



Occupational Therapist ANZSCO 2524-11

Western Australia
June 2019

Current labour market rating: No shortage

An overwhelming majority of surveyed employers filled their vacancies for this occupation, with no shortage of suitable applicants for roles across the state.

Key research findings

- Employers in the metropolitan and regional areas experienced little difficulty attracting suitably qualified and experienced applicants to their roles.
 - Employers in the metropolitan area attracted an average of 3.3 suitable applicants per vacancy and filled 88 per cent of their roles.
 - Surveyed employers in regional areas attracted an average of 1.3 suitable applicants and filled 100 per cent of their roles.
- Employers sought qualified and registered applicants with the professional skills base, experience and interpersonal capabilities to work with a diverse client base with complex needs, such as patients with dementia, mental health issues and intellectual and physical disabilities.
- Employers also required applicants who have a sound ability to work in a multi-disciplinary environment with other allied health professionals, and engage with the families and caregivers of clients to facilitate high quality outcomes.
- All vacancies required a minimum of a bachelor degree in occupational therapy (or equivalent).
 - In the metropolitan area, 95 per cent of applicants were qualified. In regional areas the proportion of qualified applicants was slightly lower (71 per cent).
 - Some applicants were qualified in other allied health fields, or had not yet completed their degree in occupational therapy.
 - Employers in the metropolitan and regional areas respectively found 75 per cent and 20 per cent of qualified applicants to be unsuitable.
- Applicants were most often deemed unsuitable due to a lack of experience providing functional mobility training, or working with a particular client group. This included

2019 Survey Results¹



91%
of vacancies
filled



10.5
Applicants per
vacancy



9.9
Qualified
applicants
per vacancy



2.7
Suitable
applicants per
vacancy

clients on the Autism spectrum, those with complex mental health conditions, vision impairment, and clients in need of rehabilitation assistance.

Demand and supply

- Online vacancies for occupational therapists have followed a steady upward trend since late 2014. Data as at May 2019 show an average of 39 vacancies per month, the highest average in this series for this occupation.
- Entry into this profession is via a bachelor or master degree in occupational therapy.
 - As at 2017, the number of commencements and completions of undergraduate and postgraduate occupational therapy courses in WA were at their highest levels in 10 years.
- Data from the Occupational Therapy Board for March 2019 show there were 2932 Occupational Therapists holding General Registration in Western Australia. This represents a 4.3 per cent increase on the previous year.

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 Student Data Collection, 2017, customised tables; [Occupational Therapy Board of Australia, Statistics](#), March 2019