



Optometry Council of  
Australia and New Zealand

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education Provider: University of Western Australia  
Program: Doctor of Optometry (OD)  
Date: October 2024  
Outcome: Accredited with no conditions until 31 December 2032

### 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. The Discipline prepared a submission that addressed how it was meeting each of the Standards.

Under the Australian *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009*, OCANZ may grant accreditation if it is reasonably satisfied that a program of study, and the education provider that provides it, meet an approved accreditation standard. It may also 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 May 2024, the University of Western Australia submitted its reaccreditation submission, addressing each of the OCANZ Standards and providing the associated 14 core pieces of evidence outlined in the *OCANZ Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide* as well as a range of additional evidence. This report outlines the findings of the assessment team which assessed the submission and conducted the September 2024 assessment team 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 Western Australia of its decision.

## KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT TEAM

The assessment team is satisfied that the graduates of the University of Western Australia optometry program will have the knowledge, skills and attributes to meet competency standards as entry level practitioners in Australia and New Zealand and that they will be equipped with the necessary skills to maintain those competencies.

The following table displays the key findings of the assessment team. Where Accreditation Standards are noted as “substantially met” the Department is required to provide evidence to OCANZ that the actions detailed in order to meet the specific standard have been appropriately completed. A condition needs to be reported on by the education provider at a time specified by OCANZ. A recommendation refers to an action or a course of actions that should be considered by the provider to improve the delivery and/or outcomes of the program.

Standard 1 Public safety - Standard 1 is MET	
Criteria	Comments
1.1 Protection of the public and the care of patients are prominent amongst the guiding principles of the educational program, its clinical education components and learning outcomes.	<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Strong partnership between the optometry program and external clinical placement sites.</li></ul>
1.2 Students achieve the relevant competencies before providing patient care as part of the program.	
1.3 Students are supervised by suitably qualified and experienced registered optometrists and/or other health professionals during clinical training.	
1.4 Health services and optometry practices providing clinical placements have robust health, quality and safety policies and processes for patient care that meet all required regulations and standards.	
1.5 Patients consent to care by students.	
1.6 Students understand the legal, ethical and professional responsibilities of a registered optometry practitioner.	

1.7	The education provider holds students and staff to high levels of ethical and professional conduct.	
1.8	Processes for identification and management of student impairment are effective.	
1.9	Where required, all students are registered with the relevant regulatory authority/ies	
1.10	The program has regard to cognate health care policies and standards that relate to clinical training and practice as a health care practitioner.	

Standard 2 Cultural Safety – Standard 2 is MET		
Criteria	Comments	
2.1	Cultural safety is integrated throughout the program and clearly articulated in required learning outcomes.	<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authentic engagement with First Nations Peoples in program design and delivery</li> <li>• Student on Country experience</li> <li>• Diverse Indigenous clinical placements and strong stakeholder relationships</li> <li>• Strong and meaningful commitment to cultural safety.</li> </ul>
2.2	There is input into the design and management of the program from First Nations Peoples.	
2.3	The education provider promotes and supports the recruitment, admission, participation, retention and completion of the program by First Nations Peoples.	
2.4	Students' clinical experiences incorporate provision of culturally safe care for First Nations Peoples.	
2.5	The education provider ensures students are provided with access to appropriate resources, and to staff with specialist knowledge, expertise and cultural capabilities, to facilitate learning about the health of First Nations Peoples.	
2.6	Staff and students work and learn in a culturally safe environment.	
2.7	The design and management of the program, particularly its clinical components, continue to have regard to relevant national policies concerning the	

health and health care of First Nations Peoples.	
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Standard 3 Academic Governance and Quality Assurance – Standard 3 is MET	
Criteria	Comments
<p>3.1 The education provider has robust academic governance for the program of study that include systematic periodic monitoring, review and improvement of the program.</p> <p>3.2 Input is obtained periodically from internal and external stakeholders to the design, review and improvement of the program, including feedback from students, consumers, academics and representatives of the optometry profession to ensure the program remains fit for purpose.</p> <p>3.3 The program responds to contemporary and emerging developments in health professional education and practice.</p> <p>3.4 The education provider operates in an environment informed by contemporary scholarship, research and professional enquiry that informs and fosters the development of the program.</p> <p>3.5 Risks to the quality and sustainability of the program are, and continue to be, identified, managed and mitigated effectively.</p>	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong external stakeholder relationships and commitment to future proofing the program</li> <li>Effective communication feedback loop.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support leadership development of the curriculum committee to improve their oversight of the alignment between the curriculum and new competencies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Observation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Course Advisory Board could be strengthened by consumer involvement.</li> </ul>

Standard 4 Program of Study – Standard 4 is MET	
Criteria	Comments
<p>4.1 A coherent educational philosophy informs the program of study and is reflected in the design, delivery, learning outcomes and teaching and assessment methods of the program.</p> <p>4.2 Program learning outcomes address all the professional competencies endorsed by OCANZ.</p> <p>4.3 The quality, quantity and diversity of clinical training are sufficient to produce a graduate competent to practice across a range of settings and patient presentations.</p> <p>4.4 Learning and teaching methods are intentionally designed and used to enable students to achieve the required learning outcomes.</p> <p>4.5 Emerging developments in education, technology and practice are incorporated as necessary to keep the program fit for purpose.</p> <p>4.6 Principles of inter-professional learning and practice are embedded in the curriculum and</p>	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well organised and fit-for-purpose program</li> <li>Diversity of clinical placements</li> <li>Dedicated and enthusiastic staff</li> <li>Well-resourced clinical facilities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further development of IPE and practice prior to final year clinical placements.</li> </ul>

<p>students work with and learn from other health professions to foster a capacity for interprofessional collaborative practice.</p> <p>4.7 Teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced to deliver the units that they teach.</p> <p>4.8 Learning environments, clinical facilities and equipment are accessible, up to date, well maintained, fit for purpose and support the achievement of required learning outcomes.</p> <p>4.9 Graduates achieve research literacy appropriate to the academic level and type of program.</p> <p>4.10 Cross-cultural competence is integrated within the program and clearly articulated among required disciplinary learning outcomes.</p> <p>4.11 The optometry program has the resources, including access to clinical facilities, to sustain the quality of education that is required to facilitate the achievement of the OCANZ-endorsed competency standards. Cultural competence is appropriately integrated within the program and clearly articulated as required disciplinary learning outcomes: including an emphasis on Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Māori and Pasifika cultures.</p> <p>4.12 The optometry program has the resources to sustain the quality of education that is required to facilitate the achievement of the competency standards.</p>	
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Standard 5 The Student Experience – Standard 5 is MET	
Criteria	Comments
<p>5.1 Course information is clear and accessible.</p> <p>5.2 Admission and progression requirements and processes are equitable and transparent.</p> <p>5.3 Students have access to effective grievance and appeals processes.</p> <p>5.4 The education provider identifies, and provides support to meet the academic learning needs of students.</p> <p>5.5 Students are informed of and have appropriate access to personal support services provided by qualified personnel.</p>	<p><b>Strength</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong student culture.</li> </ul> <p><b>Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trimester model adds pressure to student workload</li> <li>• Requirement for rural/international placements may impact the ability for graduate students to cover travel and accommodation costs and meet their financial commitments and costs of study.</li> </ul>

5.6	Students participate in the deliberative and decision-making processes of the program.	
5.7	Equity and diversity principles are observed and promoted in the student experience.	

Standard 6 Assessment – Standard 6 is MET	
Criteria	Comments
<p>6.1 Program learning outcomes are specified and mapped to the required professional competencies and requirements for registration to practise.</p> <p>6.2 Program learning outcomes encompass skills for further study and life-long learning.</p> <p>6.3 On completion of the program, students have demonstrated all specified learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.4 Multiple assessment tools are used, including direct observation in clinical settings.</p> <p>6.5 Methods of assessment are consistent with and appropriate to the outcomes being assessed and the education provider can demonstrate that its assessment strategies are appropriate, fair, valid and reliable.</p> <p>6.6 Program management mechanisms, including internal and external moderation, achieve consistent and appropriate approaches to assessment and timely feedback to students.</p> <p>6.7 Suitably qualified and experienced staff, including external experts for final year, assess students.</p> <p>6.8 All assessors are informed of and engaged with the requirements of the assessments in which they take part.</p>	<p><b>Observation</b></p> <p>Learning outcomes and assessments should continue to be mapped to and align with OCANZ endorsed professional competencies.</p>

## OUTCOME

OCANZ is satisfied the Doctor of Optometry program at the University of Western Australia meets the OCANZ Accreditation Standards with no conditions.

The OCANZ Board had agreed to accredit the program until 31 December 2032 with no conditions, provided there are no material changes to the program during this period.

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 program during that year.