

Scopes of Practice for Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians 2020

Pursuant to sections 11 and 12 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (“HPCA Act”), the Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board (“Board”) specifies two optometrist scopes of practice and one dispensing optician scope of practice, and has prescribed qualifications for each scope of practice, as described below.

Notice

1. Title and Commencement

(1) This notice is the Notice of Scopes of Practice and Related Qualifications Prescribed by the Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board.

(2) This notice comes into force on **10 December 2020**.

2. Revocation

This notice revokes and replaces all previous scopes of practice and qualifications prescribed by the Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board.

Scopes of Practice for Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians as at 8 December 2020

1. Optometrist Scope of Practice

An optometrist registered in the optometrist scope of practice provides evidence-based comprehensive eye health and vision care in a professional and ethical manner, in accordance with the HPCA Act.

The “practice of optometry” includes:

- prescribing any ophthalmic appliance, optical appliance, or ophthalmic medical device intended for remedial or cosmetic purposes or for the correction of a defect of sight;
- assessing, diagnosing, treating and managing conditions affecting the eye and its appendages;
- prescribing medicines whose sale and supply is restricted by law to prescription by authorised prescribers;
- reporting or giving advice in an ophthalmic capacity, using the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competence initially attained for the primary optometry qualification and built upon in postgraduate and continuing clinical education, wherever there could be an issue of patient health or wellbeing;
- signing any certificate required for statutory purposes, such as driver licensing eyesight certificates; and
- holding out to the public, or representing in any manner that one is authorised to practise optometry in New Zealand.

The practice of optometry goes wider than clinical optometry, and includes teaching, research, optometric or eye health management, in hospitals, clinics, general optometric practices and community and institutional contexts, whether paid or voluntary.

Additionally, clinical practice is defined as any work undertaken by an optometrist that relates to the care of an individual patient. Non-clinical practice is defined as any work undertaken by an optometrist that does not relate to the care of an individual patient.

Prescribed Qualifications for Registration in the Optometrist Scope of Practice

The optometrist must satisfy all the requirements from one of the following options:

- hold a primary optometry degree from a New Zealand or Australian university accredited by the Board for the purposes of registration in New Zealand, and published on the Board’s website (Pathway 1 – “Optometrist”); **or**
- hold a primary optometry degree from an overseas university accredited by the Board for the purposes of registration in New Zealand and published on the Board’s website, **and** have an offer of employment to work as an educator in optometry in a New Zealand education institution (Pathway 2 – “Optometrist Educator”); **or**
- hold a primary optometry degree from an overseas university accredited by the Board for the purposes of registration in New Zealand and published on the Board’s website, **and** have completed a Board-accredited therapeutics qualification, **and** have an offer of employment to work as an educator in optometry in a New Zealand education institution (Pathway 3 – “Optometrist Educator - Prescriber”); **or**
- hold General Registration in Australia.

2. Provisional Optometrist Scope of Practice (Time-limited)

An optometrist registered in the provisional optometrist scope of practice provides evidence-based comprehensive eye

health and vision care in a professional and ethical manner (excluding the prescribing of therapeutic medicines), in accordance with the HPCA Act, works under supervision, and is in the process of completing Board-accredited training to prescribe therapeutic medicines.

The Provisional Optometrist Scope of Practice is time-limited and registration in this scope of practice will end after three years, or other period as specified by the Board from time to time, or on the successful completion of a Board-accredited therapeutics qualification leading to registration in the Optometrist Scope of Practice.

Evidence of enrolment in a Board-accredited therapeutics course will be required at the time of registration.

The optometrist's registration may be subject to conditions as set out in section 22(3) of the HPCA Act.

These conditions may include:

- a requirement to practise under supervision;
- a requirement to practise under oversight;
- that the practitioner may not perform certain tasks, or that those tasks are only performed under certain circumstances;
- a requirement to practise only in a stated capacity, for example as an employee or a nominated person or a person of a stated class;
- a requirement to practise only for a specified period;
- a requirement to get one or more stated qualifications or further experience of a stated kind; and
- a requirement to comply with any condition the Board believes to be necessary to protect the safety of the public.

Prescribed Qualifications for Registration in the Provisional Optometrist Scope of Practice

The optometrist must provide evidence of a pass in the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ) Competency in Optometry Examination (Pathway 4 – 'Provisional').

3. Dispensing Optician Scope of Practice

A dispensing optician registered in the Dispensing Optician Scope of Practice has a qualification prescribed by the Board, is involved in the practice of interpreting and dispensing optical prescriptions, and may perform specified delegated tasks, set by the Board, which are clinical support services for New Zealand registered optometrists or ophthalmologists who provide direct patient care.

A registered dispensing optician in New Zealand:

- A. *Is qualified to give advice and instruction in the dispensing of spectacle lenses, spectacle frames (including their fitting), contact lenses, and any other optical device intended for correction of a defect of sight.*
- B. *may perform the following delegated tasks in support of New Zealand registered optometrists or ophthalmologists who provide direct patient care:*
 - *Operate diagnostic equipment, including but not limited to, automated visual field analyser, auto-refractor, non-contact tonometer, digital imaging devices, colour vision tests, standardised visual perceptual tests*
 - *Administration of pre-test questionnaires and obtaining of health information*
 - *Instruction of treatment plans*
 - *Administration of medicines under a Standing Order*

"Delegated tasks" means activities that are delegated to a dispensing optician by an optometrist or ophthalmologist and which are done under the supervision of the optometrist or ophthalmologist (not necessarily direct supervision). The responsibility for ensuring the dispensing optician has the knowledge and training to perform the delegated task lies with the delegating health practitioner (optometrist or ophthalmologist), as does any interpretation, diagnosis, treatment outcomes and subsequent management of the patient.

Prescribed Qualifications for Registration in the Dispensing Optician Scope of Practice

- The applicant holds the qualification Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing, awarded by the New South Wales Technical and Further Education Commission, or proof of eligibility to graduate from this course, and has submitted a completed and signed record of training book showing evidence of the completion of a minimum of 800 hours of practical experience as specified in the record of training book, within two years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board (Pathway 5 – "Dispensing Optician"); **or**
- The applicant holds the qualification Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing (conferred on or after 31 May 2009), awarded by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, or proof of eligibility to graduate from this course, has

completed the “Perform Edge and Fit” module as part of the qualification, and has submitted a completed and signed record of training book showing evidence of the completion of a minimum of 800 hours of practical experience as specified in the record of training book, within two years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board (Pathway 5 – “Dispensing Optician”); **or**

- The applicant holds the qualification Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing, awarded by the Australasian College of Optical Dispensing, or proof of eligibility to graduate from this course, and has submitted a completed and signed record of training book showing evidence of the completion of a minimum of 800 hours of practical experience as specified in the Board’s record of training book, within two years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board (Pathway 5 – “Dispensing Optician”); **or**
- The applicant holds the qualification FBDO (UK) (Pathway 5 – “Dispensing Optician”); **or**
- The applicant holds the qualification FBDO (Overseas), and has submitted a completed and signed record of training book showing evidence of the completion of a minimum of 800 hours of practical experience, within two years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board (Pathway 5 – “Dispensing Optician”); **or**
- The applicant has passed an optical dispensing examination approved by the board (Pathway 5 – “Dispensing Optician”).

Dated at Wellington this 8th day of December 2020.

ANTONY McFELIN, Registrar, Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board.