

ACOTE® Statement on Requests for an Abeyance of the Mandate that the Entry-Level Degree Requirement for the Occupational Therapist Move to the Doctoral Level

December 6, 2017

At its November 30–December 3, 2017, meeting, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) received letters of request for an abeyance of the ACOTE mandate that the entry-level degree requirement for the occupational therapist will move to the doctoral level by July 1, 2027.

ACOTE members reviewed the process and timeline that led to the decision to mandate the entry-level doctoral degree. The members noted that the question of the entry-level degree requirements has been debated in the profession for well over 10 years and has been reviewed and discussed in every ACOTE meeting since publication of the recommendation in the AOTA Future of Education Ad Hoc Committee report in 2013. At each meeting, ACOTE members have reviewed reports, surveys, letters, petitions, publications, and proceedings from open hearings reflecting the issue from multiple stakeholder groups. In addition, ACOTE noted that at this time 83 program locations are applicant, candidate, or accredited doctoral-level programs, representing 30% of the occupational therapy entry-level programs.

Given the deliberate process undertaken to ensure input from stakeholder groups in determining the mandate that the entry-level degree requirement for the occupational therapist will move to the doctoral level by July 1, 2027, ACOTE members have decided to uphold the mandate as published.