

THE NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION (NOTCE)

What is the National Occupational Therapy Certification Exam?

The National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination is a mandatory requirement of registration with the College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba (COTM). This exam is administered by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) and is commonly referred to as the NOTCE. See <http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=424> for more information.

The examination ensures that all individuals entering the profession of occupational therapy have met a minimum standard in the written application of academic knowledge and professional behavior.

Can I begin working as an occupational therapist before I write the exam?

You must be registered with the COTM before you begin any type of occupational therapy practice, including orientation to a new position, volunteer work as an OT, or work as an OT in a non-traditional setting. You cannot be on the COTM Register of Practising Members until you have passed the examination.

If you have established your eligibility to write the examination, and you are registered to write the exam or you are waiting for your exam results, you may be eligible for registration on the COTM Register of Provisional Members as an examination candidate. Exam candidates who have met all of the other requirements of registration must practise with Level 1 supervision if their education was in Canada or Level 2 supervision if their education was outside of Canada. (Refer to Supervised Practice Fact Sheet for more information)

When should I write the exam?

You may write the exam before you register with COTM or at the first available opportunity after you become provisionally registered. If there is a very good reason, you may be able to get permission from COTM to defer writing the exam until a more suitable time.

What happens if I fail the NOTCE? Can I still work as an occupational therapist?

If you fail the NOTCE on the first attempt, you must practice with Level 3 supervision for the remainder of the time you are provisionally registered with COTM. You must develop a learning contract with your supervisor and have a plan to work on the areas of difficulty identified in your exam results. You must apply to re-write the exam at the next available opportunity.

What happens if I fail the NOTCE more than once?

If you fail the exam a second time, you can continue to practise with supervision and attempt to write the exam one more time. If you fail the exam for a third time, your provisional registration with COTM will be cancelled as soon as COTM receives notification of the failure. After that, you cannot practise occupational therapy in Manitoba until you have passed the exam. After passing the exam, you can reapply for registration with COTM.

I have written the exam while living in another province. Does this count?

Yes, you must report all previous exam attempts to COTM when you apply for registration. You are eligible for provisional registration until you have failed the exam three times, including all previous attempts.

Can I keep working as a provisional registrant once I pass the NOTCE?

No, you must send your exam results to COTM within 30 days of receiving the results. COTM will then move your name to the Register of Practising Members. If COTM does not receive your exam results within 30 days, your provisional registration will be cancelled, and you will no longer be able to practise occupational therapy in Manitoba until you complete the registration process.

What resources are there for preparing to write the NOTCE?

- National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE): Exam Procedures Manual
Resource prepared by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists, the developers of the NOTCE. This text can be ordered from CAOT or obtained online at <http://www.caot.ca/pdfs/Exam/ExamProMan10.pdf> .
- National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE): Resource Manual
Resource prepared by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists, the developers of the NOTCE. This text can be ordered from CAOT or obtained online at <http://www.caot.ca/pdfs/Exam/ExamResMan10.pdf>
- Occupational Therapy Exam Preparation Program (OTepp)
This new mixed-delivery program is offered by McMaster University. The intent of the program is to assist internationally educated occupational therapists prepare to write the national certification exam. More information is available online at <http://www.OTepp.ca>
- Orientation to Canadian Health Care Systems, Culture and Context
Resource offered by for immigrant health care professions who are not yet registered to practice in Canada. Workshops available in specific locations across Canada, online

program may be offered in 2008. See <http://www.iehpcanada.utoronto.ca/index.html> for details.

- Trial Occupational Therapy Exam Manual (TOTEM) and the Trial Occupational Therapy Exam (TOTE)
This web based resource provides sample questions and answers as well as practice questions. It is aimed to help exam candidates become familiar with the exam format.
Available for purchase at <http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=4165>
- The CAOT Occupational Therapy Exam Module (OTEM)
An online group that assists candidates to prepare for the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE) through online discussion of practice questions.
Register on line at <http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=4238>

If I use these resources to study for the exam, will I be sure to succeed?

Engaging in all of the programs available will be quite costly and may not be necessary for many applicants. Please consider which of the exam preparation resources best meets your needs.

For more information, please contact COTM at (204) 957-1214 or by email at OTinfo@cotm.ca

This publication is provided for general information. For more specific information see
The Essential Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada,
The COTM Code of Ethics for Occupational Therapists and
The Occupational Therapists Act and Regulation.
COTM publications are available on our website at www.cotm.ca