



Optometry Council of  
Australia and New Zealand

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## Appendix B: Skills Station Examination - Information

This document provides additional information for candidates undertaking the Skills Station examination component of the OCANZ Competency in Optometry Examination.

### ARRIVAL

Make sure that you arrive at least 30 minutes before the scheduled examination time. Examinations start at the scheduled time whether you are there or not, and you will not receive additional time if you are late.

On arrival for the examination, please sit in the patient waiting area. You will be collected by the examination coordinator and asked to sign in and collect your name badge. Your name badge must be worn before you enter the examination and all the time thereafter so that the assessors know who they are examining, and so that building security knows you are a verified visitor. Please leave your name badge at the venue at the end of the examination.

### STANDARD OF DRESS

Dress and personal hygiene must be to a professional standard.

### EQUIPMENT

Only “required” and “optional” equipment can be brought into the examination by the candidate. You must keep all your personal equipment together in a limited area when you are inside the exam room. It is important that you label all your personal equipment and that you keep it separate from equipment provided by the examination venue. You must take all your equipment with you as you move between stations. The examination venue is unable to manage any lost property that does not have your name on it.

**Required equipment:** Candidates must provide themselves with a retinoscope (any model, streak or spot is permitted, a battery-operated instrument is preferred), inter-pupillary distance (p.d.) rule, cover-paddle (60mm diameter minimum is recommended, this diameter will reduce the stimulus to fusion during the cover test), pen torches, and pens (writing and lens marking). This equipment is not provided by the examination venue. Please make sure that the equipment is charged. You will not be able to charge required equipment at the examination venue.

**Optional equipment:** Candidates may supply their own gonioscopes and their own fundus lenses (as long as the fundus lens is not a digital wide-field lens). If not supplied by the candidate, this equipment will be provided by the examination venue.

**Provided equipment:** The equipment provided by the examination venue at each station is outlined later in this document.

### RECORDING SHEETS

Recording sheets will be laid out on the bench in each examination room.

## PROCESS

Prior to the examination there should be no communication with the examiner. If communication has occurred, the examiner will notify the examination coordinator of its nature and extent. A replacement examiner may be necessary if the examination process has been compromised.

Prior to the start of the examination at each station the examination coordinator will ask you to enter the room and the examiner will:

- (i) direct you to place your equipment in a designated location,
- (ii) point out the recording sheet,
- (iii) indicate the location of equipment and facilities specifically provided for that station.

When the start of the time period at the station is signalled you may begin the tasks required to demonstrate the skill by washing your hands.

During the examination you should:

- (i) Instruct and communicate with the subject as is appropriate for the skill being demonstrated,
- (ii) Respond to instructions or questions provided by the examiner,
- (iii) Provide the examiner with a narrative about what you are doing or seeing **if** this is indicated in the instructions for the individual skill – see below.

If you are required to inform the examiner about what you are doing or what you are observing, but fail to do so, the examiner will remind you of that need.

If you are still working when the time allocated for the station has finished, you must stop immediately. The examiner will remind you to stop if you don't. You may NOT continue with any examination and may NOT do any recording of findings once the time at that station has expired. You should immediately gather your equipment and you will be directed when to move to the next station.

Please note that the examiners at each station cannot provide you with any results or any feedback.

If the examiner has any concern about subject safety, they may ask you to stop the procedure that is causing safety issues in that skill. Should this occur, you may NOT re-start, or complete any of the procedures involved in that particular skill. You may however begin the second skill being examined at that station if that skill has not already been completed.

Once all six stations are complete, you will be directed to exit the Skills Station examination area and move to the location that is nominated by the examination venue.

## TIMING

Do not start an examination until the start time has been signalled. When the stop time is signalled you must stop what you are doing. This includes stopping the writing of records.

There is a central time keeping system with a timer clock. The timekeeper provides verbal warnings at 15 minutes, 5 minutes to go, and at the end.

If you complete a skill station before the 30 minutes available time, you must wait in the room until the time is up. You must not move to the next station early. Most examination rooms are adjacent to each other, and you will be directed when to move between the stations.

## RECORDING OF RESULTS

All results must be recorded. If a recording error is made, this should be crossed out in a manner that allows the original entry to be read. The correct finding should be written legibly nearby. DO NOT over-write a finding recorded in error. Each recording sheet should be signed by the candidate.

## **FEEDBACK AND RESULTS**

The examination coordinator and examiners cannot provide feedback about performance. Notifications come only from OCANZ.

Overall results will be notified by telephone the morning after the Skills Station examination. If you sit a supplementary examination, you will be notified of the outcome of this by telephone within a few hours of the examination being completed. All candidates will be provided their overall results by email within one week of the examination being undertaken.

Failing candidates will receive written feedback, outlining the reasons for failure, by email within a month of the examination being undertaken.

All questions about the examination arrangements, processes, and progress must be directed to OCANZ.

## **PROCEDURE AT EACH SKILL**

The following pages provide information to assist you to complete the skills that are part of the current Skills Station examination.

## Station 1: A. Binocular Vision Assessment

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
1	A. Binocular vision assessment: (i) Cover test (ii) Heterophoria measurement (iii) Vergence testing	Prism bars, loose prisms, trial frame and lenses, trial lens occlude, refractor head, Maddox rod, Howell (Prentice) distance and near phoria cards, distance fixation target, distance fixation light source, near fixation targets.

### (i) Cover test

Use the cover test to examine, measure and diagnose the subject's binocular vision status at distance and at near.

Record all results using the appropriate notation.

Ensure that only objective measurements are obtained.

Information about the subject's distance and near prescription, inter-pupillary distance, and distance visual acuities will be given to you. The examiner will nominate what corrections will be worn by the subject during your measurements.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

Your communication with the subject is an important part of your demonstrating this skill.

Please provide your examiner with a brief narrative of what you are seeing.

**For the cover test, this brief narrative will relate to the eye movements that you observe at each stage of the examination.**

### (ii) Heterophoria measurement

Use an appropriate subjective method to measure the horizontal and vertical phorias of the subject at distance.

Use an appropriate subjective method to measure the horizontal and vertical phorias of the subject at near.

Record all results using the appropriate notation.

Information about the subject's distance and near prescription, inter-pupillary distance, and distance visual acuities will be given to you. The examiner will nominate what corrections will be worn by the subject during your measurements.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

For heterophoria measurement the examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and hear the subject's responses. **No narrative is required during this test.**

### (iii) Vergence testing at near

Use an appropriate method to measure the horizontal and vertical vergences of the subject at near.

Record all results using the appropriate notation.

Information about the subject's distance and near prescription, inter-pupillary distance, and distance visual acuities will be given to you. The examiner will nominate what correction will be worn by the subject during your measurements of near vergences.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

For vergence testing at near the examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and hear the subject's responses. **No narrative is required during this test.**

## Station 1: B. Distance Retinoscopy

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
1	B. Distance retinoscopy	Refractor head, trial frames, trial set lenses and prisms, internally-illuminated visual acuity charts or projected or screen-based visual acuity charts, disinfectant, tissues.

Use distance retinoscopy to determine the refractive error of both the right and left eyes of the subject.

Record the refractive findings in standard terminology.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

For Distance retinoscopy the examiner can observe your procedures and hear your instructions. Your examiner will be comparing your findings with findings that were determined earlier.

**No narrative is required during this test.**

## Station 2: C. Soft Contact Lenses

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
2	C. Soft contact lenses	Soft contact lens trial sets, Burton Lamp, Vital-dyes (stains), slit-lamp biomicroscope, contact lens cases, mirror, bowl, towels, contact lens cleaning, disinfection & storage solutions.

For the subject's eye selected by the examiner:

- Correctly measure the horizontal visible iris diameter.
- Select a suitable soft contact lens.
- Inspect and prepare the lens.
- Insert the lens on the nominated eye.
- Assess the fit of the lens shortly after insertion using slit-lamp biomicroscopy.
- Remove the lens.
- Record your observations about the suitability of the fit.
- Check the corneal integrity and manage appropriately (remember to record your findings and management).

The corneal curvature measurements of the subject will be given to you.

The examiner may ask you to pause your examination for a second or so from time to time to allow them to assess the view or views that you are obtaining with the biomicroscope.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

Your communication with the subject is an important part of your demonstrating this skill.

Please provide your examiner with a brief narrative of what you are seeing.

**For the soft contact lens skill, this brief narrative will relate to the soft lens characteristics that you observe at each stage of your work.**

## Station 2: D. Visual Field Assessment

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
2	D. Visual field assessment (i) Amsler grid testing (ii) Automated visual field testing (iii) Confrontation	Amsler Grids without instruction page, occluder, automated perimeters (Humphrey and Medmont), eye patch, confrontation target, sample visual field results for analysis.

### (i) Amsler grid testing

Instruct the subject in the performance of an Amsler grid test.

Perform the Amsler grid test for one eye of your subject.

Record the results.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

For Amsler Grid testing the examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and hear the subject's responses. **No narrative is required during this test.**

### (ii) Automated visual field testing

Set up your subject and begin measurements of the central visual field of one eye of your subject using the automated instrument provided.

The visual field instrument could be a Humphrey Visual Field Analyser or a Medmont Automated Perimeter. You will not be able to choose which instrument to use.

Pause the measurement after the nominated time.

View the printouts from a subject who has had visual fields measured previously.

Record your assessment of the validity of the test, your interpretation and analyses of the results on the record sheet.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

For Automated visual field measurement, the examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and hear the subject's responses. **No narrative is required during this test.**

### (iii) Confrontation

Measure the visual field of each eye of the subject to confrontation.

Record the findings.

Write your interpretation of the results on the record sheet.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

For confrontation testing the examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and hear the subject's responses. **No narrative is required during this test.**

### Station 3: E. Dispensing

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
3	E. Dispensing	Vertometer, lens thickness gauge, Geneva lens measure, pair of glasses with unknown lens type and unknown powers with some distance visual points marked, a summary of the relevant Australian Standards, selection of frames for the subject, fine point felt-tipped pens, transparent adhesive tape, pupillometer, multifocal centration chart.

For the pair of glasses provided to you:

- Measure and record the powers and axes for the right and left lenses.
- Measure and record the power of the near addition.
- Determine the lens design and record.
- Measure and record the optical centration.
- With reference to the subject's distance visual points marked on the lenses, measure any horizontal and vertical prism.
- Measure and record the base curves.
- Measure and record the centre thicknesses.
- Determine if the lenses are coated and record.
- Determine if the lenses are tinted and record.
- Check the quality of the lens edging and the fit of the lenses in the frames and record.
- Compare the lens parameters with the written prescription for that pair of glasses and record any problems identified that may mean the prescription may not meet the Australian/New Zealand standard (AS/NZS ISO 21987:2011).

For the subject waiting for you:

- Measure and record the subject's inter-pupillary distances.
- Assess the suitability of a spectacle frame having been provided with the subject's prescription.
- Determine the required parameters necessary for the correct positioning of progressive lenses. The prescription will have details of the progressive lens design to be ordered.
- Record the required positions of the centres and other details needed for fabrication of the progressive lenses.

What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:

For dispensing the examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and hear the subject's responses. **No narrative is required during this test.**

### Station 3: F. Contact Applanation Tonometry

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
3	F. Contact applanation tonometry	Sodium fluorescein dye, local anaesthetic, saline, disinfectant, applanation tonometers (Perkins and Goldmann), slit-lamp biomicroscope, tissues.

Examine your subject in preparation for contact applanation tonometry on one eye.

Note: Your examiner will tell you which eye is to be examined.

Prepare the tonometer and its probe.

Instil the topical anaesthetic and fluorescein.

Record the drugs administered appropriately.

Conduct contact applanation tonometry on that eye.

Record your findings including the outcomes of post tonometry testing and management.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

For the procedures involved in tonometry the examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and compare your results with known measurements.

For the post tonometry assessment your examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and view the cornea through the teaching eyepiece.

**No narrative is required during this test.**

## Station 4: G. Pupil Testing

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
4	G. Pupil Testing	Transilluminator or other source of high intensity light (e.g. binocular indirect ophthalmoscope), near fixation target, room with adjustable lighting to bright and dim.

Examine the subject's pupils.

Examine the pupil reflexes of the subject.

Use appropriate room illumination conditions and carefully directed local lighting if necessary.

Record the results.

What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:

Your communication with the subject is an important part of your demonstrating this skill.

Please provide your examiner with a brief narrative of what you are seeing.

**For the assessment of pupils and pupil reflexes, this brief narrative will relate to the observation you are making of the pupils.**

## Station 4: H. Subjective Refraction

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
4	H. Subjective refraction	Refractor head, trial frames, trial set lenses (including prisms and a set of 0.25 and 0.50 Jackson crossed cylinder (JCC) lenses), internally-illuminated visual acuity charts or projected or screen-based visual acuity charts, disinfectant, tissues.

Use subjective refraction techniques to determine the balanced refractive error of both the right and left eyes of the subject.

Record the refraction in standard terminology.

Measure the monocular and binocular acuities that the subject is able to obtain with the refraction results.

Record the acuity findings.

What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:

For subjective refraction the examiner can see what you are doing, listen to your instructions and hear the subject's responses. **No narrative is required during this test.**

## Station 5: I. Slit-Lamp Biomicroscopy

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
5	I. Slit-lamp biomicroscopy	Slit-lamp biomicroscope with observation system, sodium fluorescein dye, saline, cotton bud, disinfectant, tissues.

Use slit-lamp biomicroscopy to examine both eyes of your subject and record your observations.

Include in your examination the following and add targeted investigations of anything out of the ordinary that is found:

- Examine the lids, lashes, lid margins and adjacent tissues including the skin around the eyes.
- Examine the palpebral conjunctivae (including lid eversion of both upper and lower lids), and the bulbar conjunctivae.
- Examine the cornea (including inspection of the endothelium) using white light and the appropriate illumination methods and magnification settings.
- Assess the anterior chamber angles using the van Herick method.
- Examine the iris and the lens.
- Examine the anterior chamber including a screening for cells and flare.

The examiner may ask you to pause your examination for a second or so from time to time to allow them to assess the view or views that you are obtaining.

If a particular view is visible to you but not to the eyepiece that has the examiner's observation system connected, the examiner may ask you to move the view to the examiner's eyepiece.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

Your communication with the subject is an important part of your demonstrating this skill.

Please provide your examiner with a brief narrative of what you are seeing.

**For slit-lamp biomicroscopy, this brief narrative will relate to the structures you observe.**

## Station 5: J. Gonioscopy

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
5	J. Gonioscopy	Slit-lamp biomicroscope with observation system, local anaesthetic, disinfectant, tissues, interface (coupling) fluid, ocular lubricants, Goniolenses, sodium fluorescein dye, saline.

Prepare the goniolens to be used.

Note which one of the subject's eyes the examiner has asked you to examine.

Undertake a preliminary inspection of the corneal integrity of that eye using Sodium Fluorescein.

If the results of this inspection indicate it is safe to undertake gonioscopy, carry out an examination of the anterior segment using gonioscopy.

Instil the topical anaesthetic and record the drugs administered appropriately.

Systematically examine across all 4 quadrants, identify visible angle structures in each quadrant and describe to the examiner;

- (i) the visible angle structures seen in the inferior quadrant, and
- (ii) any significant findings.

At the end of the gonioscopy examination check the corneal integrity again.

Record all the findings.

The examiner may ask you to pause your examination for a second or so from time to time to allow them to assess the view or views that you are obtaining.

If a particular view is visible to you but not to the eyepiece that has the examiner's observation system connected, the examiner may ask you to move the view to the examiner's eyepiece.

**What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:**

Your communication with the subject is an important part of your demonstrating this skill.

Please provide your examiner with a narrative of what you are seeing.

**For gonioscopy, this narrative will include**

**a) which angle you are looking into as you scan across that angle,**

**b) what angle structures you can identify in each angle,**

**and,**

**c) in the inferior angle, as well as the angle structures you can see, identify the most posterior angle structure you can see.**

## Station 6: K. Binocular Indirect Ophthalmoscopy

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
6	K. Binocular indirect ophthalmoscopy	Binocular indirect ophthalmoscope with observation system, Fundus lens (20D or similar)

Note which eye you have been asked to examine.

Examine this eye using binocular indirect ophthalmoscopy.

Use a systematic examination technique to cover all regions of the retina including the central, paracentral, mid-peripheral and far-peripheral areas.

Provide full, clear and stable views for the examiner to view through the teaching mirror.

Record the findings.

The examiner may ask you to pause your examination for a second or so from time to time or to go back to a particular place in the retina to allow them to assess the view or views that you are obtaining.

What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:

Your communication with the subject is an important part of your demonstrating this skill.

Please provide your examiner with a narrative of what you are seeing.

**For binocular indirect ophthalmoscopy, this narrative will include where in the fundus you are looking, any landmarks you see, and any significant findings you will be recording.**

## Station 6: L. Fundus Lens Evaluation

Station	Skill	Summary of Equipment provided
6	L. Fundus lens evaluation	Slit-lamp biomicroscope with observation system, 90D lens and Volk Superfield lens or equivalent.

Note you are to examine both eyes.

Use a systematic examination technique to cover all regions of the retina including the central, paracentral, mid-peripheral and peripheral areas.

Provide full, clear and stable views for the examiner to view through the teaching mirror.

Record the findings.

The examiner may ask you to pause your examination for a second or so from time to time or to go back to a particular place in the retina to allow them to assess the view or views that you are obtaining.

If a particular view is visible to you but not to the eyepiece that has the examiner's observation system connected, the examiner may ask you to move the view to the examiner's eyepiece.

What to tell the examiner as you are performing this skill:

Your communication with the subject is an important part of your demonstrating this skill.

Please provide your examiner with a brief narrative of what you are seeing.

**For fundus lens evaluation, this brief narrative will include where in the fundus you are looking, any landmarks you see, and any significant findings you will be recording.**

**The narrative should not be extensive and should not add greatly to your time.**

The Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand reserves the right to alter this document without notice.

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