



Optometry Council of  
Australia and New Zealand

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education Provider:	Queensland University of Technology
Program:	Bachelor of Vision Science & Master of Optometry Program
Date:	September 2022
Outcome:	Accredited with no conditions until 31 December 2030

### 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](http://www.ocanz.org)).

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 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 May 2022, Queensland University submitted its reaccreditation 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* as well as a wide range of additional evidence. This report outlines the findings of the assessment team which assessed the submission and conducted the August 2022 assessment team site visit.

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 Queensland University of Technology of its decision.

## KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT TEAM

The assessment team is satisfied that the graduates of the Queensland University of Technology 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 program’s academic and administrative staff of the program, and the health professional accreditation staff. Also appreciated was the promptness of response and clarification of queries throughout the accreditation process.

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.	<b>Recommendation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update patient consent form to ensure written patient consent to care by students.</li></ul>
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.	

<b>Standard 2 Academic Governance and Quality Assurance - Standard 2 is MET</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>
2.1 The provider has robust academic governance arrangements in place for the program of study that includes systematic monitoring, review and improvement.	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake external academic and professional peer review of course</li> <li>• Conduct quality assurance meetings as scheduled, such as Student Advisory Group meetings</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance alumni engagement to foster stakeholder relationships, including future academic and clinical workforce, clinical placement involvement, and graduate feedback for quality review and assurance.</li> </ul>
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.	

<b>Standard 3 Program of Study - Standard 3 is MET</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>
3.1 A coherent educational philosophy informs the program of study design and delivery.	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enthusiastic staff and students</li> <li>• Collaborative and cooperative academic team</li> <li>• Staff retention and opportunity for career progression</li> <li>• Research embedded throughout curriculum and involvement of students in research projects</li> <li>• On site teaching clinic</li> <li>• Commitment to cultural safety</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate Interprofessional Education into all years of study and make use of the QUT clinics for this</li> <li>• Provide more comprehensive orientation to external clinical placement providers and clarify the purpose of external placement with students and providers</li> </ul>
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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate the benefit of expanding external placements to improve the quantity and diversity of student’s clinical placements</li> <li>• Update the electronic clinic management system to ensure monitoring of clinical experience and facilitate Interprofessional Education</li> <li>• Improve pre-clinical lab resourcing and equipment, such as observable teaching equipment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Observation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate incorporating simulated scenarios in pre-clinical and clinical education to develop communication skills and prepare students for difficult conversations.</li> </ul>
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**Standard 4 The Student Experience – Standard 4 is MET**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<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><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students are engaged at the School and Faculty level</li><li>• Support for peer-to-peer learning</li><li>• Commitment to student success and retention</li></ul> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarify and reinforce communication of student grievance/complaints procedures to students and staff</li></ul> <p><b>Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accessibility of grievance and appeals policies and procedures at the university level may limit student engagement in services and processes, including the application of policies</li></ul> <p>Could include student representation on the School's Course Advisory Committee</p>

**Standard 5 Assessment – Standard 5 is MET**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<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>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Utilise student management systems, such as a fit for purpose clinical management system, to provide timely, constructive feedback</li><li>• Undertake external moderation of assessments</li><li>• Provide external clinical placement providers with training and clear guidelines communicating the purpose of placement and their role expectations</li><li>• Revise external placement provider forms to provide constructive feedback to students and facilitate monitoring of the external experience</li></ul> <p><b>Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve clinical and pre-clinical lab resourcing and equipment to support moderation of clinical skills</li></ul>

	development and graded clinical assessments Consider using a booking system to ensure equity in student's ability to practice clinical skills prior to examination.
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**OUTCOME**

OCANZ is satisfied the Bachelor of Vision Science/Master of Optometry program at Queensland University of Technology meets the OCANZ Accreditation Standards with no conditions.

The OCANZ Board had agreed to accredit the program until 31 December 2030 with no conditions, provided there are no material changes to the program during this period.