



Te Poari o ngā Kaimātai Whatu me ngā Kaiwahakarato Mōhiti

Consultation Paper

**Inclusion of the University of Western Australia,
Doctor of Optometry,
in the list of accredited programmes for
registration in the Optometry scope of practice
(Pathway 1 - Optometrist)**

21 December 2022

Introduction

1. The Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board (ODOB, the Board) is responsible under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act) for ensuring that optometrists and dispensing opticians are competent and fit to practise when they apply for registration. Section 118 of the HPCA Act requires the Board to prescribe the qualifications required for scopes of practice, and for that purpose, to accredit and monitor education institutions, degrees, courses of studies or programmes.
2. The current prescribed qualifications for registration in the Optometrist scope of practice includes that the applicant must:¹

hold a primary optometry degree from a New Zealand or Australian university accredited by the Board for the purposes of registration in New Zealand, and published on the Board's website (Pathway 1 – "Optometrist")

3. Currently, there are seven accredited optometry programmes recognised for *Pathway 1 – Optometrist* which are published on the ODOB website:²

Table 1: A summary of accredited providers and their programmes, recognised for registration in the Optometry scope of practice with the ODOB

Education provider	Qualification	Programme status	Approval end date
1. Deakin University	Bachelor of Vision Science / Master of Optometry (3.5 years)	Accredited	31/07/2027
2. Flinders University	Bachelor of Medical Science (Vision Science) / Master of Optometry (3 years + 2 years)	Accredited with conditions	30/06/2030
3. Queensland University of Technology	Bachelor of Vision Science / Master of Optometry (5 years)	Accredited	31/12/2030
4. University of Auckland	Bachelor of Optometry (5 years)	Accredited with conditions	31/12/2025
5. University of Canberra	Bachelor of Vision Science / Master of Optometry Program (5 years (3+2 years))	Accredited with conditions	30/04/2023
6. University of Melbourne	Doctor of Optometry (OD) (4 years)	Accredited	31/12/2023
7. University of New South Wales	Bachelor of Vision Science / Masters of Clinical Optometry (5 years)	Accredited with one Condition	31/12/2027

4. The purpose of this paper is to seek any feedback or comments on the inclusion of an additional accredited programme in the list recognised for *Pathway 1 – Optometrist* published on the ODOB website.

¹ See the Gazette notice, nr 2020-gs5669, published 8 December 2020. Available at: <https://gazette.govt.nz/assets/pdf-cache/2020/2020-gs5669.pdf>.

² At the time of this consultation process the Board's website is experiencing issues due to a cyber-attack involving one of its IT providers. The website will be restored as soon as practicable. Please contact the ODOB Office if you need more information (Email: registrar@odob.health.nz).

University of Western Australia, Doctor of Optometry (DOpt)

5. The ODOB has a memorandum of understanding with the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ) to administer the accreditation process of optometry programmes on the ODOB's behalf. Even though this process is administered by OCANZ, the ODOB remains responsible for accrediting all programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand, and to recognise the prescribed qualifications for registration in the Optometry scope of practice.
6. OCANZ has a two-stage accreditation process which first involves the assessment of a preliminary submission outlining the case for the establishment of an optometry programme, and secondly an evaluation of the extent to which the programme complies with OCANZ Standards set out in *the Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide for Entry-Level Optometry Programs, Part 2 – Standards* (January 2017).
7. In January 2020, the University of Western Australia (UWA) submitted a Stage 1 submission for the proposed new Doctor of Optometry (DOpt) programme. In a report dated July 2020 OCANZ decided that the application should proceed to a Stage 2 assessment.
8. In October 2021, UWA provided its Stage 2 accreditation submission, addressing each of the Accreditation standards and providing associated evidence, as outlined in the *OCANZ Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide*, as well as a wide range of additional evidence. The assessment team evaluated the submission and conducted a virtual site visit in November 2021 (due to COVID-19 border restrictions).
9. In March 2022, OCANZ advised the ODOB that OCANZ endorsed the assessment team's *Stage 2 Accreditation Report of the Doctor of Optometry Programme, of the School of Allied Health, University of Western Australia* (January 2022). This included their recommendation that:
 - accreditation (with conditions) is granted until 30 June 2024, provided there are no material changes to the programme during this period.
 - the conditions relate to Standard 3, Programme of study and Standard 5, Assessment and requires the discipline to provide further information in upcoming reports to OCANZ regarding programme design, delivery, resourcing and assessment to enable students to achieve the required professional competencies, and
 - the assessment team will conduct a site visit in early 2023 in order to assess physical facilities.
10. The Accreditation report summary/Executive summary is available on the OCANZ website³ but is also attached as Appendix 1 for ease of reference.
11. The accreditation of the UWA's Doctor of Optometry programme was considered at the Board meeting of 6 June 2022. The Board requested further information from OCANZ and

³ https://www.ocanz.org/assets/Accreditation-Reports/dc59cea19b/UWA-Executive-Summary-April-2022_FINAL.docx.pdf

this was received in August 2022. At its meeting on 23 September 2022, the Board considered all the relevant information, and resolved to:

- approve the OCANZ assessment team’s recommendation, and
- accredit the UWA Doctor of Optometry Programme (with conditions) and for the same period.

12. Reasons for its decision were that:

- OCANZ considered that UWA’s Doctor of Optometry Programme meets the OCANZ accreditation standards.
- The UWA programme will be subject to monitoring requirements including site visits early 2023 and 2024, and progress reports addressing accreditation conditions. The Board will be provided with reports.
- The Board is satisfied with the OCANZ Accreditation report and the recommendation of the OCANZ Accreditation team.
- The assessment followed the process and procedures described in the OCANZ publication *Accreditation Procedures Guide* (Appendix 2). It was based on OCANZ’s *Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide for Entry-Level Optometry Programs, Part 2 – Standards* (Appendix 3).

13. The ODOB now proposes to include the accredited University of Western Australia Doctor of Optometry programme in the list recognised for *Pathway 1 – Optometrist* published on the ODOB website. Once the accredited UWA programme is included in this list on the Board’s website it will be a **prescribed qualification** for the purpose of registration in the Optometrist scope of practice (*Pathway 1 – Optometrist*). Subject to consideration of any submissions in response to this proposal, the UWA Doctor of Optometry Programme would be added to the list from 1 March 2023.

Have your say

14. If you wish to make a submission on the Board’s proposal, please provide this in writing by **5.00 pm on 31 January 2023**. The Board does not guarantee that submissions received at the Board’s offices after that date will be considered.

15. Submissions can be emailed to registrar@odob.health.nz. or submitted via post at:

The Registrar
Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board
PO Box 9644
Wellington 6141

Appendices

16. The list of appendices below:

Appendix 1	Accreditation report summary/Executive summary of the Doctor of Optometry Programme offered at the University of Western Australia
Appendix 2	<i>OCCANZ Accreditation Procedures Guide</i>
Appendix 3	<i>OCCANZ Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide for Entry-Level Optometry Programs, Part 2 – Standards</i>