

Re:View

Keeping excellence in your sights | January 2023 | Issue 44



Graduation celebrations

College improvements

Get SMART for your career

Communication and
Charles Bonnet Syndrome

Make learning new skills your New Year's resolution



Optics is not immune to the adverse effect the economy is having on the High Street. Our profession also has a workforce shortage, a knock-on effect from Covid-19. Education was virtually on hold for 12 months, hence a shortage of newly qualified and those gaining postgrad qualifications. We also saw many who were nearing retirement take a premature plunge to their next phase of life. This has caused a vacuum in the profession which will take many years to fill.

Despite the gloomy economy though, there are still plenty of opportunities out there so don't sidestep or stagnate. All practices thrive on well-trained support staff and good management. We recommend that you consider career progression that requires learning and qualifications.

Your next move from dispensing optician could be to contact lens optician and the next step for contact lens opticians could be the Community Urgent Eyecare Service (CUES). All these enhanced skills are in great demand, providing you with more variety of work, increased job satisfaction and an improved salary.

If you need career inspiration, read Nick Walsh's article on personal development in this *Re:View* as a starting point. Talk to your employer. They might have some good ideas and they will almost certainly want to support your career progression. Your colleagues too might offer some valuable insight.

Remember that ABDO and ABDO College have a great selection of courses, starting with optical assistant and senior optical assistant programmes, moving onto business management, both short and diploma courses. So, what will your next career steps be? Visit the ABDO College and ABDO websites for more information.

ABDO College is always grateful to all our sponsors whose support results in enhanced facilities at Godmersham. In this edition, read about the latest major development, the inspirational Optimum Library.

Clive Marchant FBDO
Chair, ABDO College Board of Trustees

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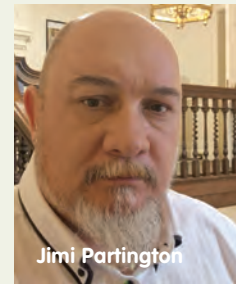
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Be inspired in your career choice

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NEWS

Joining the team



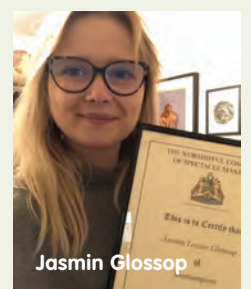
ABDO College has appointed a new technician, Jimi Partington, who has over 22 years of experience

comprising of lens surfacing, optical and contact lens dispensing and working as a laboratory technician.

Speaking in November after his first week, Jimi said: "Meeting new people that are friendly is always a highlight to a great first week. It's nice to be able to get involved with the lectures and to interact with the students."

A wider role

ABDO College lecturer Jasmin Glossop became a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle



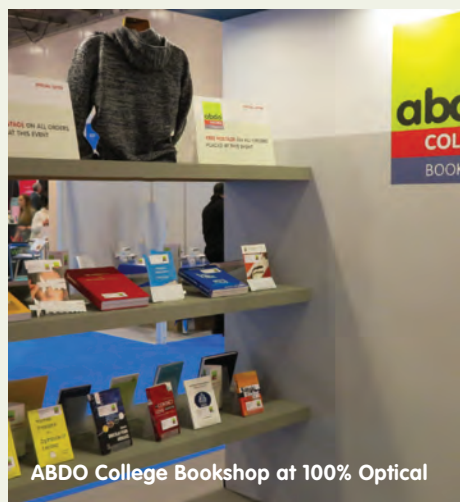
Makers (WCSM) in November.

Jasmin has been at the College for three years and recently qualified as a practical examiner for ABDO and is also a principal theory examiner.

"I am honoured to become a Freeman and am looking forward to promoting the profession in this capacity," said Jasmin. "This is also a fantastic opportunity to network and to develop my knowledge further."

Buy the book! Updates make purchasing even easier

ABDO College Bookshop has updated its website with Google Pay (GPay) and Apple Pay, making it even easier to buy books and equipment online. The option of using PayPal Credit has also been added.



"The update streamlines the whole checkout process for anyone with a Google or Apple account," explained bookshop administrator, Justin Hall. "Once signed in, this takes away the need to add address and payment details, and with a few clicks, it's all done, making checkout a much simpler and quicker process. Customers just need to look out for the button at the top of the checkout page.

"We have also added the option of using PayPal Credit for larger payments over £99 to be spread over four months, interest-free. An account will need to be set up with PayPal and a credit check will be carried out and, if approved, this can be used elsewhere, not just in our bookshop. Just click on the PayPal button

at the bottom of our checkout page to be taken through to their site where you can sign in if you already have an account.

"Remember the ABDO College bookshop offers competitively priced dispensing, optometry and contact lens books, with eBooks now available for a range of key dispensing texts. Please contact us if you would like us to source a particular title for you," Justin highlighted.

In addition, the bookshop sells equipment such as rules, gauges and charts. Essential packs of books for student DOs and useful study guides are also available.

For details visit
www.abdocollege.org.uk/bookshop/

Sharing Optimum lens knowledge with students

Students at Godmersham are discovering more about lenses, thanks to sponsorship from Optimum Rx Lens Specialists which has enabled the College to refresh the library with inspiring and informative new displays.

Optimum sales director, Mark Marland, said: "The displays are in the format of various literature packs that students can take away and keep for reference.

"Complex lens displays show the various lenses that can be produced at Optimum, concentrating on the weird and wonderful in uncut form and glazed specials, such as Franklin splits. These displays also showcase our coatings and specialist tints, backed with a digital screen with educational videos.

"The motivation to be involved with ABDO College came from our feedback via students that have previously visited Optimum during their case 51 laboratory tours. We want to continue to educate students wherever we can about what is available when faced with the most complex of prescriptions."

ABDO College principal, Dr Robert Cubbidge said: "On behalf of the College, I would like to thank the company for sponsoring the new Optimum Lens Library and helping our students gain technical knowledge of the lens products available in the UK."

The independent ophthalmic lens manufacturing company provides complex lens solutions, including hard coating, anti-reflection coatings, mirror coatings,



speciality tints/filters and glazing services. Its purpose-built laboratory uses state-of-the-art surfacing, polishing, cleaning and lacquering technology, together with some of the industry's most advanced processes and equipment.

Team effort from staff and students is praised for the College's sustainability success

Paper usage at the College has been reduced by 55 per cent as part of its increasing aim to promote environmental sustainability.

"The whole team at the College is working very hard to reduce the use of printing and photocopying," explained operational support administrator Karen Johnston, the College's 'sustainability champion.'

"The reduction in paper usage at the College is a fantastic accomplishment. This has been achieved in collaboration with the students and an increased focus on working online where feasible," she added.

"Environmental sustainability at the College is very much ongoing and a daily topic of conversation, which is excellent," Karen emphasised.

"Students have embraced the use of bamboo coffee cups and water bottles,

recycle bins are placed throughout the building and all the staff are now very conscious of electricity usage and how they can reduce consumption.

"As a College, we have also made a conscious effort to recycle equipment and buy eco-friendly products such as the College hoodies, which has been well received by the students."



'Sustainability champion' Karen Johnston

'Students have embraced the use of bamboo coffee cups and water bottles, recycle bins are placed throughout the building and all the staff are now very conscious of electricity usage.'

Time to boost your career prospects in 2023

In the New Year, did you resolve to improve your career prospects but now find yourself wondering how you are going to achieve that? In optics, there are so many opportunities, it can be hard to know which direction to take but in this edition of Re:View magazine, we hope to inspire your new career path. A good starting point is to read the article on page 9 by Nick Walsh, ABDO's head of corporate development, which will help you map out and achieve your career goals.

Don't forget that ABDO College offers a great range of courses, including optical support courses for all staff, whether you work in retail optics, manufacturing, sales or technical support. There are also two courses for optical assistants and courses leading to qualifications such as the renowned Contact Lens Certificate and the Fellowship Dispensing Diploma (FBDO). There are a range of ophthalmic dispensing courses, low vision courses and revision courses. All of these can help improve your job satisfaction and boost your salary prospects. For full details, visit www.abdocollege.org.uk

Six of the best honoured at graduation celebration

Six former students of ABDO College were among the prizewinners announced at the ABDO Graduation and Prize Giving Ceremony at Canterbury Cathedral on 23 November.

Connie Davies was awarded the Stepper Prize and Razvan-Vasile Cucuruzan was presented with the Essilor Prize. Ashley Davies was awarded the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers (WCSM) Prize and Ruairdh Knight was awarded the Rodenstock Prize. David Lipson was presented with

the Optical Suppliers Association Derek McLaren Memorial Prize and Emma Buller was awarded the Contamac Prize.

Over 100 dispensing opticians and contact lens opticians celebrated their graduation with family and friends at the event. ABDO president Daryl Newsome and the Master of the WCSM, Nigel

Haig-Brown, addressed the graduands.

Daryl told them: "Your determination, flexibility and tenacity have achieved the gold standard in ophthalmic dispensing, the FBDO qualification. You all truly deserve to enjoy celebrating your achievements. Go to work tomorrow and be the best dispensing optician you know how to be and commit to yourself to perform that role a little bit better every day."

Nigel highlighted that disadvantaged groups would feature in their practice most days. "Commit to giving back by helping the vulnerable," he urged the graduands.



Italian award-winner emphasises that eyecare for all is more important than la dolce vita

Students met Italian optician and optometrist Alessandro Spiezia, the winner of the International Optician Association's Lifetime Achievement Award for Services to Optics, when he was the guest of honour at the College in October.

Alessandro is the 2019 recipient of the prestigious accolade and is so renowned he has even met Pope Francis. His visit to the College was hosted by ABDO general secretary, Tony Garrett and ABDO's head of professional services and international development, Elaine Grisdale, who first met Alessandro through the Paris tradeshow Silmo.

On his visit, Alessandro emphasised that his position had enabled him to meet many celebrities, including film stars Tom Hanks and Harvey Keitel, as well as heads of state at the Vatican, but

more importantly, it had enabled him to help many ordinary people have the right care for their eyes.

"To each and every one of them, I gave the same scrupulous attention, as required by my own professional ethics and that is, I know, taught by ABDO," he said.

As a teacher, on his visit to the College he highlighted the importance of preparing young opticians 'for the difficult challenges of tomorrow,' to 'train them to handle the complexities of our work.' He pointed out the importance of,



not only sharing technical knowledge, but also the humanity necessary to help those in need.

"I am honoured to visit this prestigious place of learning, steeped in history just after receiving the coveted plaque of 'bottega storica,' historical workshop, for my small shop in the heart of Rome," said Alessandro.

"My historical shop has always been, not only caring for eye health, but is also an up-to-date window for all the latest technology that we have at our disposal."

He concluded: "I think we should reflect on words of wisdom from Sir Winston Churchill, 'sometimes doing our best is not enough, we must do what is necessary.' It's not strength or intelligence that is the key to finding our own potential, it is continuous effort."



MEET the ABDO COLLEGE TEAM

Visit the ABDO College Bookshop

Ask about courses for optical assistants and support staff

Discuss becoming a DO

Hear about the new contact lens course

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A time for reflection and looking to the future

By Dr Robert Cubbidge

The New Year is often a time for looking back and reminded me that I started at ABDO College as principal in July 2021, after 27 years at Aston University School of Optometry.

All the staff made me very welcome and aided a smooth transition from the leadership of Jo Underwood who had developed the College from its inception. I still delight in seeing how much students engage with their education when here at the College on their block release.

My first year was not without challenges as the Covid-19 pandemic in its earliest stages had a major impact on the operation of the College. I am immensely proud of our staff who made a shift to online teaching during the long lockdowns. Thankfully, this academic year, we were able to welcome a full cohort of students to the pre-pandemic course structure.

A recent highlight for me was the award of a PhD to Alicia Thompson, ABDO's director of education, research and professional development. As a senior lecturer at Aston, I had supervised her project over the previous eight years which investigated the facial growth of children and its application to frame design. We are both excited by the prospect of the research leading to improved fitting characteristics in children's frames and the College will support ABDO in the development of new programmes to enhance education.

Lecturer Sally Bates joined the College when it opened in 2001 and contributed immensely to the development of the ophthalmic dispensing programmes.

In September she left to pursue other activities and we gathered to wish her well. College technician George Whatley also left, and we have welcomed new dispensing optician staff, with Greg Cahill and Callum Wills joining us as lecturers and Jimi Partington as a technician.



Fond farewell: Dr Robert Cubbidge saying goodbye to lecturer Sally Bates, with Jo Underwood and ABDO's general secretary Tony Garrett

We are grateful that industry continues to support the College. Many of our sponsors have supplied dispensing aids, marketing information and lens samples, which are invaluable to our students' education.

Many of our courses are regulated by the General Optical Council (GOC) and they carried out a quality assurance visit last March for the post-FBDO contact lens certificate course. I am very pleased

that this has been approved for a further five years. We recently updated and introduced a new course structure which is more clinically applied, and the course continues to go from strength to strength.

The GOC recently carried out its Education Strategic Review (ESR) of optometry and dispensing optician education to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose as the sector evolves. This is the biggest overhaul in education in many years, which has wide ranging implications for the College. ABDO is

introducing a new syllabus for future dispensing opticians which reflects the outcomes of the ESR. There are many changes, but of particular note, is the enhancement of education in paediatrics, low vision and refraction.

It is my great pleasure to be leading the talented team of academic and supporting staff at the College as we enter a new phase in the education of the dispensing opticians of the future.

Do patient education and support have a significant impact on outcome in Charles Bonnet Syndrome?

By Lauren Sibley BSc Ophthalmic Dispensing

INTRODUCTION

Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS) is a condition which affects patients with visual loss and was first described by Charles Bonnet in 1760 (Teunisse *et al* 1995). Patients with this condition experience visual hallucinations which can be complex and richly detailed in nature, with no psychiatric causes (Teunisse *et al* 1995), (Best *et al* 2019).

The prevalence of CBS is not precisely known, and although commonly reported as being between 0.4 per cent and 30 per cent (Pang 2016), some studies estimate that it is much higher. Even if the prevalence is among the lower estimates, this results in a significant number of patients across the country who are either at risk of, or actually have, Charles Bonnet Syndrome. Many studies identify that CBS-awareness among patients is low. As professionals in practice, such as dispensing opticians, are well placed to educate patients who are at risk of CBS, it is important to be aware of the impact of this.

METHOD

This research was conducted online and prior to starting research, keywords were identified with the use of a spider diagram. After the initial searches using these keywords, further relevant studies were identified by citations within the studies brought up by the original search. These studies were critically appraised using Cormack's framework (2010) to ensure that all the research included was credible and as up to date as possible. Many of the studies found were case studies and were eliminated from the main focus due to the inherently small sample size.

FINDINGS

A study conducted by Cox and Ffytche (2014) used an initial sample of 4,000 members of the Macular Society. Of these, 31 per cent responded, and of those, 39 per cent had experienced hallucinations, or had a CBS diagnosis. The study found that 67 per cent of CBS patients had not heard of the condition when their hallucinations started and 16 per cent had attributed them to the onset of mental



illness, or Alzheimer's disease. These patients were found to have more negative long-term outcomes, as did those who were unaware of CBS prior to the onset of hallucinations. A total of 38 per cent of patients reported finding the hallucinations initially frightening and 63 per cent were reassured by the diagnosis of CBS and information given to them.

This study draws on a large sample size, although due to the source of the sample, only older patients were identified and younger patients could have different concerns, for example being less likely to attribute hallucinations to Alzheimer's disease. The study also acknowledged that, as members of the Macular Society, the patients may have been better informed than average, indeed, Jones *et al* (2021) found that the general population of age-related macular degeneration (AMD) patients were significantly less informed.

Jones *et al* (2021) conducted a search of the literature with attention to the psychological impact of CBS. This study found that a key factor influencing patient experience is the nature of the hallucinations themselves. Jones *et al* (2021) also found that awareness of CBS among visually impaired patients was low, and noted one third of patients fearing insanity, and 63

per cent fearing being labelled as insane. Jones *et al* (2021) therefore state that patient education on CBS is a key factor affecting the quality of life in those affected.

Menon *et al* (2003) also highlighted many patients fearing insanity and their reluctance to discuss symptoms as a result. Explanation of CBS was highlighted as having a profound effect on patients, however, Menon *et al* (2003) also mention several other factors having an impact on the presentation of CBS, such as social isolation, fatigue and changes in the level of visual function.

All three studies recognised that a lack of awareness and education on CBS in clinical staff is an issue, increasing the chances of CBS going un- or mis-diagnosed and limiting the potential to educate patients on the condition.

DISCUSSIONS

The importance of educating patients on CBS and reassuring them that hallucinations can be a part of visual loss was mentioned to some degree in almost all studies. Fear of insanity was identified in many studies as a significant stress factor at the onset of CBS in patients who were not previously aware of the condition and

also as a leading cause of under-reporting of hallucinations. Menon (2005) found that, in a study of 48 patients with low vision, none volunteered the information that they were having hallucinations, although on further questioning, two-thirds were in fact experiencing this symptom. For the vast majority, direct questioning was necessary to determine this, which demonstrates how easily CBS could go unreported in practice, as even those who had previously heard of CBS only admitted to hallucinations with prompting. Many of the patients involved were concerned, either that they were going insane, or that they would be perceived to be, and of these, almost all reported feeling comforted by reassurances that the symptoms could simply be a feature of visual loss.

Teunisse *et al* (1996) referenced a lack of knowledge among doctors being another cause of under-reporting. This is backed up by Gordon and Felfeli (2018), who found that awareness among family physicians is still low. Although this study concentrated on Canadian doctors, it indicates, however, that lack of awareness of CBS among professionals is still a problem and other studies have also mentioned it as an ongoing issue (Menon *et al* 2003), (Yacoub and Ferrucci 2011), (Jones *et al* 2021). While it is possible that awareness is higher among optical professionals, Cox and Ffytche (2014) found that only half of patients associated their hallucinations with their visual loss, further reducing the chance that patients would discuss the symptom with optical professionals without direct prompting.

The fear of mental illness has been identified by many studies as a leading cause of stress among patients at the onset of hallucinations (Menon *et al* 2003), (Eperjesi and Akbamlı 2004), (Menon 2005), (Cox and Ffytche 2014). Several studies therefore have specifically highlighted the importance of discussing CBS with low vision patients before they experience any symptoms (Eperjesi and Akbamlı 2004), (Cox and Ffytche 2014), (Singh, Subhi and Sørensen 2014).

Yacoub and Ferrucci (2011) state that 30 per cent of patients are afraid of the implications of the hallucinations, rather than the hallucinations themselves. It is logical, therefore, that being

informed of the possibility of CBS prior to the start of symptoms could reduce this initial reaction of anxiety. Singh, Subhi and Sørensen (2014) agree that an awareness of CBS reduces anxiety caused by the onset of hallucinations and also recommend educating all low vision patients on the condition. Despite these recommendations, the literature indicates that awareness of CBS is generally low (Jones *et al* 2021).

Menon *et al* (2003) and Menon (2005) found that simple reassurance and explanation of CBS provided significant relief to patients and further therapy was not needed, indeed, Doeller *et al* (2021) conducted a study specifically into this question and concluded that no benefit was found from therapy. Yacoub and Ferrucci (2011), however, found that more than simple reassurance was needed and that it was important to educate patients also on common triggers that could start/end hallucinations. There is some conflicting research on the topic of such triggers, with Menon (2005) finding that triggers were rare, while many other studies (Teunisse *et al* 1996), (Vukicevic and Fitzmaurice 2008), (Ricard 2009) refer to them as commonly being effective, although none claim that they work for all patients. There are currently no large-scale studies on the effects of such management techniques, or the prevalence of triggers for hallucinations.

Some studies examined how other factors could affect the impact of CBS. Jurisic *et al* (2018) discussed how a change in visual acuities could affect the frequency of hallucinations, while other studies identified social isolation as having an effect. Jones *et al* (2021) conducted a study into the effect of the Covid-19 lockdown on CBS and found those reporting increased loneliness also more commonly reported hallucinations becoming more intrusive. In total they found around half the patients in the study had an increase in symptom intrusiveness during the lockdown, although isolation was not the only potential cause cited, with restriction on exercise and stress related to media coverage of the pandemic also being mentioned.

It seems commonly accepted in many studies that educating patients on CBS reduces stress and anxiety and this is detailed, not only in the larger studies, such as Cox and Ffytche (2014)

but also in case studies (Nadarajah 1998), (Ricard 2009). Whether the implication of this is that an understanding of the condition could in itself have an effect on the presentation of symptoms, as is implied in one case study (Issa and Yussuf 2013), is something that cannot be determined without further studies being conducted.

CONCLUSION

The literature agrees that much of the anxiety experienced by CBS patients is related to the fear of hallucinations being caused by, or linked to, mental illness. This fear can be reduced by discussing CBS with low vision patients, however, studies have consistently found awareness of CBS is low, implying that, although many of them recommend that CBS is routinely discussed with at-risk patients, this is not currently happening. Research also suggests that, even when aware of CBS, patients are reluctant to volunteer information on hallucinations, so it is recommended that low vision patients are routinely asked about their symptoms.

Reassurance was found to have a relieving effect in most cases where patients were anxious about their hallucinations. This is particularly relevant to optical practice, as optical professionals, such as dispensing opticians or optometrists, are likely to be involved in providing such reassurance and education on the condition.

There is some indication that many patients are able to disrupt hallucinations by methods such as repeated blinking, moving or changing the intensity of light. However, more research needs to be conducted into the efficacy of such methods and whether particular techniques are more effective than others. If this was found to be of use in a significant proportion of CBS patients, it could be integrated into the handling of the condition in practice, as all the methods mentioned are simple actions which could be discussed with patients without the need for extensive training.

For article references, visit
<https://abdocollege.org.uk/references/>

Checking out from the tills to a rewarding career

In their final year, ABDO College degree students are all required to complete a dissertation which focuses on a research question of their choice. In this feature you can read about Lauren Sibley and her research paper, *'Do patient education and support have a significant impact on outcome in Charles Bonnet Syndrome?'*

Taking the opportunity to do overtime in the optical department when Lauren was working on the ASDA checkouts set her on a whole new career path. "I thought it was bound to be more interesting, so I went for it," she explained. "It was supposed to be mainly admin, but once I was there, we started learning pre-screening, then adjustments and collections, and then single vision dispensing. I really enjoyed it and after a year, I managed to transfer across and finish training as an optical assistant."

Lauren was there for another year before moving to Specsavers in Poole and heard about ABDO College. Her first block on the dispensing course was memorable.

"I remember sitting in lectures and we'd get to something I'd really struggled to figure out for the distance learning assignments, but with the explanations, it would suddenly all click," said Lauren.

"Block was definitely my favourite part of the course," she emphasised. "I always seemed to get ahead on assignments whilst I was there, partly I think, just because we were all there discussing it together."

Her least favourite part of the course was doing the essays, even though



Lauren Sibley

Lauren writes fiction for a hobby. "I found it difficult to imagine there being more than a few hours of work until I started. It felt like I was making very slow progress, but as I did more essays, I got used to it."

Lauren also found it a challenge juggling the assignments, essays and writing up case records while working. "Weekly assignments seemed to take up all of my time, and then before I knew it, an essay deadline was approaching, and meanwhile, I'd been collecting case records at work but not writing most of them up because I was too busy. I regretted that in my third year."

However, Lauren became better at time management and made the most of the blocks to get ahead. "That helped a lot, plus I became better at estimating how long things would realistically take."

Her advice to students is to get on top of the case records early on to avoid making the final year more stressful. "Just write them up as you go," she recommended. "Even if you have to edit them later when you've learned more, that will still be much quicker and less daunting than having a whole stack to write up from your notes."

It was only after a year of working in optics that Lauren heard of Charles Bonnet Syndrome. "It occurred to me, what would people who started getting symptoms think was happening to them? I started doing a few searches to see what studies had been done and narrowed down my focus to the effect that patient support and education had on outcomes."

"I did a spider diagram to identify keywords and kept a record of which brought up the most relevant studies, and also checked their references to find more. I then used a critical framework to narrow it down."

Having completed her research, Lauren's conclusion was that, knowing about Charles Bonnet Syndrome in advance of experiencing symptoms made a huge difference to patients. "Many who hadn't heard of it feared the hallucinations were a symptom of mental illness rather than something related to their visual loss. It's definitely an area where it's really important to spread awareness," she concluded.

Get SMART, set and achieve your career goals

By Nick Walsh, ABDO head of corporate development

When you achieve your goal of qualifying as a dispensing optician and proudly use the suffix FBDO, the question often asked is 'where next?' The good news is that there are many options open to qualified DOs.

It's fair to say that specialisms, such as contact lens optician, or low vision optician, are the best-known ways of developing from the DO role into a more clinical area and ABDO College offers great courses leading to qualification for both. For details, visit www.abdocollege.org.uk.

Practice manager is another role taken on by many DOs post-qualification. One way to ensure that you have the right knowledge and preparation for this role is to study and gain a qualification, just as you did for the DO role. ABDO offers a range of courses leading to qualifications awarded by the renowned Chartered Management Institute. To find out more, visit Management and Leadership Training in the business hub at www.abdo.org.uk/business-hub/mlt

There are other roles within eyecare that you may not have considered, and for inspiration, visit the website specifically created by ABDO at www.careersineyecare.org.uk

Sadly, without clear direction and action for your career ambitions, you won't advance. One of the most important things to do is to set a clear goal. A great way to do this is to use our SMART goal-setting tool on the ABDO peer-to-peer eMentoring platform at <https://abdo.onpld.com>

THE TOOL HIGHLIGHTS:

Specific

This clarifies what needs to be achieved. Think about how you could demonstrate that you have achieved the goal, for example, you could improve your communication skills by talking to someone new within your organisation every week.

Measurable

How will you measure if your goal has been achieved? Improve my communication skills by talking to someone new within my organisation every week can be measured, however, improve my communication skills can't be measured.

Achievable

While your goal needs to stretch and challenge you, it must be within your control and ability to be able to achieve it.

Realistic

It is reasonable to expect you to set goals only in areas in which you have some influence and not ones that can be derailed by factors beyond your control.

Timebound

A goal should always include a timeframe so that you can track progress and ensure it is completed within a realistic timeframe.

You may have a few different goals, long-term, mid-term and short-term. These may be linked in some way, as you may need to achieve a short-term goal to make a mid- or long-term goal more achievable.

A long-term goal could be to achieve promotion to a specific job role within five years. The short-term goal is something that supports this, for example, gaining good communication skills for that specific job.

Get a mentor

Putting together a career plan can be a daunting task but can be made easier by working with a mentor. The mentor can work with you to help identify the strengths and opportunities you can capitalise on to help achieve your goals and to help you identify and overcome weaknesses and challenges that could derail your ambitions.

A mentor will give you an impartial view and may have alternative routes that you may not have considered which you could take to achieve your goals. They will give you honest feedback and provide valuable support to help you achieve your ambitions.

The ABDO peer-to-peer eMentoring platform is at <https://abdo.onpld.com>. Whichever route you decide to take, always remember that ABDO and ABDO College are here to support you.



Optical Support Courses from ABDO College

Optical Support courses from ABDO College are great for new staff induction and development of your existing support teams.

Optical Support courses lead to qualifications awarded by the Association of British Dispensing Opticians.

They are for all staff, whether you work in retail optics, manufacturing, sales or technical support.

For further information and to apply for these and other courses:

Visit **www.abdocollege.org.uk/courses**

Call the ABDO College Courses Team on **01227 738 829 (Option 1)**

or email **info@abdocollege.org.uk**

