

WCSM Courses

Available through ABDO College

2018–19 Prospectus





The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers

The Spectacle Makers' Company (WCSM) is a City of London Livery Company and a nationally recognised Awarding Organisation for qualifications which are below the level of GOC registration.

The Company was founded in 1629 when there was little more that could be done for people with vision impairment other than to ensure that the spectacles issued to them were fit for use – hence the Company's name. Today, there are many more services available and patient care is very different but the Company's purpose has remained exactly the same – to support those who prevent, and treat, vision impairment.

For almost a hundred years, the Company trained and qualified "high street opticians". You may still see the qualifications "FSMC" and "SMC(Disp)" displayed in some optical practices today. In the 1980s the Company played a prominent role in the establishment of the College of Optometrists and the Association of British Dispensing Opticians. Since that time, it has focused on developing knowledge and skills among optical technicians, optical assistants and other support staff.

WCSM Qualifications at levels 2, 3 & 4 are accredited in England (OFQUAL) Wales (Qualifications Wales) and Northern Ireland (CCEA). Certificates in Optical Care at SCQF levels 5 and 7 are accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

Members of the Company include people training in optical professions, dispensing opticians, optometrists, orthoptists, ophthalmologists and researchers, right through to world-leading experts in vision science. Through those members and through these qualifications, WCSM remains at the heart of a craft that every day changes people's lives.

Since 2015, ABDO College has been providing training courses aimed specifically at WCSM qualifications. The courses operate through distance learning and are designed to support people who are training at the same time as working in an optical environment.

WCSM remains the awarding body. It sets the syllabus for each qualification and awards final certificates of achievement to those who pass its examinations. Successful candidates are invited to receive their certificates and diplomas in a special Presentation Ceremony held by WCSM in October each year in the historic Apothecaries' Hall, its London home. There they can celebrate their achievement with employers, friends and family.

WCSM qualifications lay a solid foundation for the development of essential optical skills and open up a clearly defined career pathway for those entering optical professions at the lower 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 quality programmes leading to WCSM and 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.

WCSM Qualifications

ABDO College provides training courses aimed specifically at WCSM qualifications. Courses consist of mandatory units covering core knowledge 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, deadlines and an application form contact us by telephone, email, post or via the ABDO College website (www.abdocollege.org.uk).

Fees

Please note that examination fees are separate and are not included in course fees. However, the team at ABDO College will be able to provide you with a cost for both courses and examinations. Please contact ABDO College on 01227 738 829 (option 1) or email info@abdocollege.org.uk. As an indication, the total cost for a WCSM qualification at level 2 or 3, if a student takes the ABDO College course and passes all required units at the first attempt, would be less than £1,000 and could be completed in 12–15 months.

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

If you require any further assistance please call the courses team at ABDO College on 01227 738 829 (option 1).

Contents

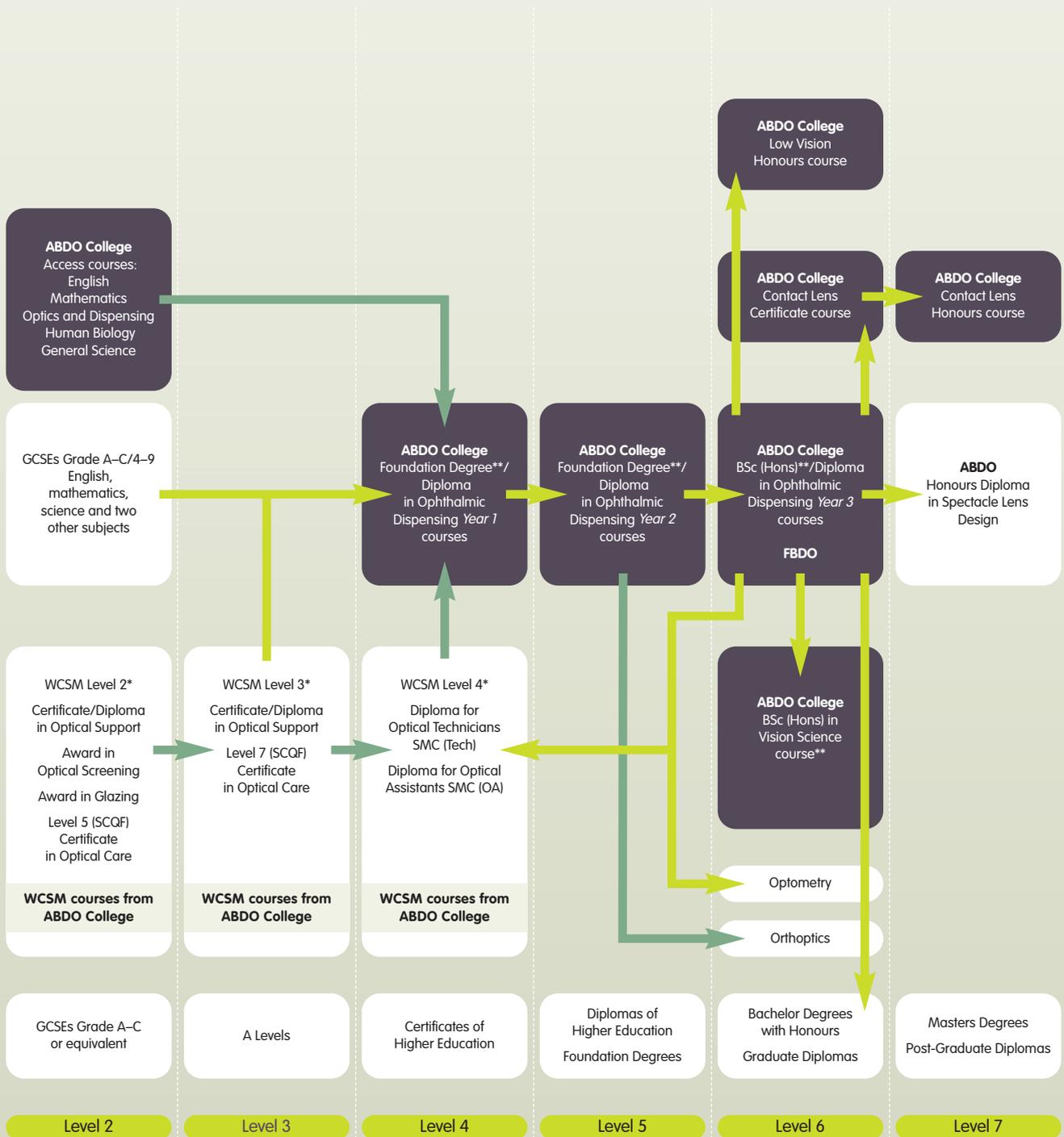
- 4 Level 2 Optical Support
- 8 Level 3 Optical Support
- 12 Level 4 Diploma for Optical Assistants
- 16 Level 4 Diploma for Optical Technicians
- 19 Fast Track Technician Training for FBDOs

Qualifications Accredited in Scotland

- 21 Certificate in Optical Care at SCQF level 5
- 23 Certificate in Optical Care at SCQF level 7

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 staff working within optics who do not have a registerable qualification with the General Optical Council, 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. You will need to gain at least 26 credits for a Level 2 certificate. 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 suppliers, practices and patients. It includes customer service and how good communication can improve all working relationships.

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. The learner will understand optical prescriptions and transposition, and 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

4

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

5

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 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

6

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

7

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**8****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**9****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**11****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**12****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**10****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 anyone 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 will need 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. Your training consists not just of learning coursework but also learning in practice with your supervisor and colleagues. You will develop practical skills in your workplace to supplement your learning.

Duration

To complete at least four units needed to gain a certificate, 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 mean one 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, deadlines and an application form for this or any of our courses please contact the ABDO College Course Team on 01227 738 829 (option 1) or email info@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 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, deadlines and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, email, post or via the ABDO College website (www.abdocollege.org.uk).

Level 3 Optical Support



Overview

The WCSM qualification in optical support is designed for staff working within optics who do not have a registerable qualification with the General Optical Council, 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. 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 (at least 21 credits) 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 and supervisory 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 underlining the choice of particular lenses used in spectacles and for the learner to know and understand the benefits of the various alternatives available, including low vision appliances. The learner will learn about 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 working in optical practice, either in a retail or a community setting.

Optional units

Learners must achieve a minimum of one of these optional units

UNIT

4

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 learn about 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 and the limits of authority in practice.

UNIT

5

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 learn 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

7

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

6

MATHEMATICS FOR OPTICAL ASSISTANTS (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

8P

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

9

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

10

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

12

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

11

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 or manufacturing.

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

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) 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. Your training consists not just of learning coursework but also learning in practice with your supervisor and colleagues. You will develop practical skills in your workplace to supplement your learning.

Duration

To complete at least four units needed to gain a certificate, 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. Examinations at Level 3 last between 30 and 90 minutes per unit. Written examinations can be taken at a central venue or, for most units, online. Units 6 and 8 cannot be assessed online.

Next steps

For an information pack with details of the next intake, fees, deadlines and an application form for this or any of our courses please contact the ABDO College Course Team on 01227 738 829 (option 1) or email info@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.

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, deadlines and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, email, post or via the ABDO College website (www.abdocollege.org.uk).

Level 4 Diploma for Optical Assistants

Overview

The Level 4 Diploma for Optical Assistants is WCSM's newest qualification for optical assistants. 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 supervisors and provides the next step for people who want to develop their future career.

The course

This is a two-year distance learning course. Students are assigned a personal tutor, and work through a series of assignments. At least six to eight hours of work per week is required, plus individual research and written assignments.

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, 3 and 4. Units 1, 2 and 4 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 further optional unit

• Part I Examinations at the end of year two

- Written papers on Unit 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 three times. All Units must be completed within a period of five years.

Exemption may be granted 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 (level 4 or above from 2017) in GCSE mathematics within the last five years.

The practical assessment requires submission of a portfolio of evidence which must be signed off by a GOC registered supervisor.

You can study as many units as you wish at one time. The course gives flexibility for those who may want to progress but want to take their studies one step at a time.

Note: Candidates who may be thinking of advancing to higher level qualifications such as the Diploma in Dispensing are strongly advised to take optional units 6, 9 and 10. Those who pass units 6, 9 and 10 may be eligible to claim recognition of prior learning for some course elements of Year 1 of the ABDO College Fellowship Dispensing Diploma course.



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

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

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 and recognised pathways for referral

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

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 of 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

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 how to apply them in optical practice
- How to extract information from line and bar graphs
- How to solve problems involving simple algebraic expressions

If the learner has already achieved this unit at Level 3 or if the student can demonstrate they have equivalent current knowledge or have achieved a certificate equivalent to grade C or above (level 4 or above from 2017) in GCSE mathematics within the last five years. They will receive exemption from this unit at Level 4.

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

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

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

FAQs

Who is running the course?

ABDO College will be running this course.

Do I need to attend college?

No, however there are practical workshops available (subject to numbers). 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 receptionists, optical advisors and optical assistants who want to progress within optics. It gives the underpinning knowledge to understand the principles behind many of the tasks undertaken by optical assistants.

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 GOC registered 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.

Mandatory practical assessment

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

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

Candidates will be required to submit a written business/development plan which brings together the learning developed during the course and which could be of benefit to their own practice.

UNIT

12P

OPTICAL SKILLS IN PRACTICE (12 Credits)

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

This unit will be assessed by submission of a portfolio of evidence, plus a viva and one day practical assessment.

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?

This qualification will give you the suffix SMC (OA). It will not mean you are a qualified dispensing optician as it is not a registerable qualification. However, WCSM courses are recognised as providing a very high standard of training in optical support roles in practice. You may be able to apply for some exemptions from year 1 coursework of the ABDO College Fellowship Dispensing Diploma course.

Will I receive any exemptions if I have been awarded a level 3 certificate or diploma?

Yes. You may be exempt from Units 1 and 2 if you have passed relevant units at Level 3.

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, deadlines and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, email, post or via the ABDO College website (www.abdocollege.org.uk).

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. Holders of this qualification may be able to apply for some exemptions 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 17. 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

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



Year 1

UNIT

1

MATHEMATICS FOR OPTICAL MANUFACTURING (7 Credits)

The mathematical principles used in the optical workshop.

UNIT

2

THE EYE AND THE PRINCIPLES OF OPTICS (9 Credits)

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

UNIT

3

THE PROPERTIES OF OPHTHALMIC LENSES (12 Credits)

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

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

8P

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

9P

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

FAQs

Who is running the course?

ABDO College will be running this course.

Do I need to attend college?

No. However, there are practical workshops and revision workshops available (subject to numbers). 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 GOC registered 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'. You will need access to a laboratory for practical pathway units.

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.

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. You may be able to apply for some exemptions from Year 1 coursework of the ABDO College Fellowship Dispensing Diploma course.

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, deadlines and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, email, post or via the ABDO College website (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 of the standard Level 4 course for Optical Technicians.

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, deadlines and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, email, post or via the ABDO College website (www.abdocollege.org.uk).

Certificate in Optical Care at SCQF Level 5

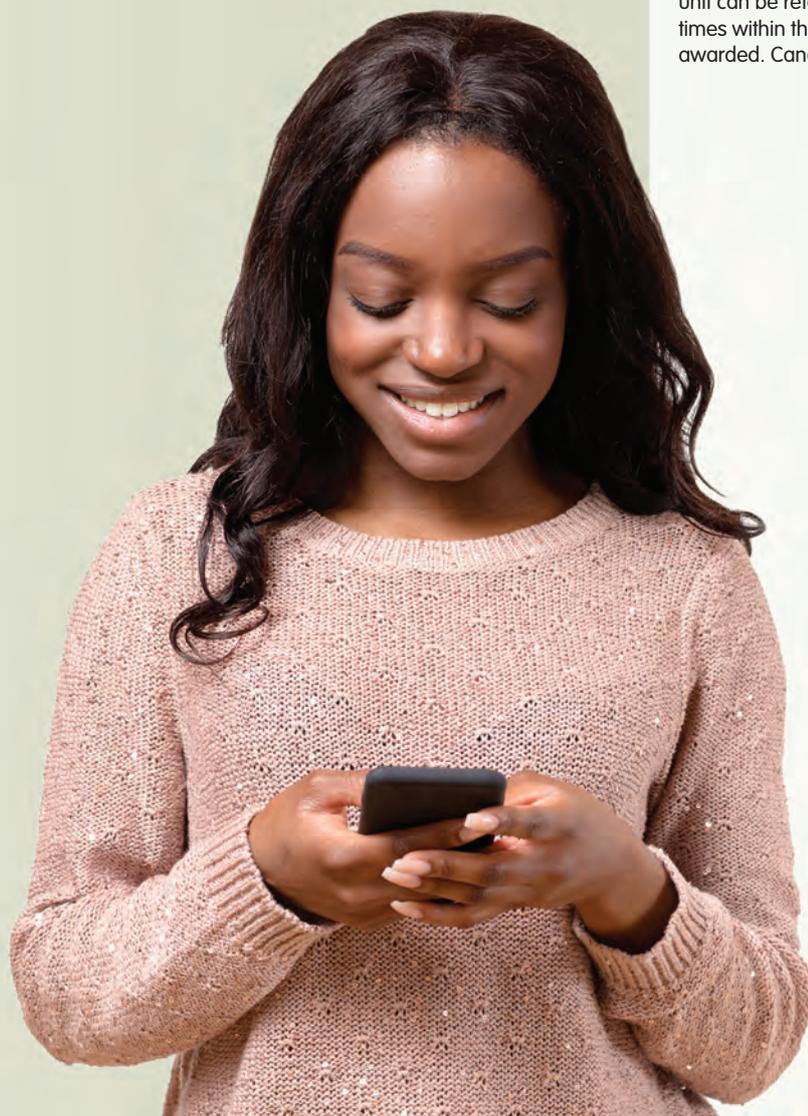
Introduction

A qualification accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and introduced at the request of NHS Education for Scotland (NES) to increase skill levels in optometric practices throughout Scotland. 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 taken online in a practice, subject to certain conditions, or on paper at a central venue in Glasgow or Edinburgh.

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 choose. 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 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 assignments 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 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, deadlines and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, email, post or via the ABDO College website (www.abdocollege.org.uk).

Certificate in Optical Care at SCQF Level 7

Introduction

This qualification has been developed in conjunction with NHS Education for Scotland for Senior Optical Assistants supporting the provision of the General Optical Services in Scotland. The objective is to build on their existing abilities and expand knowledge further to enable them to better support all functions of the optical practice in order to improve the quality of service experienced by customers.

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 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 assignments 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 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, deadlines and an application form please contact the ABDO College Operational Services Team by telephone, email, post or via the ABDO College website (www.abdocollege.org.uk).

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