

Executive Summary

Why are the OCANZ Accreditation Standards being reviewed?

OCANZ is undertaking a review of the *Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide for Entry-Level Optometry Programs* to ensure the Standards remain contemporary, evidence-informed and fit for purpose for the evolving healthcare, regulatory and educational environment.

The review has been informed by:

- changes in health practitioner regulation and accreditation requirements
- feedback from education providers, regulators and key stakeholders
- developments in optometry practice and higher education, and
- comparison with contemporary accreditation standards in Australia and internationally.

The review aims to maintain an outcomes-based approach while supporting innovation, reducing unnecessary regulatory burden and continuing to protect the public.

Key proposed changes

The proposed revisions retain the existing six-domain structure of the Standards while strengthening expectations in several areas, including:

- Cultural safety throughout the Standards, while retaining Cultural Safety as a standalone Standard.
- Stronger emphasis on person-centred care, anti-racism and equity.
- Contemporary clinical governance and quality improvement.
- Appropriate, ethical and safe use of artificial intelligence in education and clinical practice.
- Preparation of graduates for contemporary practice, including digital health and evolving models of care.
- Interprofessional education and collaborative practice.
- Student wellbeing and support.
- Care for diverse populations, including people with cognitive disability and those affected by family, domestic and sexual violence.
- Greater recognition of curriculum mapping to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori Health Curriculum Frameworks.
- Continued focus on outcomes-based accreditation while reducing duplication and unnecessary administrative burden where possible.

What feedback is OCANZ seeking?

OCANZ welcomes feedback on whether the proposed Standards:

- appropriately protect the public while remaining flexible and outcomes-focused,
- are clear, relevant and practical to implement,
- reflect contemporary optometry education and practice,
- appropriately balance regulatory requirements and administrative burden, and
- include any important concepts that should be added, removed or clarified.

Consultation questions

Questions to consider when providing feedback on the OCANZ Accreditation Standards consultation include:

1. Do the proposed revisions appropriately and clearly balance public safety, flexibility and regulatory burden?
2. Do you agree with the specific proposals as incorporated in the draft Standards? Should any of the Standards or Criteria be deleted or reworded?
3. Are there any concepts missing from the proposed revised standards that should be included? What additional information or guidance should be provided?
4. Are the 13 pieces of core evidence outlines in the Standards appropriate, noting one addition to the previous 14 to make mandatory the mapping of curricula to the OCANZ Health Curriculum Frameworks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Māori, as well as two deletions to reduce duplication with the HESF?
5. Do you foresee issues or costs associated with implementation of the proposed revisions to the Standards?

Feedback is also sought on the proposed evidence requirements and any implementation issues or costs.

Consultation period

The consultation is open until **3 November 2026**.

Following consultation, all submissions will be considered by the Reference Group before the revised Accreditation Standards are finalised and submitted for approval.

The contact details for providing feedback and/or receiving further information are:

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