



Optometry Council of
Australia and New Zealand

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education Provider:	University of New South Wales
Program:	Bachelor of Vision Science & Master of Clinical Optometry
Date:	December 2019
Outcome:	Accredited with one condition until 31 December 2027

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 Manual for Optometry Programs in Australia and New Zealand Part 1- Processes and Procedures August 2012* (www.ocanz.org).

The accreditation process evaluates the extent to which the changes to the program of study comply with the OCANZ Standards set out in *Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide for Entry-Level Optometry Programs, Part 2 – Standards*, effective January 2017. The School 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 July 2019, UNSW tendered its reaccreditation submission, addressing each of the 2017 OCANZ Accreditation Standards for Entry-Level Optometry Programs 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 an assessment team site visit in September 2019.

The OCANZ Board notified the Optometry Board of Australia (OBA), Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board – New Zealand (ODOB) and the Head of School and the Vice-Chancellor of University of New South Wales of its decision.

KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT TEAM

The assessment team is satisfied that the graduates of the University of New South Wales 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 school in their participation in the accreditation process. The assessment team 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” 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 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, clinical training and student learning outcomes.	Strength <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The School has highly qualified and engaged staff supervising students' clinical education
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.	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good engagement with the profession through the Visiting Committee • The support of the program from the Faculty of Science <p>Observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collation of formalised employer feedback would give the School a more holistic overview of the qualities of its graduates and areas in which they might be improved <p>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional external program review before next re-accreditation
2.2 Quality improvement processes use student and other evaluations, internal and external academic and professional peer review to improve 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.	

Standard 3 Program of Study - Standard 3 is SUBSTANTIALLY MET	
Criteria	Comments
3.1 A coherent educational philosophy informs the program of study design and delivery.	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the program's staff and their commitment to effective optometry education • Quality, breadth and variety of clinical experiences for students • The quality of the UNSW facilities and the range of equipment <p>Observations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more explicit statement of the overall goals and philosophy of the optometry program, and a statement in each course guide around how it contributes to these goals and philosophy, would strengthen the external perception of overall coherence of the program • The establishment of a more explicit IPE framework could better leverage the diverse range of already implicit opportunities for interprofessional learning • Continue with Digital Uplift
3.2 Program learning outcomes address all the professional competencies endorsed by OCANZ.	
3.3 The quality, quantity and diversity of clinical training are sufficient to produce a graduate competent to practice across a range of settings.	
3.4 Learning and teaching methods are intentionally designed and used to enable students to achieve the required learning outcomes.	
3.5 Principles of inter-professional learning and practice are embedded in the curriculum.	
3.6 Teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced to deliver the units that they teach.	

<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>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create or adopt an integrated online system for capturing students' clinical experiences <p>Condition 1a) A 30 June 2020 interim report to OCANZ must detail the strategy for implementation of the UNSW optometry cultural competence plan which addresses: i) The need to re-distribute teaching for addressing cultural competency in healthcare throughout undergraduate and postgraduate programs, specifically commencing earlier in the undergraduate program ii) The provision of cultural competency training for School of Optometry and Vision Science academic and professional staff iii) Planned attendance at professional program update meetings on the issues of cultural competency in healthcare, including teaching strategies iv) Ensuring that the requirements of the Optometry Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework approved by OCANZ in October 2018 (effective 01 January 2019) are met through current and future teaching strategies to address cultural competency in healthcare. In addition, the UNSW implementation plan must include details of v) How senior leadership and resources are being allocated to champion and address these issues and effect curricular change in the program.</p> <p>1b) The 2020 Annual Report to OCANZ must report on progress against the implementation plan</p> <p>1c) The 2021 Annual Report to OCANZ must report on progress against the implementation plan</p>
--	---

Standard 4 The Student Experience – Standard 4 is MET

Criteria	Comments
4.1 Course information is clear and accessible. 4.2 Admission and progression requirements and processes are robust, equitable and transparent. 4.3 Students have access to effective grievance and appeals processes. 4.4 The provider identifies and provides support to meet the academic learning needs of students. 4.5 Students are informed of and have appropriate access to personal support services provided by qualified personnel. 4.6 Students are represented within the deliberative and decision making processes of the program. 4.7 Equity and diversity principles are observed and promoted in the student experience.	Strength <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School’s openness to multiple points of engagement with its students

Standard 5 Assessment – Standard 5 is MET

Criteria	Comments
5.1 There is a clear relationship between learning outcomes and assessment strategies. 5.2 Scope of assessment covers all learning outcomes relevant to the competencies. 5.3 Multiple assessment tools, modes and sampling are used including direct observation in the clinical setting. 5.4 Program management and co-ordination, including internal and external moderation, ensure consistent and appropriate assessment and feedback to students. 5.5 Suitably qualified and experienced staff assess students, including external experts for final year. 5.6 All learning outcomes are mapped to the required competencies, and are assessed.	Strength <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of assessments Recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External optometric benchmarking of assessment processes

OUTCOME

OCANZ is satisfied the Bachelor of Vision Science and Master of Clinical Optometry program at the University of New South Wales meets the OCANZ Accreditation Standards.

The OCANZ Board had agreed to accredit the program until 31 December 2027 with one condition, provided there are no major changes to the program during this period. The condition is:

Condition-

1a) A 30 June 2020 interim report to OCANZ must detail the strategy for implementation of the UNSW optometry cultural competence plan which addresses: i) The need to re-distribute teaching for addressing cultural competency in healthcare throughout undergraduate and postgraduate programs, specifically commencing earlier in the undergraduate program ii) The provision of cultural competency training for School of Optometry and Vision Science academic and professional staff iii) Planned attendance at professional program update meetings on the issues of cultural competency in healthcare, including teaching strategies iv) Ensuring that the requirements of the Optometry

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework approved by OCANZ in October 2018 (effective 01 January 2019) are met through current and future teaching strategies to address cultural competency in healthcare. In addition, the UNSW implementation plan must include details of: v) How senior leadership and resources are being allocated to champion and address these issues and effect curricular change in the program.

1b) The 2020 Annual Report to OCANZ must report on progress against the implementation plan.

1c) The 2021 Annual Report to OCANZ must report on progress against the implementation plan.

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 School during that year. This is a general requirement of all accredited programs and not a condition specific to this Bachelor of Optometry program.