



Occupational Therapist ANZSCO 2524-11

Queensland
May 2019

Current labour market rating: No Shortage

While there is no shortage of occupational therapists in Queensland, employers in some regional areas have difficulty filling their vacancies.

Key research findings

- Although this labour market has tightened over the last few years, no overall shortage of occupational therapists was identified in 2019. Survey results were broadly consistent with the findings in 2018.
 - Around 75 per cent of vacancies were filled and there were, on average, two suitable applicants per vacancy (Figure 1).
- Vacancies in metropolitan Queensland were more readily filled than vacancies in regional areas. Regional employers noted that workers often will not relocate outside Brisbane for non-ongoing positions.
- Employers in the public sector filled all of their advertised vacancies, while private businesses filled around 70 per cent. Public sector employers also received a higher number of suitable applicants per vacancy.
- While the average number of qualified applicants per vacancy increased in 2019, employers considered around two thirds of these applicants unsuitable. This was mainly due to a lack of specific experience, such as working in a hospital, burns and plastics, or autism practice setting.
- Most employers reported a strong increase in the demand for occupational therapy services in Queensland. They attributed this to the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme between 2016 and 2019.
- Some employers indicated that there was a more than adequate supply of recent graduates, but it was difficult to find suitably skilled senior workers in this labour market.

Demand and supply trends

- Although there has been strong growth in the demand for occupational therapists in Queensland, new supply has also increased significantly in recent years.
- Bachelor degree completions in occupational therapy increased by 44 per cent in the five years to 2017, including growth of 20 per cent from 2016 to 2017.

2019 Survey Results¹

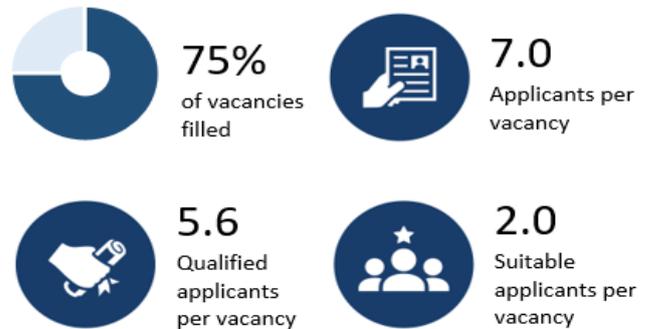
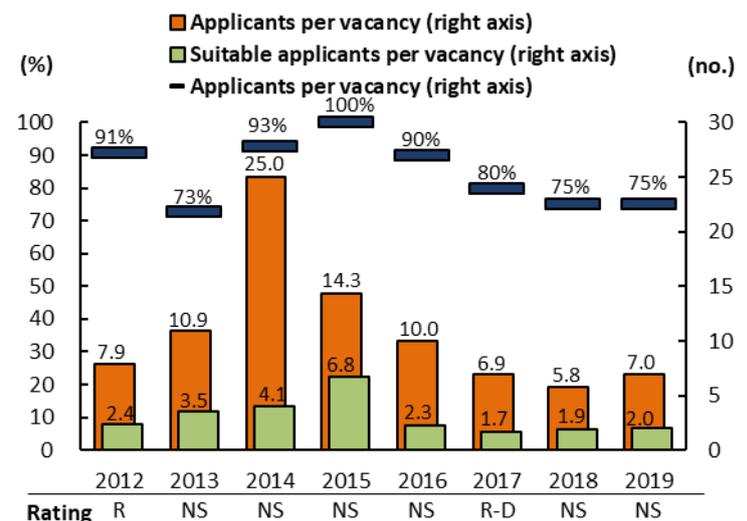


Figure 1: Survey results, Occupational Therapist, 2012 to 2019



Key to ratings: R = Regional shortage; NS = No shortage; R-D = Regional recruitment difficulty

- The number of registered, practising occupational therapists in Queensland increased by 40 per cent over the five years to March 2019.
- Meanwhile, internet advertised vacancies for this occupation in Queensland have quadrupled over the last five years, compared with an increase of around 15 per cent across all occupations. In the year to May 2019, vacancies for occupational therapists rose by more than 50 per cent.

¹ The methodology underpinning this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology](#)

Additional Data Sources: Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, Internet Vacancy Index, May 2019; Department of Education, Higher Education Data Collection, 2017, Customised Tables, domestic students; Occupational Therapy Board of Australia, Statistics 2014 to 2019