

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY– CAREER SNAPSHOT

Study Opportunities

Considering studying Occupational Therapy at JCU? Then check out: [Occupational Therapy - JCU Australia](#)

Clarify your study goals

Prepare yourself for the new world of work by exploring the careers that match your skills and interests. [The Good Careers Guide](#)

Graduate Opportunities

The Occupational Therapy program at JCU combines the study of health science, health promotion and occupational therapy professional practice. *There is a special focus on occupational therapy in rural and remote settings.* Students gain experience working with clients in urban, rural and remote locations, undertaking more than 1,000 hours of professional work experience across the course of the degree.

Occupational Therapists assess the functional limitations of people resulting from illness and disabilities and provide therapy to enable people to perform their daily activities and occupations. This includes assisting people in overcoming challenges caused by injury or illness, psycho-emotional difficulties, developmental delay, aging, and environmental and contextual issues. Occupational therapists work with people across the lifespan and aim to promote health and well-being, prevent injury and build or restore independence through participation in meaningful occupation.

The World Federation of Occupational Therapists state *“in occupational therapy, occupations refer to the everyday activities that people do as individuals, in families and with communities to occupy time and bring meaning and purpose to life. Occupations include things people need to, want to and are expected to do.”*

Occupational Therapy is a client-centred and holistic health profession.

Working as an occupational therapist offers enormous satisfaction as you help to promote participation in meaningful occupation and, subsequently, health and well-being for people throughout their lives. The number of jobs in Occupational Therapy has continued to grow over the years, with a projected growth of 7.4% in employment by 2026.

Source: [Labour Market Insights](#)

Occupational Therapy graduates are employed in the following types of settings:

- Public and private hospitals
- Acute and community rehabilitation units
- Hand therapy services
- Community health centres
- Aged care facilities
- Acute and community mental health services
- Palliative care
- Schools and other education settings
- Independent living centres
- Private practice/general practices
- Research and evaluation

JCU Graduates Employment Data

The [James Cook University LinkedIn](#) page, you can drill down to alumni with your major. Investigate their LinkedIn profiles to identify their career paths following completion of their studies, including job titles and current and past employers.

The top five Employers of JCU graduates listed on LinkedIn are:

- Queensland Health
- James Cook University
- RAR Therapy
- opportunOTy
- BHP

(Retrieved January 2024)

Explore more about our Labour markets. [Jobs and Skills Australia -- Home](#)

Registration

All Occupational Therapists working in Australia are required to be registered to practice. This registration process is the legislative responsibility of the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and is operated through the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (OTBA).

The AHPRA website contains a directory of all registered occupational therapists in Australia. The JCU Occupational Therapy course is accredited by the Occupational Therapy Council (Australia and New Zealand) Ltd.

Professional Associations

Professional Associations and peak bodies represent different professions and industries and assist with maintaining professionalism through accreditation, professional development opportunities, networking, advocacy and representation to government and other sectors.

Join [Occupational Therapy Australia](#) for access to newsletters, advertised jobs, conferences networking events, etc. Undergraduate students join for free*.

Volunteering

Volunteering can give you more exposure to areas of professional interest, such as working with children, refugees, return to work services, defence personnel, educational settings, etc.

It's also an opportunity to give to the community, grow your professional and community networks and demonstrate extra commitment to future employers and clients.

Hospital systems

- [Brighter Lives at Townsville Hospital](#)
- [Mater Health Services](#)

Community

- [Volunteering North Queensland](#)
- [Townsville Community Directory](#)

Overseas volunteering

A wide range of projects can be found by researching “allied health volunteering overseas”. Most of these projects will be coordinated via companies that will organise your experience for a fee and before becoming involved it’s important to be aware of the ethical considerations surrounding your experience.

To choose wisely, consider:

- Choosing a cause, you are passionate about and then research the opportunities thoroughly.
- Lend your strengths by selecting projects where you can add real value.
- Choose organisations that partner with local employers.
- Choose projects that offer sustainable development.

More info can be found in [this post](#) by World Vision.

Employability

Your course provides a safe environment to develop your **clinical knowledge and skills** specific to being an OT.

It also teaches you the **transferrable skills** required to be effective, such as working in multidisciplinary teams; high-level communication skills like teaching/demonstrating, coaching and building rapport; accurate report writing, analytical thinking; and developing good working relationships with patients’ families, amongst other things.

A combination of technical and transferable [skills demonstrated through part-time jobs](#) **extra-curricular experiences** and workplace-related experiences within your course will support you in developing the skills, experiences and knowledge that employers look for in graduates.

Track your experience

As an OT, you’ll need to track and reflect on your professional development for registration purposes. Maintaining clear records of your professional learning experiences as a student will also support the development of high-quality job applications. Health services often promote their guiding values on company websites, and these offer a useful guide for categorizing your experiences and demonstrating your suitability to their roles through organizational fit. For example, Townsville Hospital’s values are Collaboration, Accountability, Respect, Excellence and Through the eyes of the patient. You might highlight State Emergency Service volunteer roles that align with core values and demonstrate examples of when you’ve applied them in dealing with the public during disaster relief.

Enterprise and innovation

Health care is the fastest growing industry in Australia and innovation can improve service delivery as well as develop new assistive technologies for patients. To read more about future trends in healthcare, see [The Medical Futurist](#) and [Careers with Health](#) online magazine.

JCU offers a range of free online courses on entrepreneurship, for example: [LinkedIn Learning](#); e.g. Guy Kawasaki on Entrepreneurship; Small Business Secrets; Entrepreneurship Foundations; Become an Entrepreneur inside a Company etc.

Job Opportunities

A range of websites list job opportunities for OTs:

- [Queensland Health](#)
- [Queensland Govt Grad Portal](#)
- [Hays Healthcare](#)
- [Medijobs](#)
- [Medical Jobs Australia](#)
- [Medacs Health Care](#)
- [Health Care People](#)
- [Seek](#)
- [Glassdoor](#)
- [Workplace Rehabilitation Jobs Board](#)
- [CareerHub](#).

Job opportunities are often posted on employer websites, for example

- [Kinnect](#)
- [Allied Connect](#)
- [North and West Regional Health](#)
- Online sites : LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter feeds.

Get connected

Keeping in touch with placement supervisors and staff will ensure you’re informed of job openings when they occur, or sometimes before they are advertised.

Use LinkedIn

Investigate [JCU Alumni LinkedIn](#) profiles to identify career pathways and current and past employers of JCU Physiotherapy graduates and connect or follow them.

Follow employers of choice and **industry bodies** to ensure you don’t miss their updates and job listings, e.g. Queensland Health, Queensland Department of Education and Training, AHPRA, Australian Physiotherapy Association etc.

JCU Careers Resources

As a student, consider accessing JCU Careers resources and be job ready by developing your Employability skills.

[Careers and Employability - JCU Australia](#)

Build your employability skills and fine tune your Application Skills

- **Résumés**
- **Application Documents**
- **Interviews**
- **LinkedIn**



For further ideas access [Career Ready Plan](#)