

New ACOTE Accreditation Standards Adopted

After an extensive 2 ½-year process, multiple surveys to the communities of interest, and several open hearings, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) has adopted new accreditation standards for doctoral-degree-level occupational therapy programs, master's-degree-level occupational therapy programs, baccalaureate-degree-level occupational therapy assistant programs, and associate-degree-level occupational therapy assistant programs. The new Standards are available on the ACOTE accreditation section of the AOTA Web site (www.acoteonline.org). Programs will be required to comply with the new 2018 Standards by July 31, 2020.

In addition, ACOTE voted to allow early implementation of two doctoral-level Standards as programs would like to develop their curricula to reflect the new Standards to better address the needs of their faculty and students and for strategic planning purposes. Specifically,

1. Allow programs to waive the requirement in 2011 Standard A.3.2 for program applicants to hold a baccalaureate degree or higher prior to admission to the program.
2. Allow OTD programs to have a 14-week Capstone Experience (2018 Standard D.1.3) versus a 16-week Capstone Experience (2011 Standard C.2.3).

ACOTE will host information sessions on the new Standards at the October 2018 Academic Leadership Council (ALC) meeting in Louisville, Kentucky and at the April 2019 AOTA Annual Conference and Expo in New Orleans. In the spring and fall of 2019, ACOTE will provide regional workshops for interested faculty. The workshops will focus on the changes in the new Standards and strategies that programs could use to ensure compliance.

Update on Entry-Level Education

At the August 2018 meeting, ACOTE took the following actions:

ACOTE ACTION:

Lift the abeyance on the OTA mandate decision and rescind the mandate for a single point of entry for the occupational therapy assistant at the baccalaureate degree level.

ACOTE ACTION:

Reaffirm the decision from August 2017 to require a single point of entry for the occupational therapist at the doctoral level.

ACOTE has acted in the best interests of all parties with the decision for a single point of entry for the occupational therapist and the dual point of entry for the occupational therapy assistant. ACOTE will continue to support educational programs to meet the growing needs of society and fulfill its potential in the 21st century. We look forward to working with educational programs to ensure quality occupational therapy education by supporting the preparation of competent occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants. ACOTE will notify our stakeholders as these decisions impact their work and transition processes.

Any questions should be e-mailed to accred@aota.org.