

Policy

October 2025

Orientation to the Australian healthcare system requirements for internationally qualified occupational therapists granted general registration

Purpose

The Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (the Board) requires all internationally qualified occupational therapists (IQOTs) successfully complete a Board-approved orientation to the Australian healthcare system. This must be completed within three months of starting practice in Australia.

The purpose of the orientation to the Australian healthcare system is to ensure an effective transition for IQOTs into Australian occupational therapy practice and to help IQOTs familiarise themselves with:

- the structure of the Australian healthcare system
- Australia's legislation and professional practice requirements
- professional development requirements
- cultural diversity
- social context of care, and
- local health service and employer policies and procedures.

Who this policy is for

This policy applies to IQOTs who are granted general registration by the Board.

This policy does not apply to:

- occupational therapists who are granted general registration by the Board under the Commonwealth [Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997](#), or
- occupational therapists who are granted general registration by the Board and have completed an [approved program of study](#).

Background

The Board and Ahpra are working to ensure that health practitioners are supported with appropriate training to familiarise and prepare themselves for safe practice in the Australian health system, regardless of their registration pathway.

This was a recommendation from the *Final Report of the Independent Review of Health Practitioner Regulatory Settings*, led by Ms Robyn Kruk AO.

While this work is being finalised, the Board has endorsed a transitional approach that enables practitioners to show they have completed a Board-approved orientation to the Australian healthcare system.

Minimum requirements

The Board expects all new registrants are properly introduced to how the profession is practised in Australia.

The Board has developed an [orientation checklist](#) for IQOTs which outlines the minimum requirements of an orientation. The checklist must be completed by the IQOT and submitted to the Board as evidence they have completed a Board-approved orientation to the Australian healthcare system.

Mode of delivery

Orientation must be completed:

- Under the supervision of an occupational therapist who holds current unrestricted general registration and has held general registration for at least three consecutive years. This person is referred to as the **supervising occupational therapist**.
- With the supervising occupational therapist and IQOT one-on-one, i.e. not in a group situation.
- Either face-to-face or by video conferencing.
- In Australia.

Evidence

IQOTs must submit a completed orientation checklist to the Board within three months of starting practise in Australia. The checklist must be co-signed the supervising occupational therapist.

Document history

Approved by: Occupational Therapy Board of Australia, 28 October 2025

Date commenced: October 2025

Next review due: 3-years

Document control table

Approval date	Version	Reason for change