



Working in the United Kingdom (UK)

Published: October 2019
Lead Group: Secretariat
Country relevance: UK wide

Occupational therapy practice

We recommend that all occupational therapists wanting to work in the United Kingdom (UK) make themselves fully aware of the national policies and legislation in each of the four UK Countries - Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England. The best way to do this is initially to become an overseas member of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT). Visit www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/join-us for full details. On arrival in the UK you can become an RCOT professional member and take advantage of local networking and study events and other benefits which will help you settle into your new professional community.

Getting registered

To practise in the UK you must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), the regulatory body. 'Occupational therapist' is a legally protected title which may only be used by registered occupational therapists. In order to get registered, applicants must fulfil the HCPC criteria which includes professional indemnity insurance and CPD requirements. Membership of RCOT provides this insurance as part of the RCOT membership benefits. You can join RCOT at www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/join-us

Full information on the process for international applicants can be found on the HCPC website: www.hcpc-uk.org/apply/international/

For further information contact:

Registration Department
The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
Park House
184 Kennington Park Road
London SE11 4BU
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 845 300 4472/+44 (0) 20 7582 5460
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7840 9801
Email: registration@hcpc-uk.org

Application forms and guidance notes can be downloaded from the HCPC website. Qualifications and English proficiency are taken into account. If you are from a European Economic Area (EEA) or a Swiss national applicant, specific information is also available for you. There is a processing fee.



Information on immigration and working in the UK

Please contact:

UK Border Agency
Lunar House
40 Wellesley Road
Croydon
Surrey CR9 2BY
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 870 606 7766 or www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration

A points based system has been introduced for 'skilled workers'. Occupational therapists are now on the Home Office Shortage Occupations List (SOL) for fast tracking. Currently, conditions for EEA citizens are different.

Employment opportunities for occupational therapists

Employment opportunities for occupational therapists in the UK are available across the UK, particularly in the National Health Service and Local Authorities. However, there is a geographical variation for vacancies, e.g. a large number of vacancies in the London area. The recent introduction of the occupational therapy profession onto the Shortage Occupation List will make it easier for international occupational therapists to come to the UK.

Finding a job

Vacancy listings are available to RCOT members online at www.rcot.co.uk/jobs-0 and in OTnews. Work is available in health, social care and community settings as well as in the independent sector, education, housing etc. Agencies may also be helpful for short term work.

You may also like to look at the NHS jobs website in each UK country: <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/> (England and Wales) <https://jobs.scot.nhs.uk/> (Scotland) <http://online.hscni.net/hsc-jobs/> (Northern Ireland) and local authority social services websites.

Employers who wish to recruit an individual from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland to fill a vacancy that is on the shortage occupation list, may issue a Tier 2 Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS). There are limitations placed on those employed under Tier 2 CoS. For further information, please visit the UK government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sponsor-a-tier-2-or-5-worker-guidance-for-employers>



International students studying in the UK

Tier 4 Student Visa

The following information is provided to help international occupational therapy students who are studying in the UK. Full guidance on Tier 4 Visas is available from: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa>

If you hold a Tier 4 student visa and will have a (masters) degree from a recognised UK university, you are exempt from the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT). The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) website offers guidance to international students and has a small section on how some employers might not understand the exemptions to the RLMT. When you apply for an occupational therapist post in the UK, you should make your exempt status extremely clear on all application materials and by phoning the Trusts to ensure your application is not passed by due to a misunderstanding of eligibility. For further information, please visit the UKCISA website: <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Working/Working-after-studies>