



THE COLLEGE OF
OPTOMETRISTS

Clinical Learning in Practice Assessment Processes

August 2025

Content

Section 1 – Attendance on placement	3
CLiP placement overview	3
Placement attendance	3
Section 2 – Assessment opportunities	4
Visits	4
Visit prerequisites	4
Visit attendance	4
Service Evaluation Project	4
Section 3 – Special circumstances	6
Exceptional circumstances	6
Applications for exceptional circumstances	6
Reasonable adjustments	8
Appeals	8
Misconduct during assessment	8
Fitness to train	9

Section 1 – Attendance on placement

CLiP placement overview

CLiP placements will consist of 44 weeks of patient-facing activity, with sufficient time during the approximately 48-week period for statutory leave. Support for work-based learning and assessment on the placements will be organised in two parts, each of approximately 22 weeks' duration and with start dates aligned to the University's preferred structure.

We would usually expect the student to be in the same placement for the whole experience, completing both CLiP Parts 1 and 2 with the same supervisors and in the same working environment.

Placement attendance

All absences from placement, with or without exceptional circumstances, must be reported to the College to meet the requirement to document the weeks of patient-facing activity laid down by the General Optical Council.

CLiP cannot be completed with less than 44 weeks of patient-facing activity, unless the University indicates in writing to the College that the shortfall has been met elsewhere in the course.

Section 2 – Assessment opportunities

Visits

CLiP has a remote (R) and a face-to-face (F2F) visit in each of the two parts (four visits total).

All visits are divided into tasks, which address one or more learning outcomes. If any outcome is not passed, the associated task is also considered to be failed and must be redeemed. For most tasks this will require a resit. Only one resit visit will be provided unless there are approved exceptional circumstances, and that visit will only address failed tasks. All resits will take the same format as the first sit.

The exceptions to this are the Patient Relationships tasks which are assessed at SHOWS HOW level in CLiP1R. A resit will not be provided for these tasks, if failed, because they are reassessed at DOES level in CLiP1 F2F.

Feedback will be provided on all failed tasks.

Visit prerequisites

Many of the CLiP tasks have prerequisites, which take the form of evidence that will be used for the assessment, via the logbook. Each visit has a dashboard that allows tracking of the presence of the relevant prerequisites in the logbook. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have logged all the prerequisite evidence and arranged for their supervisor to approve it prior to the visit deadline, which will normally be one week in advance.

Any task that does not have the full complement of prerequisite evidence logged by the deadline will be treated as failed, unless there are approved exceptional circumstances.

Visit attendance

Students who present themselves for assessment at the visit will be treated as declaring themselves fit-to-sit the assessment. Only in exceptional cases will circumstances declared after the visit has taken place be considered for mitigation. For example, the student was hospitalised and unable to notify us of absence on the day of the visit.

If students or the practice are not ready to start the visit on time, visits can be started late, provided at least one hour of the allotted time remains. However, only the visit tasks that can be completed in full, in the remaining allowed time, will be assessed.

Students who do not present themselves for the visit will be considered to have failed unless there are documented and approved exceptional circumstances relating to lateness or absence. Students who have a valid reason for absence must provide this, together with appropriate evidence, by email to education.admin@college-optometrists.org. Notification of absence must take place as soon as possible, ideally before the visit is due to start. If evidence is provided after the visit, the reason for delay must also be evidenced.

Service Evaluation Project

The fully completed service evaluation *project planning template* must be uploaded to the logbook prior to CLiP1R deadline, to ensure planning has been undertaken and the assessor can provide feedback. Only properly completed sections of the planning tool uploaded on time will receive feedback unless there are approved exceptional circumstances. This project planning task is formative only, so will not be marked pass or fail.

The full completed service evaluation project *report* must be uploaded prior to the CLiP1F2F paperwork deadline. This will be verified during the visit and then marked pass or fail. Elements of the report that do not meet the passing standard will be identified, with feedback, and the report may be reworked and resubmitted once more only.

Section 3 – Special circumstances

Exceptional circumstances

Where a task, visit or missed submission deadline is subject to approved exceptional circumstances, that element will be postponed and rescheduled, without penalty, to a date set by the College in the light of the circumstances.

Should the circumstances prevent progress or attendance over a prolonged period, such that the student will be unable to:

- a) accrue 22 weeks patient-facing activity before the start of CLiP2,
OR
- b) accrue 44 weeks of patient-facing activity before the end of CLiP2,
OR
- c) be unable to complete CLiP1 assessment within the 22 weeks,
OR
- d) be unable to complete CLiP2 assessment before the end of their placement,

...then they may be required to restart the relevant section of CLiP (1 or 2) at the next start point. Typically, this would apply for circumstances that last more than three weeks total, depending on other leave taken.

No additional fees will be charged for this, and the College will support students to find an alternative placement if their employer is unable to extend the placement period.

Applications for exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances postponements will only be awarded in response to an application made to the College, with supporting evidence. Where supporting evidence will be available at a later date this must be indicated. Prolonged or complex exceptional circumstances will require more substantial evidence of impact and may also require University approval and trigger other support processes.

The following table shows a non-exhaustive list of potential exceptional circumstances and forms of evidence that might be provided, alongside some examples of circumstances that would not qualify as exceptional:

Exceptional circumstances

Circumstance	Examples that would normally be approved	Evidence	Examples that would not normally be approved
Ill health, including mental health	Illness that would warrant not attending work	Formal letter or document from a health professional	Claims for illness after the visit has taken place
Bereavement	Loss of close family member	Death certificate or funeral arrangements Employer-approved compassionate leave	Loss of a distant relative, unless evidence is provided of impact such as caring responsibilities for of from the student
Caring responsibilities	Serious injury or illness in a close family member such as parent, spouse, partner, sibling or child	Medical records	Expected childcare responsibilities such as school holidays. Caring for family members with minor illness such as coughs and colds
Pregnancy and maternity	Serious complications in pregnancy or maternity	Medical records	Being pregnant with no complications (although students may apply for reasonable adjustments)
Job loss / Placement disruption	Redundancy, or long-term /permanent closure of practice Loss of access to practice records	Employment termination records Employer-provided evidence	Misconduct or other termination reasons.
Leave	Maternity, paternity, adoption or compassionate leave	Employer records of maternity, adoption or compassionate leave	Holidays
Assessment disrupted	Fire alarm, mystery patient sickness, assessor prevented from attending, unavoidable practice closure	Assessor report	Minor interruptions of less than five minutes

Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments approved by the student's University will be applied to CLiP assessments as follows.

Approved Adjustment	Assessment	Application to CLiP
Extra time	Visit	Visit will be extended by percentage required. However, clinical tasks which are conducted so slowly, in the view of the assessor, as to cause the patient risk or discomfort will be failed, even if completed within the extended time period.
Extra time	Service evaluation project submission dates	These must be completed by the visit date. The visit will be scheduled for the last week of the allotted (three-week) window.
Breaks	Visit	Rest breaks as specified will be provided.
Use of one eye for retinoscopy (eg for Amblyopia)	Visit – Direct observation tasks	Will be permitted but must use recognised technique (e.g. Barrett) to good effect.

All other adjustments will be implemented in the light of discussions between the College and the University Link Tutor.

Where workplace adjustments have been provided by the employer for students with disabilities, or with relevant temporary conditions, these will normally be permitted during the face-to-face assessment. These must be notified at the start of CLiP, or as soon as requested by the student, to the College. Where there is any question that such adjustments would impact the validity of outcome or conduct of assessments, the student's University will determine what is acceptable for use in CLiP.

Where concerns remain on either side that performance standards may be impacted through implementation of any specific adjustment, or equality legislation may be breached if not enacted, the GOC will be approached for final decision.

Appeals

Students who believe that an administrative mistake has been made by the College should contact clip@college-optometrists.org as soon as possible to ask for it to be rectified. Students must follow the appeals process of their own University in relation to any other concerns about the outcome of CLiP assessments.

Misconduct during assessment

Where professional or academic misconduct is suspected or identified during assessment, the assessor will report, including available evidence, to the College. The College will notify the University, and the Lead Assessor will instigate further investigation and provide the outcome to the University for decision.

Fitness to train

On receipt of evidence that indicates that the student's fitness-to-train may be impaired, the College will inform the University for action. Where the impairment may present an immediate concern for the welfare of the student, patients, colleagues or others the College will take such action as seems appropriate to protect those involved.

Document version	Date	Update
1.0	14//08/2025	First publication

© College of Optometrists, 2025