Glaucoma HQs Learning Outcomes

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1. General Information

Title:	**Professional Diploma in Glaucoma**
Credits / Hours:	60-75 credits / 600-750 hours
Pre-requisites:	Professional Higher Certificate in Glaucoma or equivalent Note: it is recommended that applicants should already have the Independent Prescribing qualification or intend to study for it very soon as the learning from this course has applications requiring the use of prescription-only therapeutics.

2. Rationale

The Professional Diploma is a high-level qualification enabling optometrists in secondary care settings to manage complex glaucoma patients safely in partnership with ophthalmologists, and to manage them autonomously in a range of settings.

The Diploma Level programme is designed to develop the required management skills for leading a team or service treating patients with glaucoma.

It builds on the competencies demonstrated at Certificate and Higher Certificate Level.

It supports the development of an appropriate scope of practice in learners with Independent Prescribing rights.

3. Learning Outcomes

Following completion of this programme, learners will be able to:

a) take a comprehensive ophthalmic history in a patient with established glaucoma
b) detect disease progression by observation of the optic nerve head/nerve fibre layer and/or results of imaging/functional tests
c) monitor the response to treatment and modify the management plan if necessary
d) counsel patients regarding the risk of blindness associated with glaucoma, risk to family members, and potential impact of the disease on lifestyle

Following completion of this programme, an optometrists will have an understanding of:

e) the use of perimetric techniques for the assessment of a patient with diagnosed glaucoma
f) the indications for, techniques, expected outcomes and complications of laser therapies and surgical interventions used in the management of glaucoma and its related conditions
g) the pharmacology, cautions, contraindications, interactions and side effects of anti-glaucoma medication
h) the indications, precautions, and other considerations for neurological investigations, e.g. MRI imaging

4. Indicative Content

a) Principles of management of normal tension glaucoma

b) Principles of management of secondary glaucomas
   - Exfoliation syndrome and exfoliative glaucoma (PXF)
   - Pigmentary glaucoma (PDS)
   - Other causes of secondary glaucoma
c) Principles of management of open angle glaucomas
   - Evidence base
   - Uses and limitations of target IOP
d) Principles of management of primary angle closure (PAC) and primary angle closure glaucoma (PACG)
e) Medical management of open angle glaucomas
   - Indications, cautions, contraindications, side effects of anti-glaucoma medication
   - Compliance and adherence
f) Monitoring and detection of progression in a patient with open angle glaucoma
   - Visual field test strategies
   - Detection of progression (through observation of disc/RNFL, results of imaging tests or field change)
   - Non-glaucomatous field loss/impact of co-morbidity
g) Theory, applications and limitations of the surgical techniques and laser therapy in the management of open and angle closure glaucomas
   - Indications
   - Techniques
   - Complications
   - Post-operative techniques (such as suture removal)
h) Clinical decision-making in the management of COAG, PXF glaucoma, and treated PAC / PACG
   - Interpretation and synthesis of clinical findings
   - Formulation of a clinical management plan
   - Clinical guidelines e.g. NICE, SIGN, EGS
i) Lifestyle and social aspects of glaucoma
   - Patient psychology: models for breaking bad news
   - Compliance
   - Optimising quality of life
   - Sources of help and information
j) Clinical leadership in glaucoma
   - Leading change and quality / service improvement
   - Triaging and stratifying patients
   - Leading and supervising others in your clinic
   - Design and delivery of service improvement / clinical change projects
   - Developing strategies to address the findings of audit and significant event analyses
k) Clinical governance in the management of established glaucoma
   - Quality standards e.g. NICE
   - National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)

Overarching Criteria for College-Accredited Higher Qualifications

5. Teaching / Learning Methods

a) The qualification must be delivered and assessed at level 7/11
b) The programme should be of sufficient length to achieve the stated learning outcomes
    a. Approximately 150-200 hours for a Professional Certificate
    b. Approximately 300-400 hours for a Professional Higher Certificate*
    c. Approximately 600-750 hours for a Diploma*
    * these will include the clinical placement
c) Programme delivery will be achieved through a variety of learning strategies appropriate to the material or skill being taught

For courses that include a clinical placement

d) A structured clinical placement will take place in an appropriate ophthalmic care setting under the direction of a designated sub-specialist ophthalmologist mentor
e) It is expected that specialist optometrists will be involved in the teaching process
f) The designated mentor will provide supervision and support and will arrange, with guidance from the education provider, appropriate clinical exposure to facilitate achievement of the stated learning outcomes and the integration of theory and practice
g) Clinical placements should build on the requirements of the previous lower-level qualification
h) During the placement, the learner should have an active involvement in each logged patient episode
a) Clinical placements should be of sufficient length to achieve the competence required. As a guide, based on one session per week:
    - Professional Higher Certificate: 6 months
    - Professional Diploma: 12 months
i) The complexity of the case mix should gradually increase as clinical experience develops
j) During the placement the learner should have exposure to patient episodes of varying diagnoses and complexity for them to become competent
    - At Professional Higher Certificate level there should be 150 patient episodes and at Professional Diploma level 250 patient episodes.
    - Up to 75 patient episodes may be remote or simulated
k) Learners must maintain a portfolio that documents their clinical experience and competency-based assessments that forms part of the summative assessment of the qualification
l) The clinical placement should be augmented by case-based discussion and directed private study

6. Assessment and Evaluation

a) Assessments should be designed to provide valid and reliable judgements about a trainee's performance
b) Assessment strategies must be made explicit and be appropriate for the outcomes they are designed to test
c) It must not be possible to pass the qualification without meeting all the learning outcomes
d) For each assessment, a marking scheme with the appropriate pass/fail criteria should be established
e) No assessment may have a pass mark of less than 50%

f) The course provider must ensure work is assessed using standard-setting and moderation mechanisms that are explicit, reliable and valid including, where appropriate, second marking
g) The development of clinical decision making is a key aspect of all courses, and this should be formally assessed

7. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

a) APL may be awarded to candidates as appropriate. It should be noted that the APL must be specific to the units and certificates already held by candidates
b) APL can count towards no more than one third of the programme being studied (noting that APL processes may also be used to establish the applicants meet all of the pre-requisites for admission to any of the qualifications)

For courses that include a clinical placement

c) Candidates may be eligible for exemption from the clinical placement through accreditation of prior learning
   The criteria for exemption are:
   i. candidates must be current practitioners with relevant experience in glaucoma management within a hospital, clinic or other appropriate setting
   ii. candidates must present a portfolio of evidence of sufficient* patient episodes; patients should be seen within a hospital, clinic or other appropriate setting

       * Currently 150 episodes for a Professional Higher Diploma and 250 episodes for a Professional Diploma
   iii. the portfolio of evidence must include details of relevant, specific workplace assessments which directly match, and are assessed against the clinical skills learning outcomes in the relevant College of Optometrists' documentation
   iv. items of evidence within a portfolio of evidence have a currency of two years