

Education & Fieldwork Requirements for Internationally Educated Applicants

8-21

Section:	Registration
Applies to:	Internationally educated occupational therapists
Approved by:	Registration Committee
Date Established:	March 2005
Date Effective:	May 1, 2015
Date Revised:	February 2016, September 2016, March 2018, February 2022

Purpose

This policy explains how applicants who completed an occupational therapy degree outside Canada can meet the education and fieldwork requirements.

Principles

Applicants must possess the required competencies to be able to provide safe, effective, ethical care. To meet this requirement, they must successfully complete an occupational therapy degree. The degree must be substantially equivalent to an Ontario occupational therapy degree.

Policy

Applicants who have obtained an occupational therapy degree outside of Canada must complete the Substantial Equivalency Assessment System (SEAS) as a first step in the Ontario registration process.

SEAS is a way of determining whether the applicant's education and fieldwork are substantially equivalent to an Ontario occupational therapy degree. The SEAS process is administered by the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations.

Exceptions

The following internationally educated applicants are **not required** to complete SEAS:

- Applicants who are currently registered as occupational therapists elsewhere in Canada
- Applicants who have held a general certificate of registration with the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario in the past

- Applicants for a [temporary certificate](#) of registration who hold a valid certificate of registration as an occupational therapist in a jurisdiction outside of Canada with education and clinical requirements equivalent to those of the College as set out in subsections 36(2) and 37(2) of the Ontario Regulation 226/96: General, under the *Occupational Therapy Act, 1991*.

All other applicants must complete SEAS.

The SEAS process

Applicants must apply directly to SEAS. Once the assessment is complete, SEAS sends a report directly to the College.

The report gives the results from a review of the following areas:

- Academic credential assessment: World Education Services Academic Credential Assessment Report
- Profession-specific credential assessment: fieldwork hours
- Profession-specific credential assessment: curriculum review
- Language readiness assessment
- Jurisprudence Knowledge Assessment Test
- Competency assessment

Decision criteria

The SEAS report must say that the applicant's education and fieldwork are substantially equivalent to an Ontario degree and the applicant must have successfully completed the Jurisprudence Knowledge Assessment Test. This means the applicant has met the College's education and fieldwork requirement and can continue with the registration process.

What happens if the applicant does not meet the decision criteria

If the SEAS report says that the applicant's credentials are not substantially equivalent or the applicant has not successfully completed the Jurisprudence Knowledge Assessment Test, the College refers the application to the Registration Committee. The Committee can take any of the following courses of action:

- Direct the Registrar to issue a certificate of registration
- Direct the Registrar to issue a certificate if the applicant successfully completes a required examination
- Direct the Registrar to issue a certificate if the applicant successfully completes additional specified training
- Direct the Registrar to issue a certificate with terms, conditions, or limitations on how they can practise
- Direct the Registrar to refuse to issue a certificate of registration.

Process for temporary certificates of registration

Although applicants for temporary certificates do not have to go through the SEAS process, they must obtain a Document-by-Documents evaluation from World Education Services (WES) that demonstrates that they meet the registration requirements for a temporary certificate. The report must be sent to the College by World Education Services. It must include a copy of the applicant's transcript. If it does not, the applicant must arrange for their educational institution to send the transcript directly to the College.

Decision criteria

The WES evaluation must say that the applicant successfully completed an occupational therapy degree that was:

- accredited by the home country's respective authorities
- at least a three-year Bachelor degree
- approved by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists at the time the applicant attended.

Note: Internationally educated occupational therapists holding a temporary certificate must go through the SEAS process if they wish to apply for a general or provisional certificate of registration in the future.

What happens if the applicant does not meet the decision criteria

If the report finds that the applicant's education did not meet the decision criteria, the College refers the report to the Registration Committee. The Committee can take any of the following courses of action:

- Direct the Registrar to issue a certificate of registration
- Direct the Registrar to issue a certificate if the applicant successfully completes a required examination
- Direct the Registrar to issue a certificate if the applicant successfully completes additional specified training
- Direct the Registrar to issue a certificate with terms, conditions or limitations
- Direct the Registrar to refuse to issue a certificate of registration

Legal Requirement

[Ontario Regulation 226/96: General, under the Occupational Therapy Act, 1991, s. 36\(1\), 36 \(2\) 37\(1\), 37 \(2\) and 38 \(1\)](#)