

... assess functional limitations of people resulting from illnesses and disabilities, and provide therapy to enable people to perform their daily activities and occupations.

Indicative Skill Level

Most occupations in this unit group have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification (ANZSCO Skill Level 1).

Skilled Occupation Criteria

Long-lead time

Occupational Therapists meet the criteria for long lead time, as entry to this occupation requires a substantial training commitment.

- ▶ Employment as an Occupational Therapist generally requires the completion of a university qualification of at least four years study (full-time equivalent), such as a Bachelor of Applied Science (Occupational Therapy).

High use

Occupational Therapists meet part of the criteria for high use, showing that the skills which people have acquired through education and training are actually being deployed for the uses intended.

- ▶ Of new graduates employed as Occupational Therapists, 88% had studied in a related field, such rehabilitation therapies or other health areas (*Australian Graduate Survey, 2009*).
- ▶ As professionals, Occupational Therapists are expected to have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification. Of those employed as Occupational Therapists, 100% were found to possess this level of skill (*ABS Survey of Education and Work, 2010*).¹

High risk

Occupational Therapists also meet the criteria for high risk/high disruption. This indicates that the occupation is important for the effective operation of an enterprise and/or the broader economy.

- ▶ Occupational Therapists are required to register with a Registration Board in some states and territories, such as Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

¹ Analysis for the Skilled Occupations List (SOL) was conducted using the latest available data, including the 2010 ABS Survey of Education and Work (SEW). Percentages may therefore differ from those cited in the 'Occupation Trends' analysis (over the page), which uses alternative sources in some instances (e.g. the 2008 ABS Survey of Education and Work). Small sample sizes for some occupations may also result in fluctuations in the SEW data between 2008 and 2010. The specific data sources used for the Occupation Trends analysis can be found on the Skills Australia website: <http://www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/SOLsummarysheets.shtml>.

Occupation trends

ANZSCO: 2524

Occupational Therapists

Employment level	12,100 More than half of workers (59.7%) are employed full-time.
6 digit employment (2006 Census)	252411 Occupational Therapist 6840
Employment growth	Over the five years to August 2010, employment increased by 51.5% (compared with growth of 12.1% for all occupations). Employment is expected to rise by 12.0% over the next five years (compared with projected growth of 9.5% for all occupations).
Unemployment rate	There is almost no unemployment for this occupation.
Educational profile	Around 88.7% have a Bachelor degree or higher qualification.
Vacancies	The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) fell by 17.7% over the 12 months to September 2010 to 233.2 (March 2006=100). Vacancies for all occupations increased by 19.4%.
Gender	Around 90.0% of workers are female (compared with 45.4% for all occupations).
Labour turnover	Around 6.4% of workers leave this occupation in a year compared with 13.1% for all occupations.
Age profile	The median age is 33 years and 25.3% are aged 45 years and over (compared with 38.5% for all occupations).
Earnings	Median full-time weekly earnings (before tax) are average (\$1033).
Graduate outcomes	Graduate Careers Australia data is provided at the aggregated level for 'health', but it shows 97% of Bachelor degree graduates across the health field of study seeking full-time work were working four months after graduation, 46% of whom were employed as Health Professionals, 15% as Personal and Community Service Workers and 9% as Science Professionals.
Skill shortages	National shortages of Occupational Therapists were identified from 2002 to 2009. Research undertaken in 2010 suggests that shortages are not widespread but some employers experience difficulty recruiting specialist or experienced Occupational Therapists.

Labour market

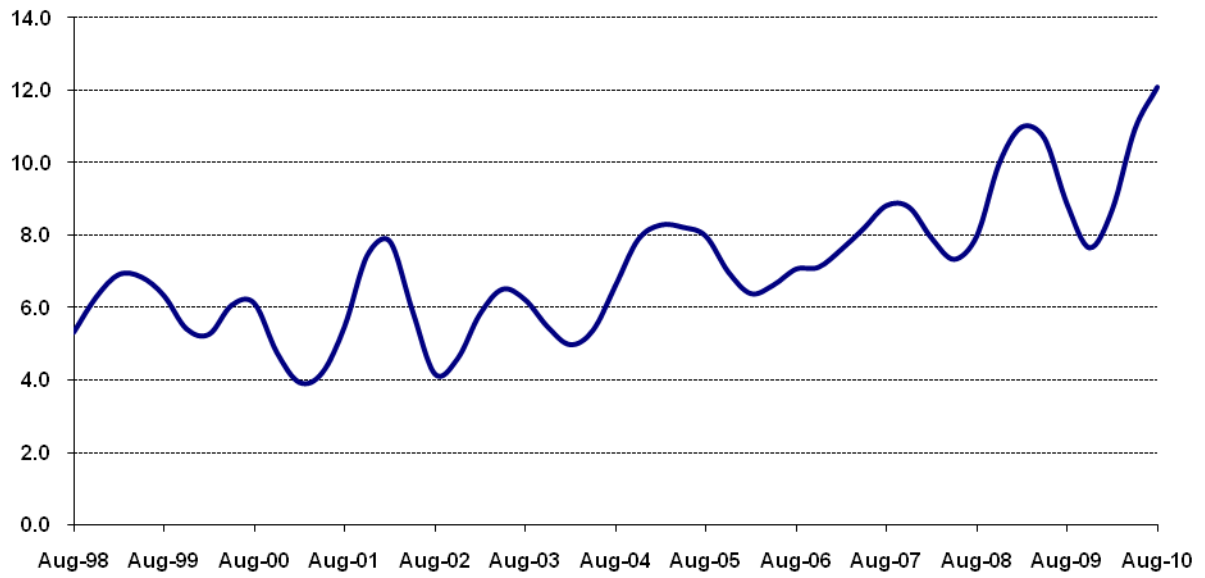
National shortages have been persistent over much of the past decade. Research in 2009 suggested that the labour market was easing, although shortages were still evident in regional locations. Research in 2010 shows about 70% of surveyed vacancies were filled and, on average, there were 1.5 suitable applicants per vacancy. Most employers who were seeking new graduates filled their vacancies with relative ease.

However, in some locations, employers experienced difficulty attracting Occupational Therapists who had a minimum of two to three years post-qualification experience or who had specialist skills. Shortages also persist in states and territories where training is not offered.

Summary

The labour market has eased, after persistent shortages were recorded to 2009. Employment has risen strongly over the past five years and is projected to grow at about the same rate as 'all occupations' over the next five years. There is almost no unemployment. Turnover is low and the workforce is young suggesting low replacement demand.

Occupational Therapists
Employed Persons ('000s) Aug 1998 to Aug 2010



Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) - 3 Monthly Average - Nov 2006 - Sept 2010
Occupational Therapists (March 2006 = 100)

