



## **Application for recognition of occupational therapy qualifications in Australia.**

### **Stage I – Desk Top Audit – Explanatory Notes**

***Important: Please READ the following explanatory notes carefully before completing the application.***

The information on the application form is collected by the Overseas Qualifications Assessment Committee (OQAC) of the Occupational Therapy Council (Australia and New Zealand) Inc (OTC) for the purpose of assessing occupational therapy (OT) qualifications for recognition in Australia.

All personal information will be handled confidentially. Details may be verified with or provided to other agencies where necessary or required by law.

If you intend to migrate to Australia, you should first contact your nearest Australian Embassy, Consulate or High Commission (overseas post) for information about migration processes and requirements for assessment of your qualifications. If you intend to migrate in a skilled migration category, information relevant to you is available in the "General Skilled Migration" booklet that can be purchased from the overseas post or Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) offices in Australia.

Please note that OTC does not provide information about how to migrate.

### **Introduction**

This is an application to assess occupational therapy qualifications completed outside Australia for recognition in Australia. Under migration law if your qualifications were gained in Australia and you wish to apply for a visa under the General Skilled Migration program, you will also need to apply for an assessment. Even if your occupational therapy qualifications are suitable for migration to Australia, you will be required to meet additional requirements of the individual State or Territory Registration Boards or OT AUSTRALIA before you are eligible for full registration or membership.

The OQAC of OTC assesses your suitability for migration to Australia as an occupational therapist by checking that you are recognised to practise OT in your own country, and that your professional education is of a standard that would adequately prepare you for practice in Australia.

The OTC assessment is valid for a period of five (5) years from the date of issue of the Assessment Letter.

## English Language Requirements

High-level English language skills are essential to the practice of OT in Australia. Applicants must submit evidence with their application that they have sufficient English language skills to work as an OT in an English language environment. Applicants must meet one of the following before their application will be assessed:

(i) English Language Proficiency Test

All occupational therapists who are applying for skilled migration or practice in Australia must prove English Language Proficiency by completing either the IELTS or the OET and achieving the results outlined below.

These results must have been obtained within two (2) years prior to applying for assessment.

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examination (Academic Module) and achieve a minimum score of seven (7) in each of the four components (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking)
- Occupational English Test (OET) and achieve an overall pass with grades A or B only in each of the four components.

(ii) Waiver of English Language Proficiency Test

The English Language Proficiency Test is waived where applicants have met the following educational requirements for English language.

1. Completed occupational therapy education program in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, New Zealand or Ireland, leading to registration/licensure in those countries (recognition by the Minister for Health & Children in Ireland).

OR

2. Completed occupational therapy program in Canada and gained registration/licensure in Canada through an examination that was in English.

OR

3. Completed occupational therapy program in South Africa and gained registration/licensure in South Africa through education that was conducted in English.

OR

4. Completed a degree in Australia (on-shore) for at least 4 semesters, 2 years full time study, within the last two years prior to application.

Please note that evidence of English is required for points 2 and 3. This evidence is usually included on the transcript or in a letter from the training institution.

If you do not meet the above criteria, you will need to complete an English Language Proficiency Test (either IELTS or OET only).

*Please Note:* The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) may require occupational therapists to undertake an English Language Proficiency Test even where OTC has waived this requirement. Please contact DIAC for further information.

If there is any doubt about ability in the English language, the OQAC of OTC may ask applicants to undertake an English language proficiency test before assessment of OT qualifications proceeds.

## Completing the Form

Before filling in the application form, you should obtain and read the OTC Information Leaflet.

Answer all questions in English, unless otherwise requested.

Initial and date any alteration to the application form.

## Documents you MUST send with the application form

These are the documents you MUST include with the application. DO NOT send originals: Send CERTIFIED COPIES (but not copies of certified copies - see notes on certification below).

- An official certified copy of evidence of English language ability (see above under English Language Requirements).
- Official certified copy of your qualification papers (for example, your degree, diploma, certificate etc) in the original language.
- Official certified transcripts of educational courses completed showing subjects, hours, and examination results, and where applicable, details of practical and clinical education, in the original language.
- Official certified evidence of your good standing/verification of registration (whether currently registered or not) from any authority(ies) with which you are currently, or have been previously, registered/licensed as an occupational therapist.

**Please note** that this MUST be requested to be forwarded directly to OTC by the relevant registering authority. Certificates greater than 3 months (90 days) old will not be accepted. Also required is evidence of current registration/licence (if applicable) which can be forwarded by you with your application.

**You should also note** that if you will also be applying for registration in Australia then a separate certificate will need to be obtained and provided directly to the relevant Registration Board as they will not accept a copy of the certificate provided to OTC.

**OR** if registration or licence is not required to work as an OT, official certified evidence of employment as an OT ie. A letter from an employer indicating the dates of your employment, your job title and the nature of your work.

- If employed two official, certified references from employers **attesting to your professional competence**. If self-employed, they may be from professional colleagues.
- Official certified evidence of change of name, eg a marriage certificate (ONLY if the name on your documents is different from your current name).

You must also send certified copies of translations into English of any of the documents above that are issued in another language.

If forged, altered or falsified documents are submitted to OTC, no assessment will be provided and your assessment fee will not be refunded.

If you cannot obtain the required documents, you should attach a letter to the application form identifying which documents you cannot obtain, and explaining the reason/s for this.

## Certification

All copies of original documents must be clearly authorised as true copies of the original by an appropriate person. In Australia, people who are authorised to certify copies are:

- Justices of the Peace (JP)
- Legal practitioners
- Admissions officers of all Australian universities
- Officers of State and Territory Overseas Qualifications Units

In countries outside Australia, authorities in that country approve persons who certify documents. If you are uncertain, the nearest Australian Embassy, High Commission or Consulate can advise you.

To have your copies certified, you must present both the original and the copy to the person carrying out the certification.

Each copy of the document must be certified separately and must show clearly:

- the words "*certified true copy of the original*"
- the signature of the certifying officer; and
- the name and address or provider/registration number (where applicable) of the certifying officer legibly printed below the signature. It must be possible, from the details provided, for the OQAC of OTC to contact the certifying officer if necessary.

## Fees

The fee for assessment of overseas OT qualifications for recognition in Australia and the assessment of Australian trained overseas applicants who seek to migrate to Australia appear in the Fee Schedule. The fee must be sent with your application form and made payable to OTC in Australian dollars by one of the following methods:

- A bank cheque drawn by a bank outside Australia that has bank clearance arrangements with an Australian bank;
- A foreign draft on an Australian bank;
- A money order issued by Australia Post;
- A bank cheque drawn by an Australian bank; or
- A personal cheque drawn on an Australian bank account.

Please do not send your payment of fees in cash by post.

A receipt will be issued to acknowledge that OTC has received your application and fee.

The fee is not normally refundable.

## **Waiting Time for Assessment**

An application for assessment will take approximately 2-3 weeks to process if all required documentation and correct fee is provided with the application. You should not make contact to check on the progress of your assessment before this time. If further information is sought from the applicant, educational institution, referees or certifying officers in other countries this will of course lengthen the processing time. A receipt will be issued when the application is processed.

## **Agents**

Australia's privacy legislation prohibits OTC from discussing your application with other people unless you authorise us to do so. If you want someone such as a family member or other agent to deal with OTC on your behalf, you need to attach a letter signed by you authorising this person (by name) to act as your agent.

## **Reviews**

If the assessment does not recognise your qualifications as an OT in Australia and you disagree with the assessment, you may apply to the OQAC of OTC for a review of its decision. Please contact OTC if you wish to find out more about this option.

## **Next Steps**

When your assessment has been completed, you will receive an official assessment letter from OTC. If you wish to apply for migration to Australia under the skilled migration category, you should include the original assessment letter you received from OTC with your application to migrate.

Registration is a legal requirement to work as an occupational therapist in some Australian States and Territories (Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia). A certified copy of the assessment letter from OTC will be required when you apply for registration and membership of OT AUSTRALIA, the Australian Association of Occupational Therapists.

## **Need More Information?**

For more information about the assessment process, you should obtain the OTC Information Leaflet. This leaflet can be accessed on the OTC website at <http://www.cotrb.com.au> under "Publications" or requested from the OTC office:

### **Occupational Therapy Council (Aust & NZ) Inc**

Suite 3, 154 Fullarton Road

ROSE PARK SA 5067

AUSTRALIA

Ph: 61 8 8431 5079

Fax: 61 8 8333 1569

Email: [admin@cotrb.com.au](mailto:admin@cotrb.com.au)

## OTC/ OQAC – ASSESSMENT FOR MIGRATION AND REGISTRATION

