

Communication to internationally qualified occupational therapists about coming changes to qualification assessment

To be published on Occupational Therapy Board of Australia and Occupational Therapy Council websites

New pathways to registration and changes to international qualification assessments coming soon for occupational therapists

From late 2025, the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (the Board) will launch three new streamlined pathways to general registration for internationally qualified occupational therapists.

This will include assessing international qualifications against new criteria. The criteria will determine whether a qualification is considered substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to an approved qualification, or relevant to the profession.

Qualification assessments will no longer be undertaken by the Occupational Therapy Council (OTC). Instead, candidates will apply directly to Ahpra for qualification assessment. Assessment of your qualification is required before you apply for registration.

These changes will make the process of qualification assessment and registration more streamlined for international occupational therapists who meet the new criteria.

Until the new pathways are launched, you can still apply to the OTC for Stage 1 desktop assessment. This is followed by a period of 3-6 months supervised practice under limited registration. Alternatively, you may choose to wait until the new pathways are launched.

Under the new pathways, if you hold a qualification the Board considers to be substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to an approved qualification, you will be able to apply for general registration without having to complete supervised practice. If you hold a qualification the Board considers to be relevant to occupational therapy, you will need to complete a Practical Assessment of Competence before applying for general registration.

To register as an Occupational Therapist in Australia, you must meet all of the eligibility requirements, including Board's [registration standards](#).

New pathways and features

Qualification Assessment Pathway

- International qualifications in occupational therapy will be assessed against revised criteria. If your qualification(s) are assessed as substantially equivalent to an approved qualification, you can apply for general registration as an occupational therapist.
- If your qualifications are assessed as relevant to the profession of occupational therapy, you will need to apply for limited registration to complete a Practical Assessment of Competence, administered by the OTC. The practical assessment of competence must be completed before you are qualified to apply for general registration as an occupational therapist.

Recognised Qualification Pathway

- The Board will publish a list of international qualifications (with specified dates) that have been recognised as either substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to an approved Australian qualification.

- You should check your qualification (including date of graduation) against the published list of qualifications and apply for general registration if your qualification has been recognised by the Board as substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to an approved Australian qualification.

Comparable Regulator Pathway

- The Board will publish a list of 'Comparable Regulators'. Qualifications awarded in that country or jurisdiction and recognised for the purpose of registration by that regulator, in a specified date range, will be considered by the Board to be substantially equivalent to an approved qualification.
- If your qualification(s) are recognised by the Comparable Regulator you can apply for general registration.

The Board is working towards launching these pathways in late October 2025 (subject to confirmation). It will publish detailed information about the pathways and the new qualification assessment criteria in July 2025.

During this transition, internationally qualified occupational therapists seeking assessment of their qualifications should carefully consider their individual situation and select the most appropriate application process.

Anyone migrating to Australia will still need to apply to the OTC for skills recognition.