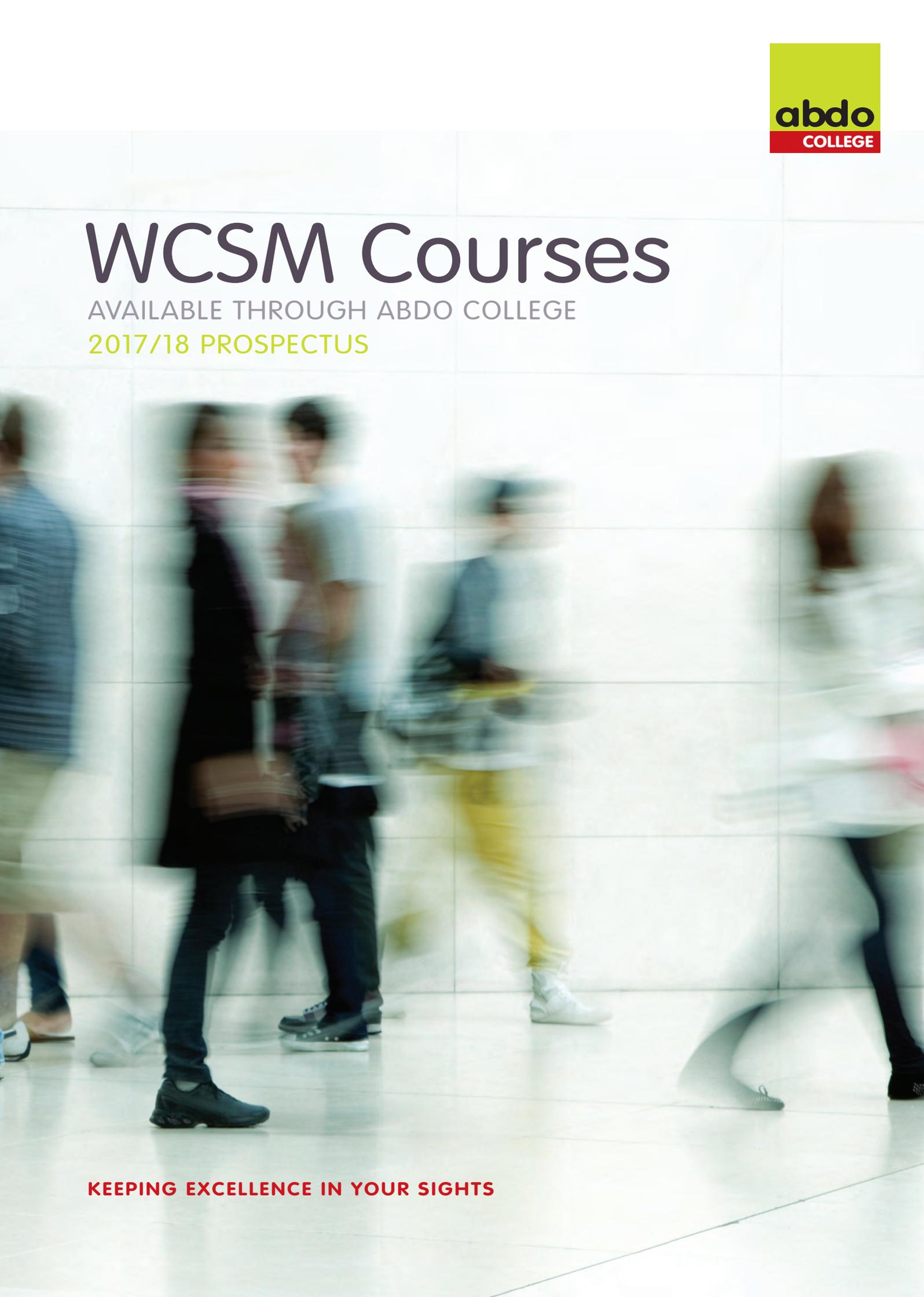


# WCSM Courses

AVAILABLE THROUGH ABDO COLLEGE

2017/18 PROSPECTUS

A blurred photograph of a busy school hallway with students walking. The image is out of focus, creating a sense of motion and activity. The students are wearing various casual clothing, and the floor is a light-colored tile.

**KEEPING EXCELLENCE IN YOUR SIGHTS**





## The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers

The Spectacle Makers' Company (WCSM) was founded to improve the quality of life for the visually impaired. At the time of its incorporation in 1629, however, there was little more that could be done other than to ensure that the spectacles issued to them were fit for use – hence the Company's name.

The early Spectacle Makers also specialised in the manufacture of scientific instruments, and they would have supplied much of the technical equipment to be found on board the Fleet at Trafalgar. Increasingly, however, an appreciable number of them became involved in the development of vision science which has now reached the point where the preservation of eyesight, including the prevention and treatment of the various diseases that can affect the eye, embraces a number of discrete professional and technical disciplines. All are represented within the Livery Company, enabling it to position itself as the apolitical forum within which all aspects of eyecare may be debated in a spirit of fellowship.

For almost a hundred years, the Company trained and qualified "high street opticians", as witnessed by the letters 'FSMC' and 'SMC (Disp)' still occasionally displayed in some optical practices today. However, since the 1980s, when it played a prominent role in the establishment of the College of Optometrists and the Association of British Dispensing Opticians, it has focused its education programme on driving up skill levels among the non-regulated workforce within the optical sector, namely the optical technicians and optical practice support staff. The Company has been accredited as a national 'awarding body' in England, Northern Ireland and Wales since 2001, and in Scotland since 2010. All WCSM qualifications are based on National Occupational Standards which the Company's representatives helped to develop.

ABDO College provides training courses leading to WCSM qualifications. WCSM is the awarding body. Successful candidates will be presented with their qualification certificates at the Company's annual ceremony at Apothecaries' Hall in London each October.

WCSM qualifications lay a solid foundation for the development of essential optical skills and open up a clearly defined career pathway for those entering optics at the lowest levels.

## ABDO College

In 2001 the Association of British Dispensing Opticians (ABDO) established their own College, ABDO College, as a centre of excellence raising the standards in optical education for the whole profession.

ABDO College is based in Godmersham, Kent and specialises in distance and blended learning education for the optical profession. It is the only college in the UK devoted solely to the teaching of the theory and practical aspects of ophthalmic dispensing and its related specialist areas.

Offering a range of courses through Access, Diploma, Degree, Advanced and Honours, ABDO College provides members of the Association with quality programmes leading to ABDO examinations. Thereby offering optical professionals the opportunity to enhance their own knowledge and career progression and enabling development for practice staff at many levels.

Devotion and care are coupled with extensive professional knowledge to equip students with the understanding and skills for their chosen progression. ABDO College has an impressive reputation for high standards and exemplary pass rates.

For those studying towards a Level 6 qualification or higher, face-to-face tuition, led by eminent and appropriately qualified lecturers, takes place at the first class training facility in Kent. The College, which is the centrepiece of the Godmersham Park Estate, lies within 1,000 acres of beautiful Kent countryside and benefits from stunning views across the North Downs. Situated between Ashford and Canterbury, it is accessible by rail, bus and car and provides an ideal venue for study and reflection away from the pressures and demands of everyday practice life.

## WCSM Courses

### Available through ABDO College

The available WCSM courses range from Level 2 Optical Support to Level 4 Optical Technicians (and soon to be available a Level 4 Optical Assistant qualification).

The courses at Level 2 and 3 consist of three mandatory units and then a range of optional units. Learners can build up credits rather than having to do a qualification in one hit.

### How do I apply?

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form contact us by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).

### Fees

Please note that examination fees are not included in course fees. For details on course fees contact ABDO College.

For examination fees and examination application forms contact:  
ABDO Examinations and Registration  
The Old Dairy, Godmersham Park,  
Godmersham, Canterbury, Kent CT4 7DT  
tel: 01227 732 921  
fax: 01227 733 641  
email: [examinations@abdo.org.uk](mailto:examinations@abdo.org.uk)

**If you require any further assistance please call the courses team at ABDO College 01227 738 829 option 1**

## Contents

- 4 Level 2 Optical Support
- 8 Level 3 Optical Support
- 12 Level 4 Diploma for Optical Assistants
- 15 Level 4 Diploma for Optical Technicians
- 18 Fast Track Technician Training for FBDOs

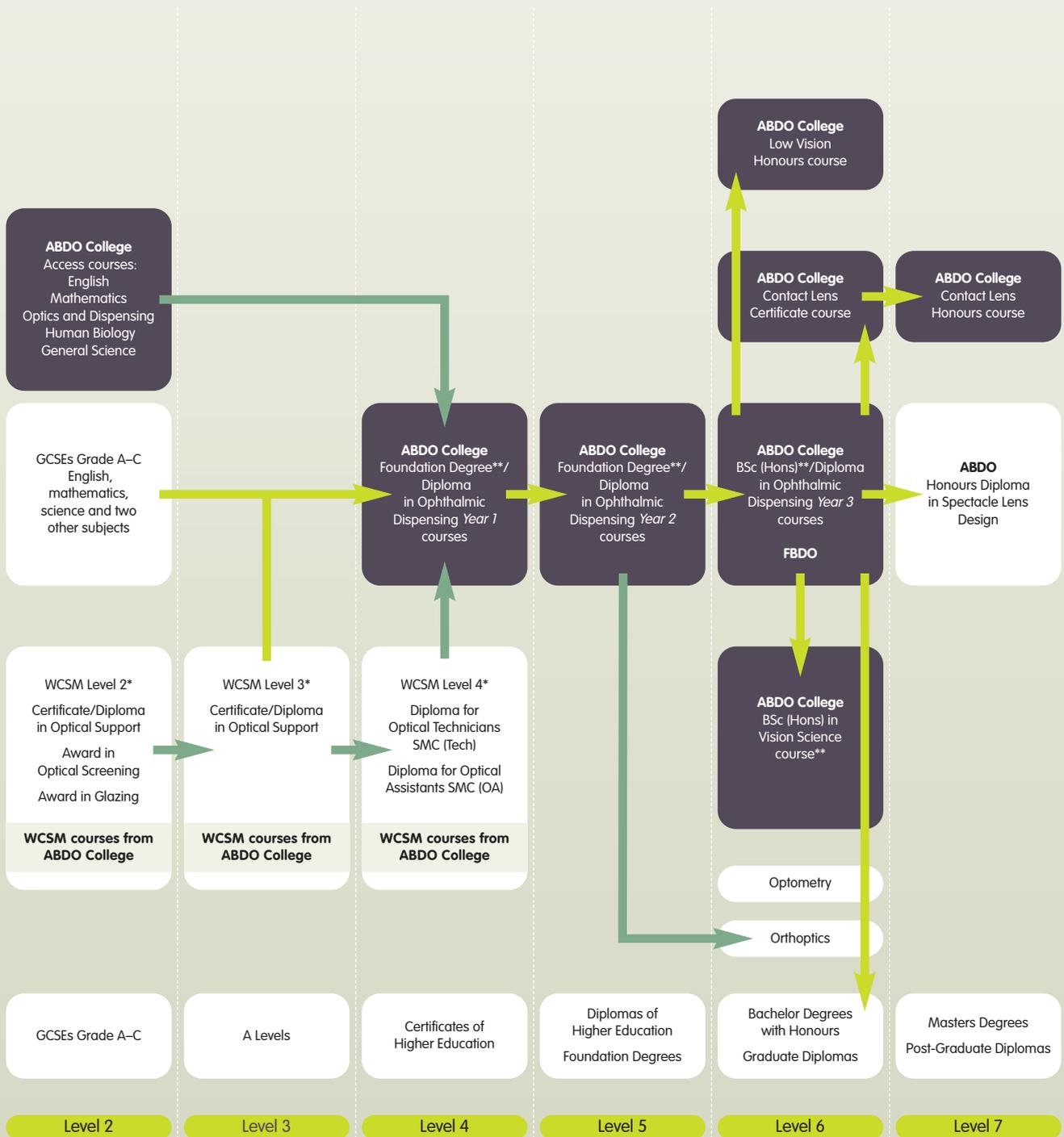
### Qualifications Accredited in Scotland

- 20 SCQF Level 5 Certificate in Optical Care
- 22 SCQF Level 7 Certificate in Optical Care



# Optical career progression pathway

The optical career progression pathway chart below outlines the central role played by ABDO College and how both ABDO College and WCSM courses offer a clearly defined career development pathway.



\*The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers qualifications

\*\*In conjunction with Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU)



# Level 2 Optical Support

## Overview

The WCSM qualification in optical support is designed for all staff working within optics that do not have a registerable qualification with the General Optical Council. Therefore, it is applicable whether you work in retail optics, manufacturing, sales or technical support. There are three mandatory units, plus optional units for you to choose from. You can choose optional units which are most applicable to your own role. Each optional unit is detailed below and includes a recommendation as to which role it would best suit. The Level 2 Optical Support qualification is the same level as a GCSE.

## The programme

This is a distance learning programme which is suitable for all optical support staff. The precise format, time and cost will depend on the units you choose and if there is a practical element or not.

## The learning outcomes

You can study just one unit but this is not large enough to be considered equivalent in size to a GCSE. However you can add on more units and work towards a certificate or diploma. If you achieve 37 or more credits then you will be awarded a diploma which is equivalent to five GCSEs.

## Mandatory units

### UNIT

**1**

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN OPTICS** (7 Credits)

The aim of this unit is to help the learner to understand the roles and responsibilities of staff within the optical profession, including how to communicate and deal with patients and patients' entitlements and the procedures required within the health service. It also gives clear guidance on the limits of responsibilities of all staff and the requirements for contractors working under the GOS contract. It therefore gives all within the profession an insight into the roles across all disciplines and also who does what and how and why. It outlines the role of the representative bodies and the GOC.

### UNIT

**2**

#### **COMMUNICATION IN OPTICS** (6 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to know how to provide customer service within optics and the skills required for effective communication. It will include communication across all professional disciplines and between supplier, practices and patients. It includes customer service and how good communication can improve the customer experience.

### UNIT

**3**

#### **THE EYE AND AMETROPIA** (8 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to understand the basic anatomy, function and pathology of the eye and the common eye conditions including myopia, hypermetropia, astigmatism, presbyopia as well as binocular vision and visual fields. To understand optical prescriptions and transposition.

To gain a basic understanding of cataracts, glaucoma, diabetes and their treatment and the advantages and disadvantages of the treatment. This unit will therefore give the learner all the underpinning knowledge required when working within any environment within the optical profession.

## Optional units

A minimum of one unit needs to be selected

### UNIT

**1**

#### **THE PROVISION OF SPECTACLE LENSES IN OPTICS** (8 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to gain an understanding of the optics of lenses and their design and form including the significance of optical centres, decentration, prisms and their application, and the types and uses of special and safety lenses, coatings and tints.

This unit is strongly recommended for anyone working in practice who dispenses, or in a lab. It would be useful for any member of staff working within customer services within a lens manufacturing situation or as a representative for a lens company.

### UNIT

**2**

#### **THE PROVISION OF SPECTACLE FRAMES IN OPTICS** (7 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to understand the components of a spectacle frame, the materials used in their construction and manufacture, the standard measurements of a frame and how to assist patients in choosing suitable frames to match their facial shape and features. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone working in practice who dispenses, or those working in a laboratory. It would be useful for any member of staff working within customer services within a frame manufacturing situation or as a representative for a frame company.

### UNIT

**3**

#### **THE PROVISION OF CONTACT LENSES IN OPTICS** (7 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to understand the different types and wearing modalities of contact lenses, their advantages and disadvantages, the general principles of fitting and lens care, and the importance of good record keeping, customer hygiene and aftercare visits. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone working in practice who deals with contact lens queries. It would be useful for any member of staff working within customer services within a contact lens manufacturing situation or as a representative for a contact lens company.

### UNIT

**4**

#### **THE GLAZING OF SPECTACLES** (12 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to understand the fitting of lenses to frames to produce spectacles. They also need to be able to fit lenses to a range of spectacle frames. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone who works in a laboratory. It would be useful for any member of staff working within customer services or in retail who would also like to know how to glaze.

**UNIT****5****SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF OPTICAL SCREENING**  
(6 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to be able to understand the purpose and be able to use a wide range of screening equipment that would be used in practice. It also covers the conditions that are screened for in practice and the diagnosis, treatment and ongoing care for these conditions. It covers the restrictions on the screening function as it is a delegated function by the optometrist. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone working in practice or hospital that has any involvement in the screening process.

It would be useful for any member of staff working within practice and for representatives of equipment manufacturers or suppliers.

**UNIT****6****SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF REFRACTIVE SURGERY**  
(5 Credits)

The aim of this unit is to give the learner an understanding of the techniques for refractive surgery, the complications and aftercare involved and how to recommend the best product.

This unit is strongly recommended for anyone working in a practice or hospital environment that advises on or carries out refractive surgery.

**UNIT****8****REPAIRING SPECTACLES**  
(5 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to understand the processes involved in the adjustment and repair of spectacles and be able to adjust and repair spectacles. This unit would be useful for any member of staff working within practice and manufacturing.

**UNIT****9****LENS TREATMENTS AND SAFETY EYEWEAR**  
(7 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to understand the special treatments that can be applied to spectacle lenses and the different types of safety eyewear available. This unit would be strongly recommended for any individual working in tinting or coating. It would be useful for anyone working in a laboratory environment.

**UNIT****7****SPECTACLE LENS PRODUCTION METHODS**  
(12 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to know the principles of lens production. It includes the different types of surfacing, quality control and the standards involved with lens production.

## FAQs

**Who is running the course?**

ABDO College will be running this course.

**Do I need to attend college?**

No.

**Who is it aimed at?**

The course is aimed at any one working within optics. It is an entry level qualification, so equivalent to a GCSE. It is ideal for school leavers, those that have not studied for a significant length of time and those that need a gentle introduction into the world of learning.

**Do I have to be working in optics?**

Yes. It is essential that you are working in an optical environment so that you can receive adequate support from your supervisor and colleagues and in order to gain the necessary practical experience. You need a supervisor and the support of your employer to work towards this qualification.

**Are there any special requirements?**

Yes. You will need to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Your study material will be provided on a 'virtual learning environment'.

**What qualifications do I need to start Level 2 Optical Support?**

None.

# Learning and assessment

## How does distance learning study work?

You will receive your course material and assignments via our virtual learning environment. All log-in details and setting up processes will be sent to you after enrolment. This will include your tutor details. All contact can be made via the online resource. You will work through an assignment each week. This is then submitted to your personal tutor.



They will mark it for you and return it to you with some feedback. You can expect this coursework to take you between two and four hours per week and you will need to be disciplined to make sure you keep up.

## What is work-based learning?

While you are studying for your qualification you will be working in an optical environment, either a practice, a laboratory or a manufacturing organisation. This training consists not just of learning coursework but also of your learning in practice with your supervisor and colleagues. You will learn practical skills from your workplace to supplement your learning.

## Duration

To complete at least four units and therefore a Certificate in Optical Support, the course will be approximately 26–34 weeks, depending on the units chosen.

## Assessment method

Most units will be assessed with a final examination; in some cases there will also be a practical project. The usual method will be to take all written units in one go and this will typically comprise of a 30 minute examination per unit. This can be taken online or at a central venue.

## Next steps

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form for this or any of our courses please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).

### Do I have to be a member of ABDO?

No.

### Do I have to register with the General Optical Council?

No.

### What will I be qualified to do after completing and achieving this qualification?

Because this is not a registerable qualification, you will not be able to register with the GOC. However, it will give you a recognised qualification that can get you started on the optical career pathway.

### What should I do if I am not sure whether this is the right course for me?

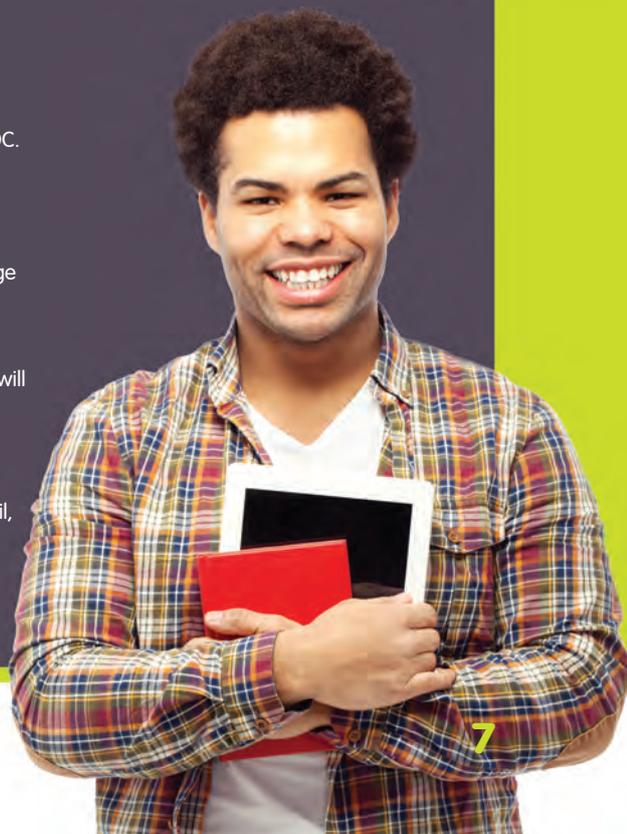
Call us. We are happy to answer questions about the available courses from ABDO College and to provide you with all the information you need to make an informed decision.

### Who should I call if I have questions or need help filling in the forms?

Call courses team at ABDO College on 01227 738 829 option 1. Any member of the team will be happy to help you.

### How do I apply?

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).



# Level 3 Optical Support

## Overview

The WCSM qualification in optical support is designed for all staff working within optics that do not have a registerable qualification with the General Optical Council. Therefore, it is applicable whether you work in retail optics, manufacturing, sales or technical support. There are three mandatory units plus optional units to then choose from. You can choose optional units which are most applicable to your own role. Each optional unit is detailed below and includes a recommendation below as to which role it would best suit. The Level 3 Optical Support qualification is the same level as an 'A' Level.

## The programme

This is a distance learning programme which is suitable for all optical support staff. The precise format, time and cost will depend on the units you choose and if there is a practical element or not.

## The learning outcomes

All WCSM courses have been designed to help you progress on the optical career pathway. Therefore you may find that if you have already studied Level 2 Optical Support (or one of the Level 2 awards) you could be exempt from some of the Level 3 Units. You will also find that if you are considering a Level 4 qualification, you will be exempt from some units by studying Level 3 Optical Support. The size of the qualification will depend on the number of units chosen. If you complete the three mandatory units plus one other you will achieve a certificate. 37 credits or more will give you a diploma.

## Mandatory units

### UNIT

**1**

#### **THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IN OPTICS** (3 Credits)

The aim of this unit is to help the learner to understand the legal implications including health and safety within an optical practice and how they relate to the role of an optical assistant. There will be elements of employment law, health & safety and GOC requirements.

### UNIT

**2**

#### **MANAGING PEOPLE IN OPTICS** (7 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for learners to know how to effectively manage relationships with colleagues including communication and supervisory skills, and how to develop other people's performance in optical practice. The learner will have the knowledge to communicate with patients/customers with impaired vision, to improve service, deal with conflict and improve selling skills. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone with a managerial or supervisory role within the optical profession.

### UNIT

**3**

#### **SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF SPECTACLES** (8 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to know and understand the principles and factors about the choice of particular lenses used in spectacles and for the learner to know and understand the benefits of the various alternatives available to the visually impaired including low vision appliances. The learner will have knowledge of the principles, designs and fitting of frames, including facial measurements, and the importance of protective and other specialist eyewear. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone who is dispensing in optical practice.

## Optional units

Learners must achieve a minimum of one of these optional units

### UNIT

**1**

#### **MATHEMATICS FOR OPTICS** (7 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to be able to understand and apply the mathematical principles used within optics. It will include calculations that require the use of geometrical mathematical principles.

### UNIT

**2**

#### **THE EYE AND THE PRINCIPLES OF OPTICS** (9 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to understand the structure of the eye and the principles upon which sight-correcting lenses are based. It will include the functions of the gross anatomical features of the eye and how refractive error is corrected. The underpinning theory of optics will be included in this unit.

### UNIT

**4**

#### **SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF CONTACT LENSES** (7 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to understand the key types, principles, designs and wearing modalities of contact lenses and for the learner to understand the more complex designs of toric and multifocal lenses and the legal framework that regulates contact lenses and solutions. The learner will know about how to identify and manage those customers who have not complied with contact lens care regimes. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone who is involved in supporting contact lens practice, especially those that perform insertion and removal appointments under the supervision of a contact lens practitioner.

### UNIT

**3**

#### **SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF OPTICAL SCREENING** (7 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to be able to interpret and understand the relevance of common optical prescriptions. The learner will have a knowledge of the principles of optical screening equipment and processes for tonometry, auto refraction and visual fields and how to obtain the best data or measurements. The learner will understand the actions required when confronted with an optical emergency.

### UNIT

**5**

#### **RIMLESS GLAZING** (5 Credits)

The aim of this unit is for the learner to be able to glaze rimless spectacles and be able to fit lenses to rimless mounts and understand the methods and principles of fitting lenses to different rimless mounts. This is a practical unit that is assessed by submitting a finished piece of work. A one day workshop (held subject to the number of students) supports this unit. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone working in a laboratory or manufacturing finished spectacles.

## UNIT

6

**PROCESSING OPTICAL WORK INSTRUCTIONS AND PROVIDING TECHNICAL SERVICE****(5 Credits)**

The aim of this unit is for the learner to be able to process customer instructions so as to be able to complete an order or a job, and to be able to provide technical guidance to customers. This unit is strongly recommended for anyone working in a practice, a laboratory or manufacturing.

## UNIT

8

**ASSURING THE QUALITY OF SPECTACLE LENSES****(5 Credits)**

The aim of this unit is for the learner to be able to assure the quality of uncut & finished spectacle lenses. This unit would be useful for any member of staff working within a practice lab and manufacturing.

## UNIT

10

**SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF REFRACTIVE SURGERY****(5 Credits)**

The aim of this unit is to give the learner an understanding of the techniques for refractive surgery, the complications and aftercare involved and how to recommend the best product.

This unit is strongly recommended for anyone working in a practice or hospital environment that advises on or carries out refractive surgery.

If the learner has already achieved this unit at Level 2 they will receive exemption from this unit at Level 3.

## UNIT

7

**SPECTACLE LENS PRODUCTION METHODS****(12 Credits)**

The aim of this unit is for the learner to know the principles of lens production. It includes the different types of surfacing, quality control and the standards involved with lens production.

If the learner has already achieved this unit at Level 2 they will receive exemption from this unit at Level 3.

## UNIT

9

**SETTING UP PRECISION OPTICAL MACHINERY****(3 Credits)**

The aim of this unit is for the learner to be able to understand the principles of precision optical machinery and to be able to calibrate and maintain the equipment. This unit would be strongly recommended for any individual working in a manufacturing environment.

## FAQs

**Who is running the course?**

ABDO College will be running this course.

**Do I need to attend college?**

No.

**Who is it aimed at?**

The course is aimed at anyone working within optics. It is designed for those in optics who have had some experience or who have left school already with GCSE maths, English and science. It is equivalent to an 'A' Level. It is ideal for those who wish to progress and further their knowledge and career. It is ideal for those considering studying for SMC (Tech) or SMC (OA) (due to be launched in September 2017) but are unsure if they have the required ability.

**Do I have to be working in optics?**

Yes. It is essential that you are working in an optical environment so that you can receive adequate support from your supervisor and colleagues and in order to gain the necessary practical experience. You need a supervisor and the support of your employer to work towards this qualification.

**Are there any special requirements?**

Yes. You will need to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Your study material will be provided on a 'virtual learning environment'.

**What qualifications do I need to start Level 3 Optical Support?**

None.

# Learning and assessment

## How does distance learning study work?

You will receive your course material and assignments via our virtual learning environment. All log-in details and setting up processes will be sent to you after enrolment. This will include your tutor details. All contact can be made via the online resource. You will work through an assignment each week. This is then submitted to your personal tutor. They will mark it for you and return it to you



with some feedback. You can expect this coursework to take you between two and four hours per week and you will need to be disciplined to make sure you keep up.

## What is work-based learning?

While you are studying for your qualification you will be working in an optical environment, either a practice, a laboratory or a manufacturing organisation. This training consists not just of learning coursework but also of your learning in practice with your supervisor and colleagues. You will learn practical skills from your workplace to supplement your learning.

## Duration

To complete at least four units and therefore a Certificate in Optical Support, the course will be approximately 26–34 weeks, depending on the units chosen.

## Assessment method

Most units will be assessed with a final examination; in some cases there will also be a practical project. The usual method will be to take all written units in one go at a central venue.

## Next steps

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form for this or any of our courses please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).

### Do I have to be a member of ABDO?

No.

### Do I have to register with the General Optical Council?

No.

### What will I be qualified to do after completing and achieving this qualification?

Because this is not a registerable qualification, you will not be able to register with the GOC. However, it will give you a recognised qualification that can get you started on the optical career ladder.

### Will I receive any exemptions if I have been awarded Level 2?

Possibly, depending on which units you achieved. Please refer to the individual units for details of exemption.

### What should I do if I am not sure whether this is the right course for me?

Call us. We are happy to answer questions about the available courses from ABDO College and to provide you with all the information you need to make an informed decision.

### Who should I call if I have questions or need help filling in the forms?

Call the courses team at ABDO College on 01227 738 829 option 1. Any member of the team will be happy to help you.

### How do I apply?

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).





# Level 4\* Diploma for Optical Assistants

\*subject to accreditation

For further details regarding this course call the courses team at ABDO College on 01227 738 829 option 1.

This is a new qualification and course that is due to be introduced from September 2017.

## Overview

The Level 4 Diploma for Optical Assistants is WCSM's new qualification for optical assistants. It is expected that holders of the qualification will be entitled to use the letters SMC (OA) after their name. It is tailored to the needs of those who aspire to become senior optical assistants and supervisors.

## The course

This is a two-year distance learning course, which starts in September 2017. Students are assigned a personal tutor, and work through a series of papers at their own pace (in general, at least six to eight hours of work per week is required).

## The assessment

To obtain the diploma, students must pass both Part I and Part II. Part I includes five mandatory units and three optional units from a choice of six. All these units are assessed by written examination. Part II involves submission of a portfolio of evidence, on which further questions may be asked in a viva, and a practical assessment. Students will be assessed at the end of each year of a two year course, but those claiming exemptions may be able to complete the qualification in a shorter time. A typical pattern would be as follows:

- **Part I Examinations at the end of year one**
  - Written papers on each of Units 1, 2 and 3. Units 1 and 2 will require written answers. Unit 3 will be assessed by a paper of 15 multiple choice questions plus a case study
  - Written paper on one optional unit
- **Part I Examinations at the end of year two**
  - Written papers on Units 4 and 5 and a further two optional units
- **Part II –Practical assessment, (Unit 12) at the end of year two**

The pass mark for each unit is 50%. If a candidate fails any unit, the unit can be retaken on its own, up to four times. All Units must be completed within a period of five years.

Exemption may be claimed for units already taken and passed at Level 3 (Units 1 and 2), or for Unit 6 if the student can demonstrate they have equivalent current knowledge or have achieved a certificate equivalent to grade C or above in GCSE mathematics within the last five years.

# Mandatory units

## UNIT

### 1

#### **THE EYE AND THE PRINCIPLES OF OPTICS**

(9 Credits)

- The nature of light and the electromagnetic spectrum
- The reflection of light when incident at plane and curved surfaces
- The refraction of light when incident at plane and curved surfaces
- The basic anatomical structure of the eye and how it relates to refractive errors

## UNIT

### 3

#### **THE PROVISION OF OPTICAL SCREENING AND CLINICAL SUPPORT**

(12 Credits)

- How to interpret optical prescriptions
- The applications of visual field screening
- The application of auto-refraction
- The application of non-contact tonometry in measuring intra-ocular pressure (IOP)
- The importance of fundus photography and optical coherence tomography (OCT)
- Eye conditions typically encountered in an optical practice
- The actions required when confronted with an ocular emergency

## UNIT

### 5

#### **THE PROVISION OF CONTACT LENSES IN OPTICAL PRACTICE**

(8 Credits)

- The legal implications of the supply of contact lenses and aftercare
- The legal implications of the supply contact lens solutions
- The key designs of contact lenses
- The wearing modalities of contact lenses
- How to advise those customers who have not complied with contact lens care regimens

## UNIT

### 2

#### **PRINCIPLES OF OPTICAL RETAIL PRACTICE SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT**

(12 Credits)

- The legal requirements that apply in an optical practice and their relevance to the role of an optical assistant
- The regulatory requirements governing optical practice
- The health and safety requirements in an optical practice and their relevance to the role of an optical assistant
- The skills required for communication in optical practice
- The principles of managing staff and developing individuals' performance in an optical practice
- How to achieve excellent customer service in an optical practice.
- How to sell in an optical practice
- The rules of provision of services through a national health care scheme

## UNIT

### 4

#### **THE PROVISION OF SPECTACLES IN OPTICAL PRACTICE**

(12 Credits)

- The design principles for spectacles
- The selection process for dispensing multi-focal lenses including bifocals and trifocals
- The measurements required prior to the supply of spectacles
- The materials used for spectacle lenses
- The principles of fitting spectacles
- The importance of the care of spectacles
- The use and limitations of protective eyewear

## Optional units

At least three units must be selected

UNIT

6

### MATHEMATICS FOR OPTICAL ASSISTANTS (7 Credits)

- How to perform arithmetical calculations
- How to use a scientific calculator to solve mathematical problems in an optical environment
- The principles of geometry and know how to apply them in optical practice
- How to extract information from line and bar graphs
- How to solve problems involving simple algebraic expressions

UNIT

8

### ANTERIOR EYE AND OCULAR SUPPLEMENTS (8 Credits)

- The use of refractive surgery to correct vision
- The identification and management of blepharitis
- The identification and management of dry eye
- The use of ocular nutritional supplements

UNIT

10

### THEORY OF OPHTHALMIC LENSES (12 Credits)

- How to measure interpupillary and centration distances
- Lens form
- The parameters of sphero-cylindrical lenses
- The parameters of toric lenses
- Lens measure and lens thickness
- The nature of ophthalmic prisms and prismatic effects
- Elements of Ametropia
- Line foci and disc of least confusion

UNIT

7

### THE PROVISION OF LOW VISION AIDS IN OPTICAL PRACTICE (8 Credits)

- The terms relating to low vision
- The importance of the case history for patients with low vision
- The anatomy of the retina, and anterior chamber and related structures and the relevant pathological conditions
- The importance of illumination for low vision patients
- The care requirements for people with low vision
- The use of low vision appliances

UNIT

9

### THEORY OF OPTICS (12 Credits)

- The propagation of light formation
- Reflection
- Refraction at a plane surface
- Refraction at curved surfaces
- Photometry
- The use of colour in optics
- How to use thin lenses

UNIT

11

### BUSINESS PRINCIPLES FOR OPTICAL PRACTICES (8 Credits)

- The factors for success of an optical retail practice
- How regulatory bodies, professional organisations and trade bodies influence the restrictions on marketing and advertising in optical practice
- The effectiveness of different marketing techniques
- The financial impact of decisions taken by optical assistants
- Systems typically used within an optical practice

## Mandatory practical assessment

UNIT

12

### OPTICAL SKILLS IN PRACTICE (12 Credits)

- Effective patient communication
- Spectacle repairs and adjustments
- Spectacle dispensing
- Spectacle verification
- Optical screening
- Contact lenses



# Level 4 Diploma for Optical Technicians

## Overview

The Level 4 Diploma for Optical Technicians is regarded by many as the 'Gold Standard' for the industry. Holders of the qualification are entitled to use the letters SMC (Tech) after their name. It is tailored to the needs of those who aspire to become senior technicians and supervisors. For holders of this qualification, it is anticipated that exemption may be applied for from Year 1 coursework of the ABDO College Fellowship Dispensing Diploma course.

## The programme

This is a two-year blended learning course, which starts in September each year. Students are assigned a personal tutor, and work through a series of assignments at their own pace (in general, at least six to eight hours of work per week is required). The course is supported by three workshops during the year and a revision workshop; these are optional, but recommended.

## The learning outcomes

The aims of each unit, together with the number of credits, are shown on page 16. In the second year, students choose a surfacing or glazing 'pathway' (either unit 8 or unit 9).

## The assessment

Students are assessed at the end of the first and second years. Candidates must pass the year 1 examinations before continuing to year 2.

### Year 1 examinations

- Unit 1: written paper
- Unit 2: written paper
- Unit 3: written paper

### Year 2 examinations

- Unit 4: written paper
- Unit 5: written paper
- Unit 6: written paper
- Unit 7: written paper
- Unit 8 or 9: practical project, viva examination and practical examinations
- Unit 10: written paper
- Unit 11: written paper

# Year 1

## UNIT

### 1

#### **MATHEMATICS FOR OPTICAL MANUFACTURING** (7 Credits)

The mathematical principles used in the optical workshop.

If the learner has already achieved this unit at Level 3 they will receive exemption from this unit at Level 4.

## UNIT

### 2

#### **THE EYE AND THE PRINCIPLES OF OPTICS** (9 Credits)

The structure of the eye and the principles of sight-correcting lenses.

If the learner has already achieved this unit at Level 3 they will receive exemption from this unit at Level 4.

## UNIT

### 3

#### **THE PROPERTIES OF OPHTHALMIC LENSES** (12 Credits)

Properties of spherical and astigmatic lenses, prisms and prismatic effects.

## FAQs

#### **Who is running the course?**

ABDO College will be running this course.

#### **Do I need to attend college?**

No. However, there are revision workshops available and some workshops for large groups. It is thoroughly recommended that you attend these if you can to get the best opportunity to learn.

#### **Who is it aimed at?**

The course is aimed at anyone who wants to progress within manufacturing. It gives the underpinning knowledge required to understand the principles behind many of the tasks undertaken within surfacing and glazing.

#### **Do I have to be working in optics?**

Yes. It is essential that you are working in an optical environment so that you can receive adequate support from your supervisor and colleagues and in order to gain the necessary practical experience. You need a supervisor and the support of your employer to work towards this qualification.

#### **Are there any special requirements?**

Yes. You will need to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Your study material will be provided on a 'virtual learning environment'.

#### **What qualifications do I need to start Level 4 Diploma for Optical Technicians?**

None. However, it is recommended that if you do not have a maths or science GCSE you start at Level 2 or 3, depending on your experience.

#### **Do I have to be a member of ABDO?**

No.

## Year 2

UNIT

4

### THE THEORY OF LENS SURFACING (10 Credits)

Surface generation of spherical and toroidal lenses; processes and standards.

UNIT

7

### THE PROPERTIES OF SPECTACLE FRAMES AND GLAZING (12 Credits)

Properties, applications and the process of manufacture; glazing techniques.

UNIT

10

### SPECTACLE LENS TREATMENTS (10 Credits)

Spectacle coating and tinting; ISO standards.

UNIT

5

### THE PROPERTIES OF OPHTHALMIC LENSES (12 Credits)

Design principles of spectacle lenses and how these relate to manufacture.

UNIT

8\*

### GLAZING PATHWAY OPTICAL WORKSHOP TASKS AND GLAZING SPECTACLE FRAMES (12 Credits)

The full range of tasks in an optical workshop; non-routine glazing.

UNIT

11

### THE SPECTACLE INDUSTRY AND STANDARDS (5 Credits)

How the processes work to produce high standards for the UK consumer.

UNIT

6

### SPECTACLE LENS MATERIALS (9 Credits)

Properties of spectacle lens materials and what makes them suitable.

UNIT

9\*

### SURFACING PATHWAY OPTICAL WORKSHOP TASKS AND SURFACING SPECTACLE LENSES (12 Credits)

The full range of tasks in an optical workshop; non-routine surfacing.

\* Students will need to take one of these Year 2 practical units

#### Do I have to register with the General Optical Council?

No

#### What will I be qualified to do after completing and achieving this qualification?

This qualification will give you the suffix SMC (Tech). It will not mean you are qualified to dispense as it is not a registerable qualification. However, it is the highest recognised qualification within the manufacturing sector. It is anticipated that exemption may be applied for from Year 1 coursework of the ABDO College Fellowship Dispensing Diploma course.

#### Will I receive any exemptions if I have been awarded Level 3?

Yes. You will be exempt from Units 1 & 2.

#### What should I do if I am not sure whether this is the right course for me?

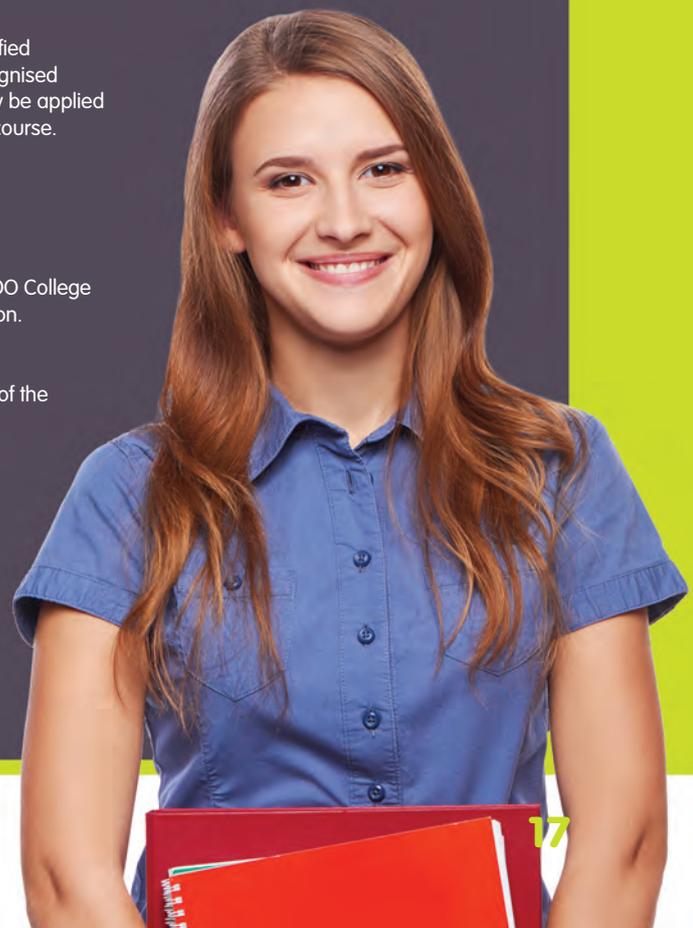
Call us. We are happy to answer questions about the available courses from ABDO College and to provide you with all the information you need to make an informed decision.

#### Who should I call if I have questions or need help filling in the forms?

Call the courses team at ABDO College on 01227 738 829 option 1. Any member of the team will be happy to help you.

#### How do I apply?

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).





# Fast Track Technician Training for FBDOs

## Overview

The course covers the elements of glazing and the technician's role that do not form part of the FBDO qualification. There are 18 written assignments and a workshop on how to glaze. For experienced glazers there is no requirement to attend the workshop. Courses start in January each year and lead to examinations in December. A theory revision day will be run towards the end of each course.

## CET points

The distance learning element of the course consists of 10 papers, each one is worth 1 CET point.

## The assessment

The examination will include three theory papers and a practical assessment.

The course includes the following units:

## UNIT

# 4

### THE THEORY OF LENS SURFACING (10 Credits)

Surface generation of spherical and toroidal lenses; processes and standards.

## UNIT

# 5

### THE PROPERTIES OF OPHTHALMIC LENSES (12 Credits)

Design principles of spectacle lenses and how these relate to manufacture.

## UNIT

# 11

### THE SPECTACLE INDUSTRY AND STANDARDS (5 Credits)

How the processes work to produce high standards for the UK consumer.

## FAQs

### Who is running the course?

ABDO College will be running this course.

### Do I need to attend college?

No. However, there are revision workshops available and glazing workshops. It is thoroughly recommended that you attend these if you can to get the best opportunity to learn.

### Who is it aimed at?

The course is aimed at any qualified dispensing optician that has attained FBDO, who wants to increase their understanding of the manufacturing industry and broaden their skills and experience.

### Do I have to be working in optics?

Yes. You will need to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Your study material will be provided on a 'virtual learning environment'. You will also need to submit a project so it is a requirement that you have access to a glazing laboratory. It is highly recommended that you spend a minimum of six weeks within a glazing environment.

### Are there any special requirements?

Yes. You will need to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Your study material will be provided on a 'virtual learning environment'.

### What qualifications do I need to start the fastrack Level 4 Diploma for Optical Technicians?

You must hold the FBDO qualification awarded by the ABDO.

### Do I have to be a member of ABDO?

No.

### Do I have to register with the General Optical Council?

No. However to fully utilise the CET provision it is recommended that you are.

### What will I be qualified to do after completing and achieving this qualification?

This qualification will give you the suffix SMC (Tech). It will not mean you are qualified to have any more responsibility under GOC guidelines. However, it is the highest recognised qualification within the manufacturing sector.

### Will I receive any exemptions due to my ABDO qualification?

Yes. You will only need to study towards and take some of the examinations as listed above. Your ABDO qualification has given you exemption from the whole of year 1, Unit 6, Unit 10 and some of the practical sections.

### What should I do if I am not sure whether this is the right course for me?

Call us. We are happy to answer questions about the available courses from ABDO College and to provide you with all the information you need to make an informed decision.

### Who should I call if I have questions or need help filling in the forms?

Call the courses team at ABDO College on 01227 738 829 option 1. Any member of the team will be happy to help you.

### How do I apply?

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).

# SCQF Level 5 Certificate in Optical Care

## Introduction

A qualification accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and introduced at the request of NHS Education for Scotland (NES) to drive up skill levels in optometric practices throughout that country. It can be used as a stepping stone towards the Level 7 Certificate in Optical Care and more advanced qualifications.

The course is supported by three workshops held in Scotland, with examinations being online or paper based.

## The examination

The duration of the written or e-assessment examination will be two hours. There will be three questions, or sets of questions to be answered on each unit, each taking about 7–8 minutes to answer. Questions will be a mix of Multiple Choice Questions, diagrams and short answer questions. The format of the written and e-assessment examinations will be identical. The pass mark for each unit is set at 50%. If a candidate fails any unit, the unit can be retaken on its own, at specified times within three years. There are no grades awarded. Candidates simply pass or fail.

# Online Syllabus

## UNIT

### 1

#### RESPONSIBILITIES IN OPTICS

- Understanding the roles, legal responsibilities and limitations of people working in optical practice
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the health care and professional bodies in ophthalmic optics
- Understanding how the optical industry works

## UNIT

### 2

#### COMMUNICATION IN OPTICAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Understanding the skills required for effective communication in optical customer service
- Understanding communication methods
- Understanding how to achieve excellent customer service in optics

## UNIT

### 3

#### THE EYE AND AMETROPIA

- Understanding the basic anatomy, function and pathology of the eye and the common eye conditions including myopia, hypermetropia, astigmatism, presbyopia as well as binocular vision and visual fields
- Understanding optical prescriptions and transposition
- Understanding of cataracts, glaucoma, diabetes and their treatment and the advantages and disadvantages of the treatment

## UNIT

### 4

#### SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF SPECTACLE LENSES IN OPTICAL PRACTICE

- Understanding the optics of spectacle lenses
- Understanding the types of spectacle lenses
- Understanding the types of protective eyewear
- Understanding the types of other special spectacle lenses
- Understanding the manufacture of spectacle lenses
- Understanding the coating and tinting of spectacle lenses
- Understanding optical centres, PDs and centration in the dispensing of spectacle lenses
- Understanding the importance of prisms when dispensing spectacle lenses

## UNIT

### 5

#### SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF OPTICAL SCREENING

- Understanding the principles of field screening
- Understanding the principles of auto-refraction
- Understanding the principles of non-contact tonometry
- Understanding the principles of fundus photography and optical coherence tomography
- Understanding how to deal with common emergencies that may occur in the screening procedure
- Understanding the pathology of the eye to enable identification of an optical emergency

## FAQs

#### Where do I start?

If you are working in a support role in an optometric practice, then you will probably already have many of the required skills. You do not need any particular academic qualification, just basic numeracy and literacy.

#### How do I study?

You may prepare yourself to sit the qualifying examination in any way you chose. However, if you feel the need for preparatory training, and you cannot find a training provider near you, you should consider enrolling on the distance-learning course run by the ABDO College. This one-year course requires only a few hours study per week, and your personal tutor will take you through a series of papers covering the syllabus at a pace that suits your other commitments.

#### How much does it cost?

You may be able to obtain sponsorship from NHS Education for Scotland (NES). If not, you should contact the ABDO College for current fees.

#### What should I do if I am not sure whether this is the right course for me?

Call us. We are happy to answer questions about the available courses from ABDO College and to provide you with all the information you need to make an informed decision.

#### Who should I call if I have questions or need help filling in the forms?

Call the courses team at ABDO College on 01227 738 829 option 1. Any member of the team will be happy to help you.

#### How do I apply?

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).

# SCQF Level 7 Certificate in Optical Care

## The examination

The learner will be assessed through a separate written examination for each unit: paper based, mix of multiple choice questions, short answer and essay style questions. The examination will not be presented online. The pass mark for each unit is set at 50%. If a candidate fails any unit, the unit can be retaken on its own, at specified times within three years. There are no grades awarded. Candidates simply pass or fail.

# Online Syllabus

## UNIT

### 1

#### THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IN AN OPTICAL PRACTICE AND CONTACT LENS CARE

- Understand the legal requirements that apply in an optical practice and the relevance to the role of an optical assistant
- Understand the health and safety requirements in an optical practice and the relevance to the role of an optical assistant
- Understand the importance of patient safety, particularly in relation to contact lens supply and aftercare
- Understand the legal implications of the supply of contact lenses aftercare, with aftercare regimens
- Understand the limitations of responsibility and authority of the optical assistant in contact lens supply

## UNIT

### 2

#### OPTICAL SCREENING

- Understand how to interpret optical prescriptions
- Understand the applications of field screening
- Understand the application of auto-refraction
- Understand the application of non-contact tonometry in measuring intra-ocular pressure
- Understand the importance of fundus photography and optical coherence tomography
- Understand the actions required when confronted with an optical emergency

## UNIT

### 3

#### SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF SPECTACLES IN OPTICAL PRACTICE

- Understand the design principles for spectacles
- Understand the selection process for dispensing multi-focal lenses including bifocals and trifocals
- Understand the measurements required prior to the supply of spectacles
- Understand the principles involved in the use of low vision appliances
- Understand the principles of fitting spectacles
- Understand the types of lens coatings and their applications
- Understand the importance of the care of spectacles
- Understand the use and limitations of protective eyewear

## UNIT

### 4

#### SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF LOW VISION AIDS IN OPTICAL PRACTICE

- Understand the terms relating to low vision
- Understand the importance of the case history for patients with low vision
- Understand the anatomy of the retina, anterior chamber, related structures and the relevant pathological conditions
- Understand the importance of illumination for low vision patients
- Understand the care requirements for people with low vision
- Understand the use of low vision appliances

## FAQs

#### Where do I start?

If you are working in a support role in an optometric practice, then you will probably already have many of the required skills. You do not need any particular academic qualification, just basic numeracy and literacy.

#### How do I study?

You may prepare yourself to sit the qualifying examination in any way you chose. However, if you feel the need for preparatory training, and you cannot find a training provider near you, you should consider enrolling on the distance-learning course run by the ABDO College. This one-year course requires only a few hours study per week, and your personal tutor will take you through a series of papers covering the syllabus at a pace that suits your other commitments.

#### Do I need any entry qualifications?

It is not compulsory, however it is strongly recommended that you have achieved a comparable Level 5 qualification.

#### How much does it cost?

You may be able to obtain sponsorship from National Health Education Service for Scotland (NES). If not, you should contact the ABDO College for details of current fees.

#### Who should I call if I have questions or need help filling in the forms?

Call the courses team at ABDO College on 01227 738 829 option 1. Any member of the team will be happy to help you.

#### How do I apply?

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadline and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, fax, email, post or via the ABDO College website ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)).

ABDO College provides training courses leading to WCSM qualifications. WCSM is the awarding body. Successful candidates will be presented with their qualification certificates at the Company's annual ceremony at Apothecaries' Hall in London each October.

WCSM qualifications lay a solid foundation for the development of essential optical skills and open up a clearly defined career pathway for those entering optics at the lowest levels.



ABDO College  
Godmersham Park  
Godmersham  
Canterbury  
Kent CT4 7DT

tel: 01227 738 829 option 1  
fax: 01227 733 900

[info@abdocollege.org.uk](mailto:info@abdocollege.org.uk)  
[www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk)