how you make information about registration practices available to individuals applying or intending to apply for registration. Specify the tools used to provide information, and the manner in which you make that information available, current, accurate and user friendly in each of these subcategories:

a) steps to initiate the registration process

Information regarding how to apply, as well as the registration process and requirements are available on the COTO website and in paper form. This includes a Fact Sheet specifically for internationally educated applicants.

The same information as on the Fact Sheet is contained in a Career Map for the Occupational Therapy profession which was jointly developed with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's Labour Market Integration Unit. This Career map is available on the government of Ontario's website.

b) requirements for registration

Information regarding the registration process and requirements are available on the COTO website and in paper form as part of the application package sent out to potential applicants. This includes the Fact Sheet specifically for internationally educated applicants.

As indicated above, the Career Map for the Occupational Therapy profession is also available on the government of Ontario's website and there are links to the Fact Sheet/Career Map from a number of Ontario government web pages.

A listing of the entry to practice requirements for registration as an occupational therapist in Ontario is also listed on the HealthForceOntario web site, along with a link to the COTO web site.

In addition, when applicants initiate the registration process, they are sent this information directly by paper or electronic mail.

c) explanation of how the requirements for registration are to be met, such as the number of years of schooling required for a degree to be deemed equivalent to an Ontario undergraduate degree, length and type of work experience, credit hours or program content

Information regarding the registration requirements is available on the COTO website and in paper form. This includes the Fact Sheet, which includes very detailed and specific information regarding how applicants may provide evidence to meet the requirements. As indicated, the Career Map for the Occupational

Therapy profession, available on the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's website, contains the same detailed information.

In addition, when applicants initiate the registration process, they are sent this information directly by paper or electronic mail as part of the registration package.

d) any education or practical experience required for registration that must be completed in Ontario or practice that must be supervised by a member of the profession who is registered in Ontario

Not applicable - There are no education or practice experiences that must be completed in Ontario for registration in the General Practising category.

However, if applicants are not current in practice, they may meet the currency requirement by practising under supervision in Ontario. Information regarding how to meet this requirement is provided on the website and in paper format and is indicated in a letter of direction sent to an applicant who does not meet the currency requirement.

If an applicant chooses to apply for a Provisional Practising Certificate of Registration, their practice under this category must be supervised by a College member. Information regarding this category of registration is available generally on the COTO website and in a specific pamphlet entitled "Provisional Practising Certificate of Registration - Responsibilities and Requirements".

This pamphlet and related documents are also available in paper form and they are provided directly in paper or electronic form to individual applicants seeking registration in this category. Information regarding Provisional practice is also included in the Fact Sheet/Career Map.

e) requirements that may be satisfied through acceptable alternatives

Not applicable, though there are some requirements, such as currency and fluency that may be met in a number of ways. This information is provided on the College's website and in paper format.

f) the steps in the assessment process

Information regarding the steps in the registration process are available on the COTO website and in paper form; all of this information is included clearly in the Fact Sheet/Career Map.

In addition, when applicants initiate the registration process, they are sent this information directly by paper or electronic mail.

g) the documentation of qualifications that must accompany each application; indicate which documents, if any, are required only from internationally trained applicants

Information regarding the documentation required to complete the registration process is available on the COTO website and in paper form. The Fact Sheet/Career Map contains this information, also.

When applicants initiate the registration process, they are sent this information directly by paper or electronic mail.

The requirements that require additional documentation from internationally educated applicants are:

Legal entitlement to work in Canada: Photocopy of Record of Landing, Permanent Resident card or work authorization.

Language Fluency: Self-declaration that their first language is English or French; Evidence that the education program completed was in English or French; or provision of test results from one of a number of accredited language fluency testing agencies.

Graduation from an approved OT program: A copy of original transcripts from educational institution where program completed and credential assessment report from WES or another credential assessment agency approved by the College.

h) alternatives to the documentation if applicants cannot obtain the required documentation for reasons beyond their control

The COTO Registration Committee Handbook indicates that applicants unable to provide adequate documentation may provide a signed, sworn or affirmed statement witnessed by a Notary Public or Commissioner of Oaths in order to provide evidence to meet this requirement.

Applicants unable to provide required documentation are informed of and allowed to avail themselves of this process.

i) how applicants can contact your organization

Applicants may contact the College by telephone or fax during normal business hours, by e-mail and by regular (Canada Post) mail.

j) how, why and how often your organization initiates communication with applicants about their applications

Communication is accomplished by telephone, email and/or written letter sent by Canada Post. Applicants are contacted:

a) if clarification is required on their application;

b) if additional documentation is required;

c) for international applicants – a letter of eligibility is sent by Canada Post. It may also be scanned and sent via email;

d) when a registration number is issued, the registrant is notified by email or phone, which is then followed by a letter; and

e) once registered, a new member package is sent to the registrant by Purolator courier. The package consists of a College letter and 2 resource binders. These are usually shipped

within 4-6 weeks from the date the registration certificate is issued.

k) the process for dealing with documents provided in languages other than English or French

If an applicant's original documents are in a language other than English or French, they are required to provide, at their own expense, certified English translations of required documents.

l) the role of third-party organizations, such as qualification assessment agencies, organizations that conduct examinations or institutions that provide bridging programs, that applicants may come into contact with during the registration process

Information regarding the roles of World Education Services (WES), other accredited credential assessment services and the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT), which sets and administers the national certification examination, are included in the Fact Sheet/Career Map.

The College has also posted information and links on its web site about projects to assist internationally educated occupational therapists (IEOTs). This has included two projects of McMaster University: the Supporting Re-Entry to Professional Practice project (SEPP) and the Occupational Therapy Examination Preparation Program (OTepp).

The College has also provided a link to the pan-Canadian "Orientation to Canadian Health Care Systems, Culture and Context" course for internationally educated health professionals (offered through the University of Toronto) on its web site.

m) any timelines, deadlines or time limits that applicants will be subject to during the registration process

An application is valid for one year from the date of application; an applicant who has not completed the process within this timeline must re-apply and pay the applicable fee again.

Applicants who are required to meet the currency requirement are provided six months to one year within which to meet the requirement. Once this requirement is met they are considered current for an 18-month period.

This information is conveyed to the applicants in written or e-mail correspondence sent to them during the registration process.

n) the amount of time that the registration process usually takes

When the College receives a completed application (meaning that all of the registration requirements have been met) the processing time is usually one week.

o) information about all fees associated with registration, such as fees for initial application, exams and exam rewrites, course enrolment or issuance of licence

Information regarding the fees are available on the COTO website and in paper form. This information is also included on the application form. When applicants initiate the registration process, they are sent this information directly by paper or electronic mail.

p) accommodation of applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment

Requests for accommodation from applicants with special needs are handled based on the needs identified by the individual. While no

information is publicly available, the few times that applicants have required accommodation to complete the registration process, College staff have been able to meet their needs on an individual basis.

The CAOT has policies regarding the provision of specific accommodations for applicants with special needs writing the examination (see section 9. vi.) and this information is provided on the CAOT web site.

Amount of Fees (2 / 13)

Are any of the fees different for internationally trained applicants? If yes, please explain.

Application, registration and examination fees are the same for all applicants.

However, only internationally educated applicants would normally be required to pay for an Academic Equivalency Review or an External Credential Assessment.

The fees associated with these are \$150 + GST for the Academic Equivalency Review and approximately \$115. + GST for a third-party credential assessment report (the fee may vary depending on the assessment service provider used).

Provision of Timely Decisions, Responses and Reasons (3 / 13)

a) What are your timelines for making registration decisions

Once all documents are received and a decision is made, it is communicated to the applicant within 30 calendar days.

b) What are your timelines for responding to applicants in writing

Responses to applicants are provided within 30 calendar days.

c) What are your timelines for providing written reasons to applicants about all registration decisions, internal reviews and appeal decisions

Reasons for registration decisions are provided within 30 calendar days of the date of the decision.

d) Explain how your organization ensures that it adheres to these timelines.

As the College receives relatively few applications that need to go to Registration Committee, deadline dates for responses are tracked manually and the deadlines are rarely exceeded.

Access to Records (4 / 13)

a) Describe how you give applicants access to their own records related to their applications for registration.

All formal decisions issued by the Registration Committee are mailed to the applicant. If an applicant requests their original documents back, they are mailed by Canada Post. If the file is substantial and requires many pages to be photocopied, the applicant will be charged a fee.

b) Explain why access to applicants' own records would be limited or refused.	The College would limit or refuse access to documents if the College has been informed that the documents are fraudulent.
c) State how and when you give applicants estimates of the fees for making records available.	Upon request and review of the volume of the documents requested, the College would determine if a fee was required for photocopying and shipping.
d) List the fees for making records available.	The College has not established a fee schedule as the number of documents are usually limited in pages and a fee would not be necessary. However, if the volume was excessive, i.e. some curricula (program descriptions) are several hundred pages long, a reasonable fee for photocopying (and shipping, if applicable) would be charged.
e) Describe the circumstances under which payment of the fees for making records available would be waived or would have been waived.	The College has not established a policy regarding this, but if the applicant is only requesting a few pages, then a fee is not charged.

Resources for Applicants (5 / 13)

a) List and describe any resources that are available to applicants, such as application guides, exam blueprints or programs for orientation to the profession.	<p>As indicated in a previous section, the College makes available a number of documents, including a Fact Sheet/Career Map for Internationally Educated Applicants as well as a Form Guide to the COTO Application Form.</p> <p>The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists has developed and makes available several documents specifically designed to provide information to internationally educated applicants as well as for Canadian graduates preparing to attempt the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE). This includes "CAOT: Requirements for Occupational Therapy Practice in Canada", the "Certification Examination for Occupational Therapists Resource Manual" and the "Exam Procedures Manual".</p> <p>There are a number of preparatory/orientation programs for internationally educated OTs, such as SEPP and OTepp, that have been offered at McMaster University and the pan-Canadian "Orientation to Canadian Health Care Systems, Culture and Context" course for internationally educated health professionals (offered through University of Toronto).</p> <p>HealthForceOntario (HFO) also provides information and counselling for internationally educated health professionals in a number of disciplines, including occupational therapy.</p>
b) Describe how your organization provides information to applicants about these resources.	The Fact Sheet/Career Map lists contact information for WES, CAOT, the Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists, HealthForceOntario, settlement.org and the Ontario Council of

Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI).

On the College web site, a link to the CAOT web site is provided. Also, in all registration materials, it is made clear that CAOT is the exam provider and that all information regarding the exam may be found by contacting the CAOT.

The College web site also provides links to SEPP and OTepp, that have been offered at McMaster University, the pan-Canadian "Orientation to Canadian Health Care Systems, Culture and Context" course for internationally educated health professionals (offered through University of Toronto), as well as to the HFO website.

Internal Review or Appeal Processes (6 / 13)

This section refers to initial internal reviews or appeals.

a) List your timelines for completing internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions.

Not applicable. There is no formal internal review or review process. However, applicants may be asked or may wish to provide further information/documentation to assist the Registration Committee in its decision-making. Applicants providing additional information or documentation in this way may have their file reviewed at the next available Registration Committee meeting.

Reviews and appeals of registration decisions must be made to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB), an adjudicative body mandated under the RHPA.

i. State the number of internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions that exceeded your timelines.

Not applicable. Please see a) above.

ii. Among internal reviews or appeals that exceeded your timelines, state the number that were from internationally trained applicants.

Not applicable. Please see a) above.

b) Specify the opportunities you provide for applicants to make submissions regarding internal reviews or appeals.

Not applicable. Please see a) above.

c) Explain how you inform applicants about the form in which they must make their submissions (i.e., orally, in writing or by electronic means) for internal reviews or appeals.

Applicants must provide any information to be considered by the Committee in written form; they may submit documents electronically or by Canada Post. Some documents, such as course descriptions etc. must be submitted directly from the issuing institution to the College. All of this information is included in the registration guidelines provided to applicants.

d) State how you ensure that no one who acted as a decision-maker in a registration decision acts as a decision-maker in an internal review or appeal of

Not applicable, as this is not a formal internal review or appeal process.

the same registration decision.

e) Describe your internal review or appeal process.

f) State the composition of the committee that makes decisions about registration, which may be called a Registration Committee or Appeals Committee: how many members does the committee have; how many committee members are members of the profession in Ontario; and how many committee members are internationally trained members of the profession in Ontario.

Not applicable. Please see a) above.

The COTO Registration Committee is a statutory committee created under the Regulated Health Professions Act.

The Registration Committee consists of:

a) two members of the Council who are members of the College;

b) two members of the Council appointed to the Council by the Lieutenant Governor in Council; and

c) one College registrant who is not a member of Council.

A Registration Panel must be composed of at least three persons from the Registration Committee, one of whom is a member of Council appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. On each panel, the number of Council members who are members of the College must equal or exceed the number of Council members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

The Chair of the Committee is elected annually by the Council.

The Registration Committee meets at least quarterly, and more frequently when applicant files need to be reviewed.

The Chair of the Committee reports regularly to the Council and prepares an annual written report for Council and registrants.

Information on Appeal Rights (7 / 13)

This section refers to reviews or appeals that are available after an internal review or appeal. Describe how you inform applicants of any rights they have to request a further review of or appeal from a decision.

All applicants who receive a registration decision are informed, in their decision letter, of their right to appeal to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB).

Assessment of Qualifications (8 / 13)

This category covers your processes for assessing all qualifications, such as academic credentials, competencies, language ability or practical experience.

a) List the criteria that must be met in order for an applicant's qualifications to satisfy the entry-to-practice requirements for your profession.

All applicants applying for registration must meet the following requirements:

1. Be legally entitled to work in Canada;

2. Be a graduate from an occupational therapy program from a school, college or university approved by the college;

3. Meet the practice hours (“currency hours”) required by the College;

4. Pass the examination approved by the College;

5. Be fluent in English or French;

6. Have professional liability insurance that includes a sexual abuse therapy and counselling fund endorsement;and

7. Provide official verification of all other registration(s)/license(s) held in other jurisdictions to ensure 'good conduct'.

Registration requirements are the same for Canadian graduates and international graduates.

b) Describe the methodology used to determine whether a program completed outside of Canada satisfies the requirements for registration.

Applicants who completed their OT program outside of Canada are required to provide an academic assessment report from a credential agency approved by the College.

The College maintains a database of OT programs outside of Canada that have previously been assessed and been approved by the College. If the credential assessment report verifies the documented completion of an OT program and this program is one that has been previously approved by the College, the applicant will be deemed to have completed an approved program.

If the program completed is verified to be a legitimate OT program, but it has not yet been approved by the College, the next step is for the applicant to ask for an Academic Equivalency Review (AER) of their program by the College's Registration Committee.

The applicant is required to provide the College with their transcript along with valid course descriptions including the names, content, hour breakdown of the courses in the program, and details of the clinical fieldwork placements.

An Academic Equivalency Review must be completed for applicants that have graduated from an OT program that has not been approved by the College. An OT program will be approved by the College when the program is found to be substantially equivalent to Ontario-approved OT programs at a bachelors level.

PROCEDURE

An AER is completed by a panel of the Registration Committee. The Registration Committee uses a standardized review tool to determine program equivalency.

The current standardized tool is the Academic Review Tool, 2008 (ART). The ART determines substantial equivalence based on the evidence provided in course curriculum in comparison to the "Essential Competencies of Practice for Occupational Therapists in Canada" 2nd Edition, (2003).

For the AER to be completed, the following process is followed:

- 1. Applicant is provided with the paper ART document (an electronic copy is provided on request);**
- 2. Applicant must arrange for their academic institution to issue the complete Course Description and/or syllabus (representative of the years they studied) to the College and to themselves;**
- 3. All academic documents must be provided in English or French. Documents in any other language will require translation into English at the expense of the applicant. Only notarized translated documents will be accepted;**
- 4. The applicant must complete the ART based on their review of the curriculum and submit this to the College for review by the Registration Committee;**
- 5. The Registration Committee will review the applicant's submission at its first available meeting, and corroborate the findings based on the applicant's transcript and course description;**
- 6. Upon completing the review, the Registration Committee will make a decision as to the substantial equivalency of the OT program.**

c) Explain how work experience in the profession is assessed.

One of the requirements of registration is that the applicant be current in practice. Applicants may meet this requirement by providing evidence that they have recent practice experience in the profession (750 hours within the last 3 years or 1,550 hours within the last 5 years) or have successfully completed a supervised Refresher Program within the last 18 months. Recent graduates (18 months or less) are automatically granted currency. Practice hours include direct service hours, planning and development hours, and administrative hours usually recognized in standard workload measurement systems.

Applicants self-declare their practice hours and

give signed permission for the College to verify this information. They may also provide signed documentation from employers as evidence of recent practice hours. This practice may have been completed in any country.

Applicants who do not meet currency must provide other evidence, satisfactory to the Registrar, of possessing the current knowledge, skill, judgment and ability. This could include evidence that they have been engaged in continuing education or professional development or that they have completed a refresher program approved by the College.

The College requirement of a third party credential assessment is to ensure the authenticity and validity of academic documents and credentials.

WES uses a sophisticated database to store all information about educational institutions, and previous assessment decisions. WES staff, including dedicated researchers, is continuously updating information on changes to education systems around the world. Evaluation team members meet weekly to discuss new information and the policy group meets weekly to ensure new information informs decisions regarding evaluations.

The Academic Review Tool used to determine substantial equivalency of OT programs is based on the national document "Essential Competencies of Practice for Occupational Therapists in Canada" 2003 2nd edition'. This document is kept current by the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO).

WES: WES stores all previous decisions, and updates to policy, in a database which is used by evaluators to prepare evaluation reports.

COTO: The College maintains a database of previous assessments of OT programs completed outside of Canada and uses this as reference when determining whether an OT program is approved by the College or requires an Academic Equivalency Review (AER). Once an AER is done a program may be added to the list of approved programs. Subsequent applicants who completed the same program will not be required to complete the AER as long as the program has not changed since it was approved by the College.

WES takes this in consideration as one factor in credential assessment. Some institutions which are not accredited in their home country are bona fide. There are also instances (rare) where a country may accredit institutions

d) Describe how your organization ensures that information used in the assessment about educational systems and credentials of applicants from outside Canada is current and accurate.

e) Describe how previous assessment decisions are used to assist in maintaining consistency when assessing credentials of applicants from the same jurisdictions or institutions.

f) Explain how the status of an institution in its home country affects recognition of the credentials of applicants by your organization.

inappropriately.

The College relies on the WES assessment to determine whether a program should be recognized or not.

g) Describe how your organization accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment.

When such needs are identified the College makes every effort to accommodate them on an individual basis. For example, the College consults with the applicant to determine what their needs are and how best to meet them, such as meeting the applicant in person to verbally explain requirements.

h) State the average length of time required to complete the entire registration process, from when the process is initiated to when a registration decision is issued.

The answer to this question depends on whether or not an applicant meets all of the registration requirements in order to be issued a certificate of registration.

A complete application takes 5 days to process. An incomplete application can take up to several months to process depending on when the applicant fulfills all requirements and sends the documentation to the College to support their application.

An incomplete application can be a result of:

- the applicant not having submitted all required supporting documentation;

- the applicant submitting the registration application prior to having met all of the registration requirements (e.g. fluency requirement, legal authorization to work in Canada);

- the applicant having submitted documentation that may be insufficient or unclear and must be referred to the Registration Committee for review.

Also, if the education program has not yet been approved by the College, the application will be referred for an Academic Equivalency Review. This review can add 3 months or more to the processing time. It can take some time for the applicant to complete the Academic Review Tool and for supporting documents to be sent from international institutions to the College.

If the applicant does not meet the currency requirement, he or she may be required to complete an approved re-entry program which is usually a period of supervised practice. The applicant is provided 12 months to meet this requirement.

i. State whether the average time differs for internationally trained individuals.

Yes, the average time for internationally trained individuals can take longer.

ii. If the average time differs for internationally

Internationally educated applicants have at

trained individuals, state whether it is greater or less than the average for all applicants, and the reasons for the difference.

least one extra step in the registration process – they are required to obtain a third party credential assessment. The College has approved all Canadian Occupational Therapy programs, therefore Canadian educational programs do not require a third party credential assessment. Also many applicants must provide evidence of language fluency through completion of a standardized test, and some require additional language training to be able to meet this requirement. Therefore, the time required to fulfill these requirements may result in the process taking longer.

Other factors that may slow down the process include: the time required for third parties (schools, former employers, regulatory bodies in other countries) to provide official documentation such as original transcripts and curricula, official confirmation or documentation of OT licensure/registration in other jurisdictions, and the time it takes to obtain a work permit or permanent resident status from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

i) If your organization conducts credential assessments:

i. Explain how you determine the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.

Not applicable. The College uses the services of a third-party credential assessment service, World Education Services (WES), to determine the level of international program completed - please see section 9.

ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.

Not applicable. The College uses the services of a third-party credential assessment service - World Education Services (WES) - please see section 9.

In addition, if the applicant's OT program has not been previously approved by the College an Academic Equivalency Review must be completed. This process is described in section b) above.

iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

Not applicable - work experience is not considered part of the credential assessment process.

j) If your organization conducts competency assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

Not applicable - there is no competency assessment process available.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

Not applicable - there is no competency assessment process available.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.

Not applicable - there is no competency assessment process available.

k) If your organization conducts prior learning assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.

Not applicable - there is no PLA process available.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.

Not applicable - there is no PLA process available.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.

Not applicable - there is no PLA process available.

l) If your organization administers examinations:

i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.

Not applicable - a third-party, the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) sets and administers the exam. Please see section 9.

ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.

Not applicable - the CAOT sets and administers the exam. Please see section 9.

iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.

Not applicable - the CAOT sets and administers the exam. Please see section 9.

Third-Party Organizations (9 / 13)

a) List any third-party organizations (such as language testers, credential assessors or examiners) relied upon by your organization to make assessment decisions.

The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) sets and administers the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE), which is currently the only examination accepted to meet the examination requirement.

World Education Services (WES) Canada provides credential assessment services for the College.

The College accepts language fluency assessments from a number of accredited language fluency testing agencies; Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL); Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB); International English Language Testing System (IELTS); TestCan etc. The College does not have formal service provision agreements with these organizations.

b) Explain what measures your organization takes to ensure that any third-party organization that it relies upon to make an assessment:

i. provides information about assessment practices to applicants

The College directs applicants to the CAOT for all information regarding the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE).

The CAOT website provides extensive information specifically for internationally

educated occupational therapists (IEOTs). This includes information regarding the role of provincial regulatory bodies in the credential assessment and registration process.

The CAOT, as a national organization, does perform credential assessments on behalf of some OT regulatory bodies in other Canadian provinces, in order to determine examination eligibility. Some internationally educated applicants may have gone through this process in order to write the NOTCE prior to applying for OT registration in Ontario. However, COTO does not use the services of CAOT for the purpose of assessing international credentials.

Applicants applying to be registered in Ontario must go through the COTO credential assessment process in order to determine whether they have met the education requirement of registration.

CAOT provides information outlining the complete examination process on their website and in the cover letter and application form provided to the applicant (all material is available in English and French).

WES: The College directs applicants to WES for credential assessment services. There is information on the WES website regarding how to apply for a credential assessment, the documentation required etc. In addition WES participates in community information sessions, walk-in support, e-mail response to individual queries, telephone response to individual queries etc.

WES is a recognized and accredited credential assessment service and has a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the College that stipulates that WES adheres to the transparency, good practices and quality assurance guidelines of the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada.

ii. utilizes current and accurate information about qualifications from outside Canada

CAOT: Not applicable - COTO does not use CAOT services to assess international programs (see i. above).

WES: WES uses a sophisticated database to store all information about educational institutions, and previous assessment decisions. WES staff, including dedicated researchers, is continuously updating information on changes to education systems around the world. Evaluation team members meet weekly to discuss new information and the policy group meets weekly to ensure new information informs decisions regarding evaluations.

iii. provides timely decisions, responses and

CAOT: Not applicable - COTO does not use

reasons to applicants

CAOT services to assess international programs (see i. above).

WES: All required documents, and payment in full must be received before the assessment of the credentials can begin. At this point, the process takes seven working days, after which a report is sent to the applicant, and to an institution or employer of the applicant's choice.

Late is defined as taking 8 or more business days, excluding the time waiting.

Based on when the file is first opened, the average length of time is 5 to 7 days; based on when WES receives all required documents. The average length of time is 5 days. This is consistent with WES' 7 business day standard, because 2-3 business days would be taken in processing the file up to the time that a request for appropriate documents was sent out. At this point, the number of working days on the file is frozen until the required documents are received.

Appeals are responded to within 20 working days. The individual is informed of the timeframe when they make an appeal.

iv. provides training to individuals assessing qualifications

CAOT: Not applicable - COTO does not use CAOT services to assess international programs (see i. above).

WES: All new evaluation staff receive formal in-house training under the leadership of the Assistant Director, Training. Typically an individual works under the direct supervision of a senior staff for two months prior to working on their own.

All evaluation staff participate in weekly meeting to ensure they are up to date on emerging trends and information.

v. provides access to records related to the assessment to applicants

CAOT: Not applicable - COTO does not use CAOT services to assess international programs (see i. above).

WES: WES's privacy policy contains details about access to information in an applicant's file. This policy is available on the WES website.

vi. accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment

CAOT: Not applicable - COTO does not use CAOT services to assess international programs (see i. above).

Regarding the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE), candidates may speak with the CAOT Exam Services Coordinator during CAOT business hours to receive a verbal explanation of the process or to clarify questions the candidate may have.

In terms of writing the NOTCE, at no cost to the candidate, and at the candidate's request based on supporting documentation from a professional or the candidate's university student services office, CAOT provides a variety of special accommodations that are required by the candidate such as additional time, private space, reader/scribe, Braille or large print exam, physical accommodation (chair with additional back support, special desk, etc.) or non-Saturday sitting based on religious restriction.

WES: Applicants may be accommodated on an individual basis, based on identified needs. For example, a WES customer services staff could meet with a visually-impaired applicant who needed a verbal explanation of the process and/or their assessment.

c) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct credential assessments:

i. Explain how the third party determines the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.

CAOT: Not applicable - COTO does not use CAOT services to assess international programs (see i. above).

WES: The main elements that are considered are the level, scope and intent of the degree in the home country. For example, what is the status of the institution, what are the admission requirements of the program, what is length and depth of the program, what does the degree lead to (e.g. further study, licensing, etc).

For BAs, there is a definition of institution type (academic versus technical, university versus community college type of institution), program type and program length that is factored into the decision as to whether the credential is a university bachelors degree, or a community college diploma. Furthermore, if the degree is comparable to a three- or four-year bachelors depends on the relative standing of the academic institution in the home country.

ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.

CAOT: Not applicable - COTO does not use CAOT services to assess international programs (see i. above).

WES: WES provides an assessment of the level of a program as well as verifications that the documents are genuine, that it is an approved program at that institution etc.

WES does not evaluate the content of the program for the College.

iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

While some college or university programs may require clinical placements or internships, this would be considered as part of the academic program. Work experience outside of the post-

secondary academic program is not part of the credential assessment process.

d) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct competency assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

Not applicable.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

Not applicable.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.

Not applicable.

e) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct prior learning assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.

Not applicable.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.

Not applicable.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.

Not applicable.

f) If your organization relies on a third party to administer examinations:

i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.

National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE):

The exam consists of two 2-hour sessions with a one hour break between. Each session covers 100 multiple-choice questions based on case studies provided in point form, in Plain English or French.

Scoring is based on standardized scores with a mean, or average, of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. For each of the Basic and Professional Content areas and for the Total exam, the average score (number of items answered correctly) for all the first-time Canadian Trained candidates is set to a standard score of 500.

Failed candidates are provided with Fail Score sheets indicating the distribution of items, the performance of the reference (first-time Canadian trained) group and the performance of the individual, all expressed in percentages.

The passing score for the examination is 290. The passing score for the exam was determined by subject matter experts who reviewed the content of an examination and rendered judgments on expected candidate performance item by item. This reflects the

purposes of the exam, which is to ensure that all individuals who enter occupational therapy practice in Canada meet a minimum standard of theoretical and applied knowledge and professional behaviour.

The passing score, which is a standardized score of 290, has been maintained from one exam administration to the next through a statistical procedure known as equating which ensures that the level of performance necessary to pass one exam is equivalent to the level of performance required to pass another exam, despite differences in length or difficulty.

An eligible applicant may write the examination an unlimited number of times.

However, if an individual holds COTO Provisional registration, he/she is afforded a maximum of two opportunities to write the NOTCE while holding a Provisional Certificate and practising under supervision. If the Provisional member is unsuccessful after two attempts, his/her Provisional registration will expire. At that point, the individual will no longer be allowed to practice as an occupational therapist, but may again attempt the examination an unlimited number of times as an applicant.

All those who write the exam are notified of their status (pass/fail) within approximately 6 to 8 weeks of the exam sitting. Those who do not pass the NOTCE are given a detailed description of their examination results.

ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.

In terms of the administration of the NOTCE, CAOT currently uses the services of the Division of Studies of Medical Education, University of Alberta, as an external examination services provider. Both validity and reliability scores are provided by DSME for each examination administration.

Validity and Test Blueprint: The NOTCE has an exam Blueprint that is used to ascertain content validity for each examination. After each examination sitting there is a report that outlines the different components of the Blueprint elements, the recommended emphasis (expressed as percent range, e.g., 20-30% for Professional Knowledge), the marginal totals and accompanying percentages showing the emphasis given to the areas on the exam.

The actual distribution of scored items by subject areas are reviewed after each sitting to ensure that the exam is representative of the content of Occupational Therapy, within the constraints of the description of the domain,

the test format, and the test blueprint.

Test Reliability: CAOT uses an accepted measure of reliability which represents a measure of the internal consistency of the examination. CAOT examination reliability values are in keeping with the reliability generally expected for licensing examinations. Each item of each examination sitting is examined for its reliability. According to reliability measures items may be removed before scoring and then be reviewed, revised, or discarded by the Certification Examination Committee.

iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.

The NOTCE is continuously under review and revision to reflect current practice and relevant professional documents. Exam items are developed according to Item Generation Policy.

All Item Generators receive training. Items are reviewed and revised by the Item Generation Coordinator, and the brought to the Certification Exam Committee after translation into plain language in each official language. Each exam item is reviewed again and revised as needed before being accepted into the bank.

Once material is accepted into the exam bank, it is reviewed for currency each time it is used on an exam, or as per policy. All case studies and items are coded according to the blueprint and referenced.

Training (10 / 13)

a) Describe the training that your organization provides to:

i. individuals who assess qualifications

WES: WES provides all new evaluation staff with formal in house training under the leadership of the WES Assistant Director, Training. Typically an individual works under the direct supervision of a senior staff for two months prior to working on their own.

All WES evaluation staff participate in weekly in-house meetings to ensure they are up-to-date on emerging trends and information.

COTO: The Registration Committee of the College is provided with annual orientation sessions to the work of the Committee. In-house training sessions on how to complete application reviews and make decisions, led by College legal counsel, is provided to committee members. The Committee's established policies, guidelines and precedence are reviewed and used to assist with application reviews.

ii. individuals who make registration decisions

Annually the COTO Registration Committee is provided orientation to a Handbook that outlines the legislation and regulations guiding registration in the profession and provides policy guidelines for the committee. This Handbook is regularly used by the Committee to guide their practices, and is updated on a regular basis.

In addition, in 2008 the Registration Committee attended a training session entitled "Fair Registration Practices & Procedures: A Training Session for Staff and Committee Members" delivered in Toronto by the law firm of Steinecke Maciura Leblanc.

iii. individuals who make internal review or appeal decisions

At WES, Area Specialists, and Managers, who have responsibility for appeals of credential assessments, represent about 25% of the evaluation staff, and generally have a minimum of 4 years experience. By participating in the WES Policy Group, they are continually kept informed of changes and trends related to their work.

Agreements on the Recognition of Qualifications (11 / 13)

Examples of agreements on the recognition of professional qualifications include mutual recognition, reciprocity and labour mobility agreements. Such agreements may be national or international, between regulatory bodies, associations or jurisdictions.

a) List any agreements on the recognition of qualifications that were in place during the reporting period.

COTO has been a signatory to the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO) Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) since it was negotiated and came into effect in July 2001.

b) Explain the impact of these agreements on the registration process or on applicants for registration.

The ACOTRO MRA allows for registrants in good standing in other Canadian jurisdictions to be registered in Ontario under a simplified process. The MRA allows the regulator in the original jurisdiction to forward the required registration documentation regarding its member directly to COTO, which facilitates and shortens the registration process for eligible applicants.

Data Collection (12 / 13)

Languages in which application information materials are available

a) Indicate the languages in which application information materials are available.

Language	Yes/No
English	Yes
French	Yes
Other (please specify)	

Paid staff employed by your organization

b) State the number of paid staff employed by your organization in the following categories.

Category	Staff
Total staff employed by the regulatory body	14
Staff involved in appeals process	n/a
Staff involved in registration process	2

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Countries where internationally educated applicants were initially trained

c) List the countries where your internationally educated applicants* were initially trained in the profession, and the number of applicants trained in each country.

Applicants	Country of training (Canada excluded)	Number of applicants**
Largest number	USA	11
Second-largest number	Philippines	10
Third-largest number	United Kingdom	7
Fourth-largest number	India	4
Fifth-largest number	Ireland	4

* Persons who have applied to start the process for entry to the profession.

**Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained

d) Indicate where your members* were initially trained in the profession (use only numbers, do not enter commas or decimals).

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Total Members	3540	445	117	335	0	4437
Non-practising members	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0

* Persons who are currently able to use the protected title or professional designation of your

profession.

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

Applications your organization processed in the past year

e) State the number of applications your organization processed in the past year (use only numbers, do not enter commas or decimals).

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
New applications received	378	43	11	39	0	471
Applicants actively pursuing licensing (applicants who had some contact with your organization in the reporting year)	7	1	1	14	0	23
Inactive applicants (applicants who had no contact with your organization in the reporting year)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	2	0	0	2	0	4
Applicants who became members	371	42	10	25	0	448
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of license* but were not issued a license	0	0	0	0	0	0
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of license*	133	7	3	6	0	149

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

	Class of License	Description
a)	Provisional Practicing Certificate	All requirements must be met except for the exam requirement. Two conditions are placed on the certificate: 1. member must attempt the first available exam sitting; 2. member must practice under a supervision plan. A Provisional certificate is valid for 60 days after the exam date. A Provisional registrant is accountable for services provided and can use the protected OT title and College title designation OT Reg. (Ont.).
b)		
c)		

Reviews and appeals your organization processed in the past year

f) State the number of reviews and appeals your organization processed in the past year (use only numbers, do not enter commas or decimals).

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Applications that were subject to an internal review or that were referred to a statutory committee of your governing council, such as a Registration Committee	2	2	0	7	0	11
Applicants who initiated an appeal of a registration decision	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appeals heard	0	0	0	0	0	0
Registration decisions changed following an appeal	0	0	0	0	0	0

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

Certification (13 / 13)

I hereby certify that:

- - I have reviewed the information submitted in this Fair Registration Practices Report (the "Report")
- - all information required to be provided in the Report is included; and
- - the information contained in the Report is accurate.

Name of individual with authority to sign on behalf of the organization:

Elinor Larney

Title:

Deputy Registrar

Date:

February 27, 2009