

College of Western Idaho
Department of Health Professions
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program

Documentation of Observation Hours

As part of your prerequisite requirements for the OTA program, you are required to complete an observation of occupational therapy practice, either face-to-face, online, or a combination of the two. Through observation, you will gain a broader understanding of the scope and practice of occupational therapy. If you choose the face-to-face or the combination option, you will use the observation form to document your experience. Face-to-face observation can be of an occupational therapist or an occupational therapy assistant. It is recommended that you initiate and complete this process as soon as possible as it must be completed prior to applying for the program.

Occupational therapy practitioners work in a large variety of settings. You must complete your observation hours in at least two different settings, serving two different populations. If you do not complete observation in two different settings and two different populations, even though you may get the minimum required hours, you will forfeit points on your application. All hours spent in observation must be documented using the form that follows. Paid work hours cannot be counted toward observation.

Ensure that the OT supervising the observation attests the total hours by signature. You are required to complete all observation hours prior to applying to the program. Submit all observation documentation with your application and retain copies for your own file.

Responsibility of arranging observation hours is solely that of the student and not that of the OTA program. Please see the OTA Program Director with any questions.

Both observation experiences have required writing elements that will be submitted with the application. In the online experience, you will note writing prompts required with each module. The student may use these to fuel the writing element, but you will not hand this in with the application. Instead, **after completing either observation experience**, the student will write a 1-2 page paper addressing what they have learned and taken away from the experience.

Important reminders regarding **face-to-face observation**:

- You must call and arrange observation with facility.
- Be mindful of the fact that you are not only representing yourself, but the CWI OTA program.
- Dress professionally: Do not wear excessive make-up or jewelry; no perfume or cologne; cover all tattoos; be early for your appointment.
- If you must cancel, call and inform the site as soon as possible.
- Minimize conversations during observation; be mindful of professionalism with behavior and conversation.

- Do not complete observation at a current or prior place of employment.
- Do not make physical contact with patients, you are observing only.
- Upon completion of observation, remember to send a thank you note to the OT practitioner.

Important reminders regarding **online observation experience**:

The virtual option for completing observation hours is found in the Quinnipiac University Online Shadowing Program for Occupational Therapy Program Application modules. This option is comprised of 6 online modules and can be located at the following link:

[Occupational Therapy Online Shadowing Experience](#)

The password for this experience is LucasQU (case sensitive).

