



## **POLICY FOR REGISTRATION OF OPTOMETRISTS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND UNDER THE TRANS-TASMAN MUTUAL RECOGNITION ACT 1997**

### **1. Policy purpose and background**

- 1.1. This policy outlines the requirements for practising as an optometrist within Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) via the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 (TTMR Act).
- 1.2. Optometry is a registered health profession in Australia and is managed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).
- 1.3. Through the TTMR Act, optometrists registered with AHPRA, may be registered with the Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board (ODOB) in NZ, obtain a practising certificate, and work in NZ without the need to be assessed as an international (overseas) qualified practitioner.
- 1.4. The prescribed qualifications accredited for registration are listed in the *Scopes of practice* (Appendix 1) and *Registration pathways* (Appendix 2) documents.

### **2. The scope of this policy**

- 2.1. This policy applies to optometrists registered with AHPRA who want to register to practise within Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ).
- 2.2. Practitioners need to meet the following criteria in the *Optometrist scope of practice* to be eligible for registration with the ODOB:
  - 2.2.1. Registration with AHPRA in the optometry profession, and
  - 2.2.2. Be “endorsed as qualified to administer, obtain, possess, prescribe, supply or use topical schedule 2, 3 or 4 medicines for the purposes of the practice of optometry.”
- 2.3. AHPRA-registered practitioners who are not “endorsed as qualified to administer, obtain, possess, prescribe, supply or use topical schedule 2, 3 or 4 medicines for the purposes of the practice of optometry”, will be eligible for registration with the ODOB in the *Optometrist scope of practice*<sup>1</sup>, but will have a condition imposed on their scope (under section 22(1) of the *Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003* (HPCA Act)). The condition will state that they are not authorised to prescribe medicines. This will appear on the Public Register on the ODOB website, as well as on their Annual practising certificate (APC), should they apply for one.

### **3. Acronyms and abbreviations**

- 3.1. The following acronyms and abbreviations are used in this policy:

Aotearoa New Zealand	NZ
Annual Practising Certificate	APC
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency	AHPRA
Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003	HPCA Act
Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board	ODOB
Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1987	TTMR Act

<sup>1</sup> <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gs5669>

## 4. Definitions and interpretation

4.1. The following definitions and interpretations are used in this policy:

Australian graduates	Graduates who hold a prescribed qualification that is from an Australian-based education institute and is a prescribed qualification of a particular scope of practice in NZ. These graduates can also apply for registration under the TTMR Act.
First language	The language a person learnt to speak first, also known as their mother tongue or home language.
Good standing (professional status)	A practitioner who, in the past five years, has not been the subject of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• any concerns about their ability to perform the functions of their scope of practice due to a mental or physical conditions</li><li>• a competence review or required to complete a competence programme</li><li>• any disciplinary/ conduct proceedings, and</li><li>• any complaints with the ODOB, Health and Disability Commissioner, or overseas authorities.</li></ul>
Health practitioner	As defined in the HPCA Act which states a “health practitioner or practitioner means a person who is, or is deemed to be, registered with an authority as a practitioner of a particular health profession”. In this document, an optometrist and/ or dispensing optician registered with the ODOB.
Optometrist	A health practitioner with recognised qualifications registered with the ODOB, under the Optometrist, Provisional Optometrist or Specialist Optometrist scope of practice. An optometrist provides evidence-based comprehensive eye health and vision care in a professional, culturally safe, and ethical manner, in accordance with the HPCA Act and ODOB standards. Optometrists conduct eye examinations, diagnose eye disease or other conditions, and prescribe optical appliances or medications for defects in sight or diseases of the eyes. An optometrist must be registered with the ODOB and hold a current practising certificate to practise in NZ. Optometrists are required to maintain their competence through a recertification programme to be allowed to keep practising.
Prescribed qualification	As defined in the HPCA Act which states a “prescribed qualification means a qualification for the time being prescribed under section 12 for a scope of practice.” In summary, section 12 outlines an authority must prescribe qualifications for each of its scopes of practice. These prescribed qualifications may designate one or more of the following: a degree or diploma from an educational institute ODOB has accredited, successful completion of a degree, course or programme accredited by ODOB, a pass in a specified exam or assessment set and approved by ODOB, registration with an overseas organisation that performs functions that correspond with those performed by ODOB or experience in the provision of a health service of a particular kind.
Scope of practice	As defined in the HPCA Act which states a “scope of practice: a) means any health service that forms part of a health profession and that is for the time being described under section 11, and b) in relation to a health practitioner of that profession, means 1 or more of such health services that the practitioner is, under an authorisation granted under section 21, permitted to perform, subject to any conditions for the time being imposed by the responsible authority.”

## 5. The registration process for applicants under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997

5.1. Applicants applying for registration are required to:

- 5.1.1. Complete the relevant application and pay the required registration fee (non-refundable). Please refer to the ODOB’s *Registration policy*.
- 5.1.2. Provide proof of identity as per the ODOB’s *Identity policy*.

- 5.1.3. Provide information regarding any issues that may affect their ability to practise safely in NZ as per the ODOB's *Fitness policy*.
  - 5.1.4. Give consent to the ODOB to inquire about and exchange information with the relevant Australian authorities regarding activities in the practice of optometry or otherwise pertaining to matters relevant to the notice (notice asking for information on registration details, history, any conditions/ disciplinary/ competence matters etc that may exist).
  - 5.1.5. Provide evidence of good standing with any other regulatory bodies currently or previously registered with, and details of any disciplinary action taken or pending.
  - 5.1.6. Providing a verified criminal convictions check, in NZ and/ or an overseas conviction clearance/ check where relevant. Convictions will be managed under the ODOB's *Convictions policy*.
  - 5.1.7. Where English is not the applicant's first language, they are required to meet the English proficiency requirements as per the ODOB's *English language policy*.
  - 5.1.8. Declare and provide information about any mental or physical health conditions that may impact on the applicant's ability to perform the required practise of an optometrist as per the ODOB's *Health policy*.
  - 5.1.9. Provide information regarding any disciplinary action taken by their academic institution.
- 5.2. Applicants must also provide evidence of the following **before** they apply for an annual practising certificate (APC):
- 5.2.1. valid cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)/ first aid certification that meets ODOB's requirements, and
  - 5.2.2. completion of an ODOB-accredited Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) course<sup>2</sup>.

## 6. Deemed registered

- 6.1. Applicants are deemed registered from the time a completed application and payment for registration is received by the ODOB. Therefore, pending grant or refusal of registration, the applicant is entitled to carry out their occupation in NZ as if they were subject to registration in NZ (s24 TTMR Act).
- 6.2. Although deemed registered as noted above, practitioners need to hold a current APC to practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is illegal to practice without a practising certificate. No person may claim to be practising as a health practitioner of a particular kind or do anything to suggest that they are practising unless the practitioner holds a current APC within the scope of practice in which they are registered.
- 6.3. Applicants who wish to practice whilst deemed registered must also make an application for a practising certificate. Please refer to the ODOB's *Policy for issuing of practicing certificates*.
- 6.4. An application takes a minimum of 20 working days to process before a decision about registration can be made.

## 7. Conditions

- 7.1. Where an applicant is subject to any condition/s on their practice in Australia, the ODOB will review the condition/s and consider if an equivalent condition/s should apply in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 7.2. Also refer to section 2.3 of this policy.

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<sup>2</sup> Effective as from 1 April 2024. Refer to the ODOB's *Registration policy*. Please visit the ODOB's Event listing page or contact [cpd@odob.health.nz](mailto:cpd@odob.health.nz) for more information.

## 8. Deferment or declining of registration

- 8.1. The ODOB may consider deferring a decision on registration for up to 6 months under the circumstances listed in section 21 of the TTMR Act.
- 8.2. The ODOB may decline to register an applicant under the TTMR Act where the applicant is found to have provided false or misleading information or documents for the purposes of registration.
- 8.3. Decisions made by the ODOB to impose conditions, postpone or deny registration under this policy can be appealed to The Trans-Tasman Occupations Tribunal<sup>3</sup>.

## 9. References

- 9.1. Commonwealth of Australia. 2014. Users Guide to the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) and the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement (TTMRA). Available at: <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/1513-users-guide-to-the-trans-tasman-mutual-recognition-arrangement-pdf>.

## 10. Related legislation, policies, and procedures

- 10.1. The ODOB's *Registration policy*
- 10.2. ODOB's *Policy for issuing of practicing certificates*.
- 10.3. ODOB's *English language requirements and tests policy*
- 10.4. ODOB's *Competence to practise policy*
- 10.5. ODOB's *Fitness to practise policy*
- 10.6. ODOB's *Recertification policy*
- 10.7. ODOB's *Assessment policy*
- 10.8. ODOB's *Policy for Optometrists returning to practice in Aotearoa New Zealand*

Revision history			
Version	Changes	Approval date	Next review
v1	Drafted as a result of the ODOB's 2022/2023 transformation programme that included a full review of key policies.	January 2024	2027

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.justice.govt.nz/tribunals/trans-tasman-occupations/apply/>

### SCOPES OF PRACTICE

The Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board (ODOB, the Board) has three scopes of practice for optometrists, and one scope of practice for dispensing opticians.

#### 1. Dispensing Optician Scope of Practice

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 A registered dispensing optician in New Zealand:
  - 1.2.1 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.
  - 1.2.2 May perform the following delegated tasks in support of New Zealand registered optometrists or ophthalmologists who provide direct patient care:
    - a) 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
    - b) Administration of pre-test questionnaires and obtaining of health information
    - c) Instruction of treatment plans
    - d) Administration of medicines under a Standing Order
    - e) “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.
- 1.3 Prescribed qualifications for registration in the Dispensing Optician Scope of Practice
  - 1.3.1 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 1 – ‘Dispensing Optician’); or
  - 1.3.2 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 1 – ‘Dispensing Optician’); or
  - 1.3.3 The applicant holds the qualification FBDO (UK) (Pathway 1 – ‘Dispensing Optician’); or
  - 1.3.4 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 1 – ‘Dispensing Optician’); or
  - 1.3.5 The applicant has passed an optical dispensing examination approved by the board (Pathway 1 – ‘Dispensing Optician’).

## **2. Provisional Optometrist Scope of Practice (time-limited)**

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 Evidence of enrolment in a Board-accredited therapeutics course will be required at the time of registration.
- 2.4 The optometrist's registration may be subject to conditions as set out in section 22(3) of the HPCA Act.
- 2.5 These conditions may include:
  - 2.5.1 a requirement to practise under supervision;
  - 2.5.2 a requirement to practise under oversight;
  - 2.5.3 that the practitioner may not perform certain tasks, or that those tasks are only performed under certain circumstances;
  - 2.5.4 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;
  - 2.5.5 a requirement to practise only for a specified period;
  - 2.5.6 a requirement to get one or more stated qualifications or further experience of a stated kind; and
  - 2.5.7 a requirement to comply with any condition the Board believes to be necessary to protect the safety of the public.
- 2.6 Prescribed qualifications for registration in the Provisional Optometrist Scope of Practice
  - 2.6.1 The optometrist must provide evidence of a pass in the OCANZ COE (Pathway 2 – 'Provisional').

## **3. Optometrist Scope of Practice**

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The "practice of optometry" includes:
  - 3.2.1 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;
  - 3.2.2 assessing, diagnosing, treating and managing conditions affecting the eye and its appendages;
  - 3.2.3 prescribing medicines whose sale and supply is restricted by law to prescription by authorised prescribers;
  - 3.2.4 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;
  - 3.2.5 signing any certificate required for statutory purposes, such as driver licensing eyesight certificates; and
  - 3.2.6 holding out to the public, or representing in any manner that one is authorised to practise optometry in New Zealand.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 Prescribed qualifications for registration in the Optometrist Scope of Practice
- 3.6 The optometrist must satisfy all the requirements from one of the following options:
  - 3.6.1 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
  - 3.6.2 hold General Registration in Australia.

#### **4. Specialist optometrist scope of practice – Ophthalmic Laser Surgeries**

- 4.1 An optometrist registered in the Specialist optometrist scope of practice – Ophthalmic laser surgeries is authorised to perform specified ophthalmic surgical procedures below the mucous membrane or surface of the skin. Specifically, they are authorised to perform:
  - 4.1.1 neodymium:yttrium-aluminum-garnet (Nd:YAG) laser capsulotomy; and/or
  - 4.1.2 neodymium:yttrium-aluminum-garnet (Nd:YAG) laser peripheral iridotomy in an approved hospital setting.
- 4.2 Prescribed Qualification for the Specialist optometrist scope of practice – Ophthalmic laser surgeries
- 4.3 The optometrist must satisfy all of the following requirements:
  - 4.3.1 Hold registration in the Optometrist Scope of Practice and not be subject to any conditions; and
  - 4.3.2 have worked in a hospital ophthalmology department for a minimum of three years with at least 400 hours as a clinician in the relevant cataract and/or glaucoma clinic (as applies); and
  - 4.3.3 have demonstrated their understanding and comprehensive knowledge in the specified areas of competence for the safe delivery of ophthalmic laser surgeries published on the Board’s website (Pathway 4 – Specialist optometrist scope of practice – Ophthalmic laser surgeries) to the satisfaction of their supervising ophthalmologist; and
  - 4.3.4 have satisfactorily observed the minimum required number of surgeries being performed by their supervising ophthalmologist published on the Board’s website (Pathway 4 – Specialist optometrist scope of practice – Ophthalmic laser surgeries), attested to by their supervising ophthalmologist; and
  - 4.3.5 have satisfactorily and independently performed the required number of surgeries under the supervision of their supervising ophthalmologist published on the Board’s website (Pathway 4 – Specialist optometrist scope of practice – Ophthalmic laser surgeries), attested to by their supervising ophthalmologist.

# REGISTRATION PATHWAYS FROM ACCREDITED PRESCRIBED QUALIFICATIONS

## Introduction

The Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board (ODOB) has four registration pathways:

1. Registration Pathway 1: Dispensing Optician
2. Registration Pathway 2: Provisional Optometrist
3. Registration Pathway 3: Optometrist
4. Registration Pathway 4: Specialist Optometrist – Ophthalmic Laser Surgeries

Each registration pathway lists accredited programmes leading to registration in a specific scope of practice.

## Registration Pathway 1: Dispensing Optician

*Registration in the Dispensing optician scope of practice.*

This registration pathway is for those who hold one of the prescribed qualifications listed below. This will allow registration in the Dispensing optician scope of practice.

To apply for this scope, applicants must hold any one of the listed prescribed qualifications.

### Prescribed Qualifications:

1. Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing, Australasian College of Optical Dispensing (ACOD), Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, 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 2 years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board.
2. Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing, New South Wales (NSW) Technical and Further Education (TAFE)/ TAFE digital (conducted by Open Technical Education Network (OTEN))<sup>4</sup>, Australia, 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 2 years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board.
3. Level 6<sup>5</sup> Diploma in Ophthalmic Dispensing (United Kingdom (UK) pathway), Association of British Dispensing Opticians (ABDO), United Kingdom (UK). Graduates are awarded the Fellowship of British Dispensing Opticians (FBDO).
4. The Level 6<sup>6</sup> Diploma in Ophthalmic Dispensing (Overseas pathway, for students outside the UK), ABDO; 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 2 years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board. Graduates from this course are awarded the FBDO.
5. The Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing awarded by the RMIT University (Melbourne, Australia) (between 31 May 2009 - 15 September 2022)<sup>7</sup>.
6. An alternative qualification approved by the Board; and the Board may require a pass grade from the Competence in Optical Dispensing Examination (CODE), or another optical dispensing examination as approved by the Board.

<sup>4</sup> NSW TAFE's name has changed to TAFE Digital.

<sup>5</sup> The ABDO programme is mapped at Level 6 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) (England/Northern Ireland) and is recognised by the General Optical Council (GOC). A Level 6 qualification on the RQF may be recognised as a Level 7 qualification on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF), but this would require an assessment by NZQA (<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/>).

<sup>6</sup> Level 6 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) (England/Northern Ireland).

<sup>7</sup> Previously called the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) (Melbourne, Australia). Please note, on 20 July 2022, the ODOB has revoked this prescribed qualification. It comes into force on 15 September 2022. Available at: <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2022-gs2983>.



## Registration Pathway 2: Provisional Optometrist

*Registration in the Provisional optometrist scope of practice, with a condition.*

This registration pathway is for those who have a pass in the OCANZ's COE, and who are in the process of completing a Board-accredited therapeutics qualification.

Once a practitioner has passed the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ)<sup>8</sup> Competency in Optometry Examination (COE)<sup>9</sup>, they are eligible to apply for registration in the Provisional optometrist scope of practice, with a condition (two restrictions) applied that indicates:

- the practitioner must practise under supervision, and
- is in the process of completing Board-accredited training to prescribe therapeutic medicines.

Once both restrictions on the condition are met, the practitioner is eligible to be registered in the Optometrist scope of practice. The provisional optometrist scope of practice is a time-limited scope and registration in this scope will expire in 3 years if a practitioner does not meet the conditions in the given period.

To apply for this scope, applicants must hold this prescribed qualification:

### Prescribed Qualification:

1. A pass grade in the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ) Competency in Optometry Examination.

## Registration Pathway 3: Optometrist

*Registration in the Optometrist scope of practice.*

This registration pathway is for those who hold one of the prescribed qualifications listed below. This will allow registration in the Optometrist scope of practice.

To apply for this scope, applicants must hold any one of the listed prescribed qualifications.

### Prescribed qualifications:

1. Bachelor of Optometry, Auckland University, Aotearoa New Zealand (from 2006 onwards)<sup>10</sup>
2. Bachelor of Vision Science/ Master of Optometry, Deakin University, Australia (from 2013 onwards)<sup>11</sup>
3. Bachelor of Science (Vision Science) & Master of Optometry, Flinders University, Australia (2010 onwards)<sup>12</sup>
4. Bachelor of Vision Science/ Master of Optometry, Queensland University of Technology, Australia (from 2023 onwards)<sup>13</sup>
5. Doctor of Optometry, University of Melbourne, Australia (2011 onwards)<sup>14</sup>; or the Bachelor of Optometry, UoM (2006 onwards)<sup>15</sup>
6. Bachelor of Vision Science and Master of Clinical Optometry, University of New South Wales (UNSW), Australia (2017 onwards)<sup>16</sup>; or the Bachelor of Optometry (Honours)/Bachelor of Science (2011 onwards)<sup>17</sup>; or Bachelor of Optometry (2010 onwards)<sup>18</sup>
7. Bachelor of Vision Science / Master of Optometry, University of Canberra, Australia (2019 onwards)<sup>19</sup>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ocanz.org/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ocanz.org/examination/competency-in-optometry-examination/>

<sup>10</sup> Any student that has completed their Bachelor of Optometry from 2006 onwards (conferred as of December 2006 or later), may register with the ODOB in the current Optometrist scope of practice, without any conditions prohibiting prescribing.

In 2005, and the Board developed a scope of practice "Optometrist (TPA) Endorsement" (Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agent (TPA) Endorsement) to allow those optometrists who were appropriately trained and qualified to practice as designated prescribers. When the Medicines Amendment Act 2013 and Misuse of Drugs Amendment Regulations 2014 came into effect, there was an expansion of prescribing rights for New Zealand optometrists in 2014. This legislative change recognised that optometrists in New Zealand were, by 2014, appropriately skilled to undertake prescribing of medication in their own right and did not require formal upskilling from the 2005 therapeutic (TPA) scope of practice. The Board no longer has a TPA endorsement on its optometrist scope of practice. Instead, the current Optometrist scope of practice specifies that all registered optometrists may (amongst other things) prescribe medicines.

Practitioners who chose not to upskill by 1 April 2007, were registered in the Optometrist scope of practice, with a condition that they may not prescribe medication in accordance with the 'Grandfather clause'.

<sup>11</sup> Initial accreditation date.

<sup>12</sup> This programme was first accredited in 2010 as the Bachelor of Medical Science (Vision Science) and Master of Optometry. In 2023, the programme name changed to the Bachelor of Science (Vision Science) & Master of Optometry.

<sup>13</sup> The date from when students graduated with ocular therapeutics as a part of their undergraduate course.

<sup>14</sup> Before 1994, this was the Bachelor of Science in Optometry. In 1994, it changed to the Bachelor of Optometry. In 2011, the programme changed to the Doctor of Optometry, with its first cohort graduating in December 2014.

<sup>15</sup> The date from when students graduated with ocular therapeutics as a part of their undergraduate course.

<sup>16</sup> The Bachelor of Optometry was first introduced in 1996. In 2011, the programme changed to the Bachelor of Optometry (Honours)/Bachelor of Science. In 2017, it changed to a Bachelor of Vision Science & Master of Clinical Optometry.

<sup>17</sup> Initial accreditation date.

<sup>18</sup> The date from when students graduated with ocular therapeutics as a part of their undergraduate course.

<sup>19</sup> Initial accreditation date.

8. Doctor of Optometry, University of Western Australia (from 2021 onwards)<sup>20</sup>
9. For applicants who hold an international optometry qualification which is not one of the prescribed qualifications listed above:
  - (a) a pass grade in both the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ)<sup>21</sup> Competency in Optometry Examination (COE)<sup>22</sup> and the Assessment of Competence in Ocular Therapeutics (ACOT); or
  - (b) a pass grade in both the OCANZ COE and a pass in an OCANZ-accredited ocular therapeutics qualification. These qualifications currently include:
    - i. Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics, Australian College of Optometry, Australia (from 2013 onwards)<sup>23</sup>
    - ii. Graduate Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics, Queensland University of Technology, Australia (conferred between 2006 and 2017)<sup>24</sup>
    - iii. Graduate Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics, University of New South Wales, Australia (from 2007 onwards)<sup>25</sup>.

Please note, each application for registration is assessed individually and conditions on a practitioner's scope may apply.

## Registration Pathway 4: Specialist Optometrist – Ophthalmic Laser Surgeries

*Registration in the Specialist optometrist scope of practice – Ophthalmic laser surgeries.*

This registration pathway is for those already registered in the Optometry scope of practice and who have successfully completed the Board-approved training programme (prescribed qualification) for performing specific laser surgeries.

This will allow for registration in the Specialist optometrist scope of practice. Optometrists registered under this scope are authorised to perform specified ophthalmic surgical procedures below the mucous membrane or surface of the skin, specifically:

- capsulotomy; and/or
- laser peripheral iridotomy.

To apply for this scope, applicants must hold the following prescribed qualification:

### Prescribed qualification:

This prescribed qualification is an internship-based training programme. The prescribed qualification for the registration pathway in the Specialist Optometrist Scope of Practice – Ophthalmic Laser Surgeries requires applicants:

1. To hold registration in the Optometrist Scope of Practice and not be subject to any conditions.
2. To have worked in a hospital ophthalmology department for a minimum of three years with at least 400 hours as a clinician in a Board-approved clinic (as applies).
3. To have demonstrated their understanding and comprehensive knowledge in the following specified areas of competence for the safe delivery of ophthalmic laser surgeries to the satisfaction of their supervising ophthalmologist:
  - (a) Comprehensive knowledge of the relevant anatomy and physiology of the eye and adnexa
  - (b) Knowledge of the physics of light and laser, and the penetration of light through ocular tissues
  - (c) An understanding of the interaction of light and living tissue including thermal effects, photocoagulative effects, photoablative effects and photodisruptive effects
  - (d) Knowledge of the wavelengths and powers utilised in ophthalmic lasers for the specific surgery
  - (e) Knowledge of required sterile techniques for performing laser surgery

<sup>20</sup> Initial accreditation date.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ocanz.org/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.ocanz.org/examination/competency-in-optometry-examination/>

<sup>23</sup> Initial accreditation date.

<sup>24</sup> This programme has been discontinued.

<sup>25</sup> Initial accreditation date.

- (f) Knowledge of surgical procedure and specialised equipment
  - (g) Knowledge of the risks and benefits for each surgery
  - (h) Knowledge of appropriate management plans for adverse outcomes.
4. To have satisfactorily observed a minimum of 20 Nd:YAG capsulotomies and/or Nd:YAG laser periphery iridotomies (as applies) being performed by their supervising ophthalmologist, attested to by their supervising ophthalmologist.
  5. To have satisfactorily and independently performed a minimum of 20 Nd:YAG capsulotomies and/or 10 Nd:YAG laser periphery iridotomies (as applies) under the supervision of their supervising ophthalmologist, attested to by their supervising ophthalmologist.