



Optometry Council of
Australia and New Zealand

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education Provider:	University of Canberra
Program:	Bachelor of Vision Science / Master of Optometry
Date:	November 2024
Outcome:	Accredited with conditions until 30 June 2031

INTRODUCTION

The Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ) was established in 1996. Its function includes assessment, for the purposes of accreditation, programs designed to produce graduates suitable for registration as optometrists in Australia or New Zealand.

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The assessment follows the process and procedures described in the OCANZ publication *Accreditation Procedures Guide 2022* (<https://www.ocanz.org/accreditation/standards/>).

The accreditation process evaluates the extent to which the program of study complies with the OCANZ Standards set out in *Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide for Entry-Level Optometry Programs, Part 2 – Standards*, effective January 2023.

Under the Australian *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009*, OCANZ may grant accreditation if it is reasonably satisfied that the provider and the program of study substantially meet an approved accreditation standard, and the imposition of conditions on the approval will ensure the program meets the standard within a reasonable time.

BACKGROUND

In February 2023, an OCANZ assessment team conducted an accreditation site visit of the University of Canberra's optometry program of study. The Assessment Team's 2023 report recommended three conditions. In February 2024, the OCANZ Accreditation Committee reviewed the University of Canberra's 2023 Annual Report together with some additional information provided by the University and agreed that Conditions 1, 2, and 3 had not yet been met. In August 2024 the OCANZ Board approved the appointment of an assessment team for the purposes of conducting an in-person monitoring site visit.

The OCANZ Board notified the Optometry Board of Australia (OptomBA), Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board – New Zealand (ODOB), the Head of Department and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canberra of revised conditions on the program's accreditation.

KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT TEAM

The assessment team remain satisfied that the graduates of the University of Canberra optometry program have the knowledge, skills and attributes to meet competency standards (including both universal and therapeutics competencies) as entry level practitioners in Australia and New Zealand and that they will be equipped with the necessary skills to maintain those competencies.

The Assessment Team deemed that Condition 1 was met. Recruitment of a senior academic into the program was ongoing and the program had not yet engaged in external moderation of assessment (Conditions 2 and 3. Standard 4, criteria 4.11; and Standard 6, criteria 6.6 and 6.7). The assessment team revised the conditions on accreditation. The conditions are:

1. The 2025 Annual Report to OCANZ must provide an appropriate staffing plan and must confirm the appointment of the planned Level D academic.
2. The 2025 Annual Report to OCANZ must report on external moderations of assessments of fitness to practice within the Master of Optometry program. This report must include the plan for ongoing external moderation of assessments.

OUTCOME

The assessment team remain satisfied that the graduates of the University of Canberra optometry program have the knowledge, skills and attributes to meet competency standards (including both universal and therapeutics competencies) as entry level practitioners in Australia and New Zealand and that they will be equipped with the necessary skills to maintain those competencies.

The OCANZ Board had agreed that the program remains accredited until 30 June 2031 with revised conditions, provided there are no material changes to the program during this period.

It is expected that the University can meet the conditions on accreditation within a reasonable timeframe, as required by National Law.

The Discipline is required, within its annual report, to include any changes made to the program in the preceding year and describe any significant changes to the resources allocated to the school during that year.