Guidance on applying for a pre-registration Masters degree in occupational therapy

Introduction:
This guidance is aimed at people who are interested in studying a pre-registration Masters degree in occupational therapy. You can find a list of Universities who offer a pre-registration Masters degree in our careers handbook.

Please note that this is guidance only and for specific up to date information you should contact the Universities.

What is a pre-registration Masters degree?
A pre-registration Masters degree (MSc pre-registration) is aimed at allowing people who already have a Bachelors degree to study to become occupational therapists. People who have already qualified with a BSc in occupational therapy need to study for a post-registration Masters (MSc post-registration).

What are the entry qualifications for an MSc pre-registration?
Each University varies in terms of entry requirements for a pre-registration MSc. You must already have a bachelor’s degree. Some Universities will ask that you have a bachelor’s degree in a specific subjects relating to occupational therapy and that your degree has a certain classification. You still may be required to have certain grades for specific GCSE subjects. Check the Universities website for information on this or contact the Universities directly.

Are pre-registration Masters degrees funded?
Some pre-registration MScs are funded by the NHS. If a pre-registration MSc is funded by the NHS, then you may also be entitled to a means tested bursary which you do not have to pay back. Details on the NHS Bursary can be found here: http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/816.aspx

Some pre-reg MScs are self-funding. Contact the Universities directly or look at their websites for more information on funding.
**How many placements are involved?**

You will be required to complete 1,000 hours of practice placement as required by the College of Occupational Therapists and the World Federation of Occupational Therapists. You are generally required to attend placement in a range of settings. Each University will vary in how many placements you will attend and in which settings, so it is best to contact the Universities directly to enquire about this.

**Are there any restrictions to studying an MSc pre-registration?**

Most Universities will expect you to show evidence of an academic achievement within, on average, the last five years, though some may allow for a longer period. It is best to check with each University directly.

**The application process:**

Applications are generally made to the University directly, though some will need to be made through UCAS. You will need two references, check with the Universities about suitable references. You will also need to write a personal statement. The University will read your personal statement to ensure that you are right for the course, therefore you need to outline why you are interested in studying a pre-registration Masters degree in occupational therapy. In your personal statement, you should write about any work or life experiences which would contribute to the course. You should also write about your previous study experience.

If you have met all of the entry requirements for the course and the University can see from your personal statement that you are suited for the course, the next stage may be going for an interview. However, meeting all of the entry criteria does not necessarily mean that you will be invited for an interview. Masters courses are very popular and there is generally a high level of competition.

In preparation for an interview, make sure that you have thoroughly researched the role of the occupational therapist and of occupational therapy. You should also research the current issues in health and social care.

You may participate in a group interview, an individual interview or both. Group interviews are conducted to enable the interview panel to see how you communicate with others.
Useful contacts

If you would like more information about applying for a pre-registration MSc in occupational therapy, then you can contact the following staff at COT:

Education Intern:
E-mail: education.intern@cot.co.uk
Telephone: 020 7450 5469

Anita Volkert, Education Manager Policy (Pre-Registration)
E-mail: anita.volkert@cot.co.uk
Telephone: 020 7450 2351

Useful reading
