



Bachelor of Occupational Therapy



Domestic fee: \$7,670 (first year)

International fee: \$25,970 (first year)

Compulsory student levy >
StudyLink >

*Fees are approximate, subject to change and exchange rates

Location Dunedin or Hamilton
Duration Three years full-time
Delivery On campus with five fieldwork placements in a wide range of settings; four of these are likely to occur outside of the Dunedin or Hamilton area

Credits 360
Level 7
Start February (full-time) or July (part-time)
 Our July intake is for those wishing to undertake one Year One course. You will complete the other courses from February next year.
Apply Now

Make a difference in people's lives. Become an occupational therapist and help people achieve independence, meaning and satisfaction in their daily activities.

As an occupational therapist, your focus will be on ensuring individuals, groups and populations within the community can do the things that are important to them. You will work with people who have had illness, injury, or a disability, and with a range of ages from the newborn to older people.

Why study occupational therapy with us?

You'll gain high-quality skills through a blend of online learning, face-to-face teaching, real-life scenarios and interactive group/community experiences. Embrace the chance to undertake five occupational therapy fieldwork placements in a wide range of settings so you can develop your practice ability to a high standard by working with people.

Exactly the same programme is delivered from both Otago Polytechnic in Dunedin and Hamilton-based at Wintec City campus so you can enrol in the campus of your choice.

Our highly-regarded Bachelor of Occupational Therapy leads to professional registration in New Zealand and is recognised by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists.

Entry requirements

There are three options for achieving the entry criteria:-

1. NCEA Level 3 including:
 - i. 14 credits at Level 3 in each of three NZQA approved university entrance subjects, and
 - ii. 10 Literacy credits at Level 2 or above, made up of 5 credits in reading and 5 credits in writing, **and**

iii. 10 Numeracy credits at Level 1 or above, made up of:

- > specified achievement standards available through a range of subjects OR
- > package of three numeracy unit standards (26623, 26626, 26627- all three required)

2. A qualification at Level 4 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) equalling at least 60 credits completed in one year
3. Successful completion of university courses/units equalling at least 50 per cent of a first-year student workload completed in one year.

> International students will be individually assessed to ensure they meet degree-level entry requirements. [Click here for your country's equivalent entry criteria.](#)

> If English is not your first language, you must provide:

- > New Zealand University Entrance OR
- > Overall Academic IELTS 6.5 with no individual band score lower than 6.5 (achieved in one test completed in the last two years), OR
- > Acceptable alternative evidence of the required IELTS (see [here](#) for NZQA proficiency table and [here](#) for list of recognised proficiency tests).

If you need to improve your English Language skills, we offer a wide range of English programmes.

Additional criteria

- > A cover letter which demonstrates your elementary understanding of occupational therapy in Aotearoa/New Zealand gained through observation or contact with occupational therapists in practice, attending seminars or open days, and/or reading about occupational therapy. Also, include the skills and experience you have which would make you a good candidate for the programme.
- > You need to provide a medical examination report which shows you have a satisfactory level of physical and emotional health as certified by a general practitioner.
- > You must submit recommendations of suitability from two referees who are NOT family members or friends (e.g. no family friends or personal friends).
- > All applicants who are accepted must obtain a Comprehensive Level 2 First Aid Certificate (Units 6400, 6401 and 6402), make a health declaration, provide their immunisation status and apply for a Criminal Convictions history report.

Recognition of Prior Learning

The Otago Polytechnic School of Occupational Therapy will give credit in recognition of prior Learning (RPL) to the taught elements of the programme, in accordance with Otago Polytechnic Academic Policy AP0501.08. Students will not be granted Recognition of Prior Learning for any Year 2 or 3 courses. An application for RPL can be made anytime after you have been accepted on to the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy programme.

[Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\)/Cross-credit info sheet](#)

[Course outlines for Recognition of Prior Learning](#)

[Recognition of Prior Learning application form](#)

Bridging options

If you don't have the academic qualifications required to enter the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy, our one year health bridging certificate can help you meet the minimum academic criteria for application. It consists of two separate Certificate qualifications - the New Zealand Certificate in Study and Career Preparation (Level 3) and the New Zealand Certificate in Study and Career Preparation (Level 4). You will be enrolled in both of these qualifications at the beginning of the year.

Please note: Due to the high demand for places, successful completion of our health bridging certificate will not automatically guarantee entry to this degree.

Selection procedure

To be accepted, you must meet minimum academic standards and all other criteria. You may be required to attend an interview to provide clarification of issues raised within the application. All acceptable applicants will be allocated places on the basis of prior academic success and diversity of life experiences. 15% of preferred entry places in this programme are reserved for both those who identify as Māori, and males.

Note: There are a limited number of places on this programme and successful applicants must prioritise their study. It is your responsibility to ensure that you do not organise employment or other study that will conflict with the timetabled activities involved in this programme.

Provisional Entry:

Any applicant who does not meet all of the entry criteria may be given provisional entry to year one at the discretion of the Head of School.

Completing your application

You must provide certified copies of proof of identity and proof of residency (where appropriate).

Applications will only be considered complete when the following documents are also received by the School of Occupational Therapy.

- > Application form (online or paper form) completed
- > A cover letter which demonstrates your elementary understanding of occupational therapy in Aotearoa/New Zealand gained through observation or contact with occupational therapists in practice, attending seminars or open days, and/or reading about occupational therapy. Also, include the skills and experience you have which would make you a good candidate for the programme.
- > 2 referee reports (Please DO NOT use a friend, family friend or family member) - [click here](#) to download the report to give to your chosen referees (pdf 102 KB)
- > Medical Examination report - [click here](#) to download this (pdf 128 KB)
- > Academic entry requirements
- > Fieldwork Agreement - [click here](#) to download this (pdf 139 KB)
- > Criminal Convictions History report - [click here](#), follow the instructions online and send us a copy of the report.

Please use this checklist (pdf 95 KB) for more information and to ensure you have done all of the tasks that you are required to do to complete your application.

Immunisation Status

Please note: Once you have been accepted into the programme, you will be notified that you must produce current evidence of immunisation status (this can only be completed through a current blood test). You are encouraged to be immunised against Hepatitis B. Not having this immunisation will impact on access to some clinical placements and thus progression in the course may be affected.

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) clearance is a requirement of a number of clinical placement providers. You may be tested for MRSA during your study. A positive result for MRSA may delay your progression in the programme as you will be unable to attend your clinical placement until you have clearance.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORMS BELOW ONLY AFTER A CONDITIONAL OR UNCONDITIONAL OFFER

- > Immunity Status Info sheet - [click here](#) to download this (pdf 98.79 KB)
- > Immunisation collection centre list - [click here](#) to download (pdf 436 KB)
- > OP student blood screening request form - [click here](#) to download (pdf 361 KB)

In addition to the Immunisation Status, on acceptance into the programme, you will need to complete or have a current Comprehensive Level 2 First Aid Certificate (Units 6400, 6401 and 6402).

Additional costs

The blood screening for immunisation status and the First Aid certification will incur additional costs.

You will be required to purchase your own stationery and cover the cost of printing reading/course materials. You will undertake five fieldwork placements during the qualification and will need to budget for these accordingly; you will be responsible for meeting any costs associated with these including travel to and from the placement, accommodation and the cost of all meals.

Programme specific risks

While on fieldwork placements, the risks you are exposed to will be those commonly associated with the health services. These are broad and range from physical/psychological risks to your person (such as back injury or infectious diseases, psychological distress) through to causing potential harm to service users which may be reported to the Health and Disability Commissioner.

Further study options

Increase your career prospects with any of our postgraduate Occupational Therapy programmes. Students who achieve a B grade average in the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy degree are eligible to complete a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy (Honours).

Computer requirements

You are required to have access to a suitable computer or laptop for study in this programme. We use Moodle, an intranet website to communicate with students and supply Course material (handbooks,

lecture notes etc), you will be supplied with log in details on your arrival. We also recommend you have Microsoft Office package on your computer.

How you will study

This is a three year, full-time qualification which uses a variety of teaching methods including the blended learning approach. This approach incorporates face-to-face lectures and tutorials, real-life scenarios, interactive groups, community experiences and online learning. You will be required to study for approximately 20 hours on campus per week and the expectation is that you will participate in a further 20 hours of self-directed learning. You will identify your learning requirements and find the best ways to meet these needs, with the support of academic staff and your peers.

During this qualification, you will undertake five fieldwork placements in order to ensure you meet the competency levels for registration to practise as a New Zealand occupational therapist

The Bachelor of Occupational Therapy programme is delivered at two campuses, Otago Polytechnic in Dunedin and Wintec City campus in Hamilton. You can enrol in the campus of your choice, knowing that you will experience the same learning/teaching methods.

Fieldwork

Working with people is at the very essence of occupational therapy and a mandatory part of the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy qualification. During this qualification, you will undertake five fieldwork placements in order to ensure you meet the competency levels for registration to practise as a New Zealand occupational therapist. Clinical experiences will be offered in a wide range of community health and rehabilitation settings and you will be required to complete a minimum of three placements outside of the Dunedin or Hamilton area. See more information relating to fieldwork below.

Declaration and police check

Fieldwork providers request that a police check be carried out prior to you going on placement. In addition, the New Zealand Occupational Therapy Board requires a declaration about convictions and a police clearance from all applicants for registration. If you have a police record, you are encouraged to discuss your circumstances with a lawyer who may be able to advise you of the implications of your record on your ability to work with vulnerable persons.

Immunisation Status

If you are accepted for the programme, you will be notified that you must have current evidence of your immunisation status. You are encouraged to be immunised against Hepatitis B, Tuberculosis, and Varicella. Not having current immunisation will affect your ability to proceed to some specific fieldwork placements which might affect your progression within the programme. Clearance for Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a requirement of fieldwork placement providers.

Fieldwork placement aims

Performance criteria for each placement follow a carefully ordered sequence where you will be expected to take increasing responsibility for personal study and initiative. Fieldwork placement supervisors will move from directing the experience to allowing you to direct it; that is, from "supervisor-oriented" to "student-oriented" experience.

The five areas of competence identified by the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand (OTBNZ) will be assessed at each level.

YEAR ONE

Fieldwork 1 – Placement

35 on-site hours per week for 4 weeks

This course enables students to explore the role of the occupational therapist in placement setting(s) and demonstrate emerging professional skills, behaviours and attitudes.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the role of the occupational therapist and occupational therapy within the local context.
2. Demonstrate the ability to practice occupational therapy at an emergent level* across identified areas of competence within the placement(s) setting.

Fieldwork 2 – Placement (Dunedin or Hamilton only)

6.5 on-site hours per week for 14 weeks

The aim of this course is to enable learners to develop and maintain relationships, participate alongside others, and facilitate occupation within communities.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the occupational identity of self and others within communities.
2. Demonstrate participation in and facilitation of occupations that meet need(s) within a placement setting.
3. Explain how the placement setting sustains a sense of place and community within bicultural New Zealand.
4. Demonstrate communication and relationship building skills in diverse populations.

YEAR TWO

Fieldwork 3 – Placement

35 on-site hours per week for 8 weeks

This course enables learners to apply specific occupational therapy skills and knowledge within the practice setting and demonstrate adequate professional behaviours and attitudes.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Justify occupational therapy practice within the local context using evidence-informed practice.
2. Demonstrate the ability to practice occupational therapy at an *adequate level across identified areas of competence within the placement(s) setting.

YEAR THREE

Fieldwork 4 – Placement

35 on-site hours per week for 8 weeks

This course enables learners to demonstrate competence through consistent application of occupational therapy skills and knowledge, within the practice setting, sustaining professional behaviours and attitudes at a consistent level.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critique the role of the occupational therapist and occupational therapy using evidence informed practice within the local context.
2. Practice occupational therapy at a consistent level* across identified areas of competence within the placement(s) setting.

Fieldwork 5 – Placement (Dunedin or Hamilton only)

17.5 on-site hours per week for 8 weeks

This course enables learners to apply occupational therapy knowledge and skills and sustain professional behaviours and attitudes at a consistent level.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Justify an occupational focus to selected health, well-being and community development initiatives.
2. Promote the role of the occupational therapist and the profession's domain of concern using evidence informed practice within the local context.
3. Practice occupational therapy within a defined population at a consistent level* across identified areas of competence.

[Meet the fieldwork team](#)

Narinder Verma , Sarah Redfearn, and Jenna Collie

Assist with the preparation, allocation and support of students and supervising occupational therapists for the range of placements offered.

Please contact the Fieldwork team if you have any questions.

Freephone number 0800 800 583

> Narinder can be contacted by phone on 021 735 236 or email narinder.verma@op.ac.nz

> Sarah can be contacted by phone on 021 735 662 or email sarah.redfearn@op.ac.nz

> Jenna can be contacted by phone on 03 479 3602 or email Jenna.Collie@op.ac.nz

> Ema can be contacted by phone on 07 834 8800 ext 3346 or email Ema.Tokolahi@op.ac.nz

Gail Morris

Gail is the fieldwork administrator and takes responsibility for modifying and updating our therapist database and handles all the administration to do with placements, including maintaining the credit/payment system.

Gail can be contacted by phone on (03) 479 3614 or email OTFieldWork@op.ac.nz

Please visit our staff page to view more details.

Bachelor's programme structure

This is a three year, full-time qualification which consists of two semesters per year. The programme structure is the same for both Dunedin and Hamilton students (although the weekly timetable will be different at each campus) and is comprised of a series of occupational therapy courses. Each course has a credit rating and each credit equates to approximately ten hours of study. In addition, your fieldwork placements occur during the taught weeks of the programme. Please note Year 1 is subject to academic approval.

YEAR 1 – whole year			
Course Name			Credits
Human Body and Movement			30
YEAR 1 – Semester 1		YEAR 1 – Semester 2	
Course Name	Credits	Course Name	Credits
Professional Practice	15	Building Cultural Competency in Practice	15
Foundations of Occupational Therapy	15	Human Mind and Behaviour	15
Fieldwork One	15	Fieldwork Two	15
Total Credits Year One			120
YEAR 2 – Semester 1		YEAR 2 – Semester 2	
Course Name	Credits	Course Name	Credits
Applied Professional Practice	30	Fieldwork Three	30
Occ. Therapy: Theory in Practice	15	Informing Practice: Occupation	15
Informing Practice: Person	15	Informing Practice: Environment	15
Total Credits Year Two			120
YEAR 3 – Semester 1		YEAR 3 – Semester 2	
Course Name	Credits	Course Name	Credits
Professional Reasoning	15	Fieldwork 4	30
Complexity in Practice: Person	15	Fieldwork 5	15
Complexity in Practice: Occupation	15		
Complexity in Practice: Environment	15		
Select one elective in Semester Two from either:			
Elective 1		Transition Negotiated Learning	15
Elective 2		Transition Showcase	15
Total Credits Year Three			120

Courses descriptions

YEAR ONE

Human Body and Movement - Full year

The course enables learners to understand human beings in terms of the key body systems and movement.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain relevant structures and functions of human anatomy and physiology.
2. Apply the principles of kinesiology and ergonomics to promote and justify better human posture and movement.
3. Explain the impact of system dysfunction on a person's health.

Foundations of Occupational Therapy - Semester 1

This course will enable learners to understand the concept of occupation and explore the fundamental principles of occupational therapy in the context of health and wellbeing.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the significance of occupation to health and wellbeing.
2. Articulate the whakapapa of occupational therapy practice.
3. Interpret a variety of situations using models/frameworks of occupational theory.
4. Apply the concepts of the occupational therapy process to simple scenarios.

Professional Practice - Semester 1

This course will enable learners to develop and apply professional practice skills in a variety of situations.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply the core skills relating to occupational therapy practice.
2. Apply communication skills and therapeutic use of self-strategies within a variety of situations.
3. Apply the use of reflective models to a variety of specified practice situations.
4. Analyse the components of an activity/occupation

Fieldwork One - Semester 1

This course enables students to explore the role of the occupational therapist in a real-life setting(s) and demonstrate emerging professional skills, behaviours and attitudes.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the role of the occupational therapist and occupational therapy within the local context.
2. Demonstrate the ability to practice occupational therapy at an emergent level* across identified areas of competence within the placement(s) setting.

Building Cultural Competence in Practice - Semester 2

This course enables learners to develop knowledge of culture and its application in a professional context in bicultural New Zealand.

At the successful completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Explain key terms associated with culture
2. Discuss how competency in culture applies to occupational therapy practice.
3. Discuss the key principles of Te Tiriti O Waitangi.
4. Apply tikaka/tikanga practices appropriately in a marae setting.

Human Mind and Behaviour - Semester 2

This course enables learners to demonstrate knowledge of psychological theories that are relevant to the practice of occupational therapy.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss a range of psychological theories and the core beliefs underpinning occupational development and functioning.
2. Recognise and apply psychological concepts in relation to self and others in an occupational context.

Fieldwork Two - Semester 2

The aim of this course is to enable learners to develop and maintain relationships, participate alongside others, and facilitate occupation within communities.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the occupational identity of self and others within communities.
2. Demonstrate participation in and facilitation of occupations that meet need(s) within a placement setting.
3. Explain how the placement setting sustains a sense of place and community within bicultural New Zealand.
4. Demonstrate communication and relationship building skills in diverse populations.

YEAR TWO

Applied Professional Practice - Semester 1

This course will enable learners to apply and integrate evidence-informed professional practice skills necessary for both occupational therapy and inter-professional practice.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply an occupational therapy process to scenarios.
2. Demonstrate and critique a range of communication strategies within a variety of situations.
3. Demonstrate and critique the use of 'therapeutic use of self' within simulated therapy contexts.
4. Analyse inter-professional practice and its relevance to the New Zealand bicultural context.

Occ. Therapy: Theory in Practice - Semester 1

This course will enable learners to utilise professional reasoning to justify occupational therapy practice.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply professional reasoning to justify appropriate occupational therapy conceptual and practice models.
2. Justify and critique the appropriate occupational therapy process.
3. Differentiate between a range of inquiry methods used within evidence-informed occupational therapy practice.

Informing Practice: Person - Semester 1

This course enables learners to critically analyse the multifaceted nature of people and how occupational therapists work with them to find meaning and purpose as occupational beings.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate the features of and impact illness, injury and/or disability has on a person in relation to their occupations and environments.
2. Analyse a person's capacity to meet the demands of environments and occupations.
3. Justify occupational therapy practice that enhances a person's occupational identity and satisfaction.

Informing Practice: Occupation - Semester 2

This course enables learners to critically analyse the multifaceted nature of occupation and how occupational therapists use occupation in practice.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Justify occupational therapy practice in the analysis, use, adaptation, and manipulation of occupations.
2. Analyse occupational impacts within practice settings.
3. Apply the concepts of occupation to people and populations.

Informing Practice: Environment - Semester 2

This course enables learners to critically analyse the multifaceted nature of environments and how occupational therapists work with and within environments.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate the features of multiple environments in relation to occupation.
2. Analyse the interrelationship between environment, self and others.
3. Justify occupational therapy practice in the analysis, use, adaptation, and manipulation of environments.

Fieldwork 3 - Semester 2

This course enables learners to apply specific occupational therapy skills and knowledge within the practice setting and demonstrate adequate professional behaviours and attitudes.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Justify occupational therapy practice within the local context using evidence-informed practice.
2. Demonstrate the ability to practice occupational therapy at an *adequate level across identified areas of competence within the placement(s) setting.

YEAR THREE

Professional Reasoning - Semester 1

This course enables learners to apply professional reasoning to complex situations.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to use professional reasoning to:

1. Critique and evaluate a range of sources of evidence to justify practice decisions.
2. Critically analyse the interrelatedness of occupational therapy practice within complex practice situations.
3. Justify and negotiate ethical dilemmas within occupational therapy practice.

Complexity in Practice: Person - Semester 1

The course enables learners to implement occupational therapy intervention and consolidate their professional reasoning in relation to a person's concept of self.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Implement and justify appropriate occupational therapy intervention through the evaluation of the person's wellbeing and capacity in complex situations.
2. Justify intervention in relation to occupational justice and human rights.

Complexity in Practice: Occupation - Semester 1

This course enables learners to utilise their professional reasoning to justify and implement occupation in complex situations.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate the interrelationship between occupation, environment, self and, others in complex situations.
2. Design and apply occupation in relation to the needs of individuals and communities.

Complexity in Practice: Environment - Semester 1

The course will allow learners to critically evaluate how complex environments inform their professional reasoning.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate occupational therapy practice in the analysis, use, adaptation, and manipulation of complex environmental situations.
2. Apply the relevant legislation, policy and guidelines that inform professional reasoning.

Fieldwork 4 - Semester 2

This course enables learners to demonstrate competence through consistent application of occupational therapy skills and knowledge, within the practice setting, sustaining professional behaviours and attitudes at a consistent level.

At the successful completion of this placement, students will be able to:

1. Critique the role of the occupational therapist and occupational therapy using evidence informed practice within the local context.
2. Practice occupational therapy at a consistent level* across identified areas of competence within the placement(s) setting.

Fieldwork 5 - Semester 2

This course enables learners to apply occupational therapy knowledge and skills and sustain professional behaviours and attitudes at a consistent level.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Justify an occupational focus to selected health, well-being and community development initiatives.
2. Promote the role of the occupational therapist and the profession's domain of concern using evidence informed practice within the local context.
3. Practice occupational therapy within a defined population at a consistent level* across identified areas of competence.

Transition: Negotiated Learning (elective) - Semester 2

This course is designed for participants to undertake individualised study, which focuses in-depth on a selected topic in occupational therapy.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate literature on a selected topic relevant to occupational therapy practice and its significance to bicultural New Zealand.
2. Construct a personal occupational identity within bicultural New Zealand.
3. Apply appropriate tikaka/tikanga of the marae.

Transition: Showcase (elective) - Semester 2

This course enables learners to be competent, reflective occupational therapy practitioners transitioning into entry level occupational therapist roles in bicultural New Zealand.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate literature for occupational therapy practice.
2. Construct a personal occupational identity within bicultural New Zealand.
3. Apply appropriate tikaka/tikanga of the marae.

Student loans/allowances

Student loans and allowances are for domestic students only. For information about student loans and allowances please visit the Studylink website. It is important to apply for your student loan/allowance at the same time as you apply for this programme, due to the length of time Studylink take to process.

Loan/allowance applications can be cancelled at any time if you decide to withdraw your programme application or if it is unsuccessful.

Disclaimer

While every effort is made to ensure that this sheet is accurate, Otago Polytechnic reserves the right to amend, alter or withdraw any of the contained information. The fees shown in this document are indicative ONLY. Both domestic and international fees are subject to change and are dependent on the development and implementation of Government policies. Please note that additional fees may from time to time be required for external examination, NZQA fees and/or additional material fees.