



Optometry Council of
Australia and New Zealand

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education Provider:	University of Canberra
Program:	Bachelor of Vision Science & Master of Optometry Program
Date:	December 2019
Outcome:	Accredited with five conditions until 30 th April 2023

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 of new optometry programs follows the process and procedures described in the OCANZ publication *Accreditation Manual for Optometry Programs in Australia and New Zealand Part 1- Processes and Procedures August 2012* (www.ocanz.org). The accreditation of a new program follows a two-stage process. Stage 1 involves a preliminary submission outlining the case for the establishment of the program and providing the necessary preliminary government and stakeholder approvals.

The Stage 2 accreditation process evaluates the extent to which a 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 2017. The Discipline of Optometry and Vision Science in the Faculty of Health at the University of Canberra 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 for the optometry profession. It may also grant accreditation if it is reasonably satisfied that the provider and the program of study substantially meet an approved accreditation standard for the optometry profession, and the imposition of conditions on the approval will ensure the program meets the standard within a reasonable time.

A satisfactory Stage 2 submission for a new program will result in Accreditation with Conditions being granted. The primary condition is to consider the program for re-accreditation once the first cohort

of students completes the program. Other conditions may also apply and will be detailed in the assessment team report. Subject to a satisfactory response to conditions, OCANZ will conduct a follow up site visit once the first cohort of students has graduated. An unsatisfactory Stage 2 submission will result in Accreditation not being granted.

BACKGROUND

In July 2019, the University of Canberra tendered its Stage 2 accreditation submission, addressing each of the OCANZ Standards and providing the associated 15 core pieces of evidence outlined in the OCANZ Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide. This report outlines the findings of the assessment team which assessed the submission and conducted the October 2019 assessment team site visit.

KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT TEAM

The assessment team is satisfied that the graduates of the University of Canberra 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 assessment team appreciated the positive approach taken by the academic and administrative staff of the discipline in their participation in the accreditation process. The assessment team was able to engage in open and frank discussion with all parties associated with the accreditation process and appreciated the prompt responses to requests for further information or clarification on issues raised.

The following table displays the key findings of the assessment team.

Where Accreditation Standards are noted as “substantially met with conditions” the School is required to provide evidence to OCANZ that the actions detailed in order to meet the specific standard have been appropriately completed.

A **strength** refers to a significant achievement by the education provider with regard to the program.

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.

An **observation/suggestion** is offered for optional consideration by the provider to be consistent with best practice.

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, clinical training and student learning outcomes.	
1.2 Screening for and management of student fitness to practice are effective.	
1.3 Students achieve the relevant competencies before providing patient care as part of the program.	
1.4 Suitably qualified and registered optometrists and/or health practitioners supervise students during clinical education.	
1.5 Health services and optometry practices providing clinical placements have robust quality and safety policies and processes and meet all required regulations and standards.	
1.6 Patients consent to care by students.	
1.7 Where required, all students are registered with the relevant regulatory authority/ies.	
1.8 The education provider holds students and staff to high levels of ethical and professional conduct.	

Standard 2 Academic Governance and Quality Assurance - Standard 2 is MET	
Criteria	Comments
2.1 The provider has robust academic governance arrangements in place for the program of study that includes systematic monitoring, review and improvement.	Strength The University's strong support for the program and willingness to invest (including in facilities) to enable the optometry program to succeed.
2.2 Quality improvement processes use student and other evaluations, internal and external academic and professional peer review to improve the program.	Suggestions The assessment team suggests that the University makes more use of the newly constituted course advisory group to ensure relevant external input into the design and management of the program.
2.3 There is relevant external input to the design and management of the program, including from representatives of the optometry professions.	
2.4 Mechanisms exist for responding within the curriculum to contemporary developments in health professional education and practice.	The assessment team notes that only a limited number of optometry staff have to date contributed to the design of the program. The team is of the view that ongoing curriculum review will be necessary

	to ensure that it is responding adequately to contemporary developments in health professional education and practice.
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Standard 3 Program of Study - Standard 3 is SUBSTANTIALLY MET WITH CONDITIONS	
Criteria	Comments
<p>3.1 A coherent educational philosophy informs the program of study design and delivery.</p> <p>3.2 Program learning outcomes address all the professional competencies endorsed by OCANZ.</p> <p>3.3 The quality, quantity and diversity of clinical training are sufficient to produce a graduate competent to practice across a range of settings.</p> <p>3.4 Learning and teaching methods are intentionally designed and used to enable students to achieve the required learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.5 Principles of inter-professional learning and practice are embedded in the curriculum.</p> <p>3.6 Teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced to deliver the units that they teach.</p> <p>3.7 Learning environments support the achievement of the required learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.8 Learning environments support the achievement of research skills appropriate to the academic level of the program</p> <p>3.9 Facilities and equipment are accessible, well-maintained, fit for purpose and support the achievement of learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.10 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>3.11 The optometry program has the resources to sustain the quality of education that is required to facilitate the achievement of the competency standards.</p>	<p>Strength The outstanding leadership and direction for the program being provided by Discipline Lead Assoc Prof Nicola Anstice.</p> <p>Suggestion The assessment team identified that content in foundational aspects of vision science (e.g. neuroscience) were low in comparison to some other accredited programs and may need to be reviewed as the program evolves.</p> <p>CONDITION 1 An interim report (due 30 June 2020) to OCANZ must include for every unit in the Master of Optometry program; the '<i>Determinant of Unit Particulars</i>', an updated document mapping assessment to learning outcomes, and the Unit Outline. Subsequent advice is to be provided to OCANZ if these documents are subject to any change as a result of internal program approval processes.</p> <p>CONDITION 2 An interim report (due 30 June 2021) to OCANZ must include a plan, budget and timetable to expand the campus clinical facilities in order to meet the program's goals to deliver approximately 50% of the minimum patient experience on campus. The report is also to include a forward plan and budget for the maintenance and/or replacement of the optometry facilities and equipment over a cycle of up to 8 years.</p> <p>CONDITION 3 The 2021 Annual Report, an interim report (due 30 June 2022) and the 2022 Annual Report (i.e. every 6 months until re-accreditation) to OCANZ must</p> <p>a) show that the program's agreed minimum patient numbers provided to OCANZ are being met. Each report is to include data by individual student, by placement setting, patient numbers and</p>

	<p>patient types of presenting conditions. These reports must also outline how any failure of the clinical training program to meet the clinical training needs of particular students has been remediated.</p> <p>b) provide a qualitative update on the Professional Practice Convenor's tracking of students' external clinical placement experiences.</p> <p><u>CONDITION 4</u></p> <p>The 2021 Annual Report, an interim report (due 30 June 2022) and the 2022 Annual Report (i.e. every 6 months until re-accreditation) to OCANZ must show that the program is meeting or exceeding implementation of the program's planned staff numbers as outlined to OCANZ in the Stage 2 submission documents. The report should also address how the hire of staff and/or the redistribution of staff duties are ensuring the robustness and continuity of program leadership in the face of planned and/or unplanned staffing changes.</p> <p><u>CONDITION 5</u></p> <p>The reaccreditation submission must include a report on a formal review of the ways in which program is delivering content in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact lenses Paediatrics (including myopia control) Binocular Vision Low vision Therapeutics Glaucoma Medical retina Anterior eye. <p>This review is to address the volume of learning and patient experience in each area and the efficacy of integrating it vertically (separation across years) and horizontally (across units) throughout the program.</p> <p>This review is to include external input.</p>
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Standard 4 The Student Experience – Standard 4 is MET

Criteria	Comments
<p>4.1 Course information is clear and accessible.</p> <p>4.2 Admission and progression requirements and processes are robust, equitable and transparent.</p> <p>4.3 Students have access to effective grievance and appeals processes.</p> <p>4.4 The provider identifies and provides support to meet the academic learning needs of students.</p> <p>4.5 Students are informed of and have appropriate access to personal support services provided by qualified personnel.</p> <p>4.6 Students are represented within the deliberative and decision-making processes of the program.</p> <p>4.7 Equity and diversity principles are observed and promoted in the student experience.</p>	<p>Observation</p> <p>The team noted the special progression arrangements being established for a significant number of students who had not completed some units at their first attempt and expects the ongoing academic and personal needs of these students to be monitored.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>That the program reconsiders the merits and potential costs of continuing to offer multiple progression pathways in the program, including reviewing the impact on planning.</p>

Standard 5 Assessment – Standard 5 is MET

Criteria	Comments
<p>5.1 There is a clear relationship between learning outcomes and assessment strategies.</p> <p>5.2 Scope of assessment covers all learning outcomes relevant to the competencies.</p> <p>5.3 Multiple assessment tools, modes and sampling are used including direct observation in the clinical setting.</p> <p>5.4 Program management and co-ordination, including internal and external moderation, ensure consistent and appropriate assessment and feedback to students.</p> <p>5.5 Suitably qualified and experienced staff assess students, including external experts for final year.</p> <p>5.6 All learning outcomes are mapped to the required competencies, and are assessed.</p>	

OUTCOME

OCANZ is satisfied the Bachelor of Vision Science & Master of Optometry Program at the University of Canberra meets the OCANZ Accreditation Standards with conditions. The recommendation of the assessment team is that accreditation is granted for a period until 30 April 2023 with conditions, provided there are no major changes to the program during this period. The OCANZ Board approved this recommendation. The conditions are:

1. An interim report (due 30 June 2020) to OCANZ must include for every unit in the Master of Optometry program; the '*Determinant of Unit Particulars*', an updated document mapping assessment to learning outcomes, and the Unit Outline. Subsequent advice is to be provided to OCANZ if these documents are subject to any change as a result of internal program approval processes.
2. An interim report (due 30 June 2021) to OCANZ must include a plan, budget and timetable to expand the campus clinical facilities in order to meet the program's goals to deliver approximately 50% of the minimum patient experience on campus. The report is also to include a forward plan and budget for the maintenance and/or replacement of the optometry facilities and equipment over a cycle of up to 8 years.
3. The 2021 Annual Report, an interim report (due 30 June 2022) and the 2022 Annual Report (i.e. every 6 months until re-accreditation) to OCANZ must
 - a) show that the program's agreed minimum patient numbers provided to OCANZ are being met. Each report is to include data by individual student, by placement setting, patient numbers and patient types of presenting conditions. These reports must also outline how any failure of the clinical training program to meet the clinical training needs of particular students has been remediated.
 - b) provide a qualitative update on the Professional Practice Convenor's tracking of students' external clinical placement experiences.
4. The 2021 Annual Report, an interim report (due 30 June 2022) and the 2022 Annual Report (i.e. every 6 months until re-accreditation) to OCANZ must show that the program is meeting or exceeding implementation of the program's planned staff numbers as outlined to OCANZ in the Stage 2 submission documents. The report should also address how the hire of staff and/or the redistribution of staff duties are ensuring the robustness and continuity of program leadership in the face of planned and/or unplanned staffing changes.
5. The reaccreditation submission must include a report on a formal review of the ways in which program is delivering content in: Contact lenses, Paediatrics (including myopia control), Binocular Vision, Low vision, Therapeutics, Glaucoma, Medical retina and Anterior eye. This review is to address the volume of learning and patient experience in each area and the efficacy of integrating it vertically (separation across years) and horizontally (across units) throughout the program. This review is to include external input.

The School 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.