



THE COLLEGE OF  
OPTOMETRISTS

**Clinical Learning in Practice (CLiP)  
Employer Handbook**

**June 2026**

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## CLiP overview

### (a) Clinical Learning in Practice (CLiP)

The CLiP programme has been designed by the College to deliver the work-based learning and assessment required under the GOC's Education and Training Requirements (ETR). The ETR stipulated that the academic and work-based elements of qualifications registering optometrists for practice need to be integrated and delivered by one provider. As such, CLiP now forms part of the University degrees, and award of the degree is the final stage for newly-qualified optometrists to register.

CLiP work-based learning consists 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 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 workplace for the whole experience, completing both CLiP Parts 1 and 2 with the same supervisors and in the same working environment.

Many core elements of the way students have worked on the Scheme for Registration will continue, including:

- Employers are able to advertise job opportunities and select a candidate through application and interview.
- Employers have a contract with the student and pay them.
- The employer arranges supervision for the student.
- The employer is able to make arrangements to continue working with the student when their time on CLiP ends.

The shift from GOC competencies to GOC learning outcomes affects the way in which assessments are structured. However, the goal of ensuring that the student progresses to become a safe and effective practitioner, with all that entails, remains the same.

Some key differences to the structure and organisation of CLiP are summarised below.

Scheme for Registration	Clinical Learning in Practice (CLiP)
Student typically starts after graduation	Students starts while still a student on the degree
Work can start at any point in the year after the student has graduated	Work needs to start and finish at set points in the year, to fit with the University calendar
The student's job application is the responsibility of the student and is arranged between the student and employer only	The College has responsibility for arranging CLiP job applications, delegated from the University

Assessment happens when the Supervisor decides the student is ready	Assessment needs to happen during set windows, though opportunities for flexibility are built in
Types of clinical encounter are recorded and the student can progress when certain numbers of encounters have been reached	A risk framework approach will be used to monitor student progress
There is no written component to the assessment	There is a written Service Evaluation Project element to the CLiP assessment
All Scheme students complete the College OSCE as a final stage of assessment	There is no requirement for a set final stage of assessment which tests everything learnt so far
On completion of the work-based learning elements and OSCE, the student can register with the GOC	After completing CLiP, the student will need to complete University assessments and be awarded the degree in order to register with the GOC

### **(b) Requirements for offering a CLiP job**

Any employer offering a CLiP job to a student needs to meet the following criteria:

- The employer arranges face-to-face patient encounters on a regular daily basis and is open at least 4 days each week.
- There is at least one employee who is suitably qualified and experienced to supervise a student.
- The employees who will supervise meet College requirements and can be given the required time and resources to fulfil the duties of this role.
- The required consulting room facilities and equipment are available to allow for student training and supervision for at least 20 hours per week (full student working hours between 28 – 31 hours per week).
- The employer is able to offer a fixed term employment contract to a student for around a year, starting in January or July with a minimum term of 11 months, ideally with scope to extend if needed if re-sits are required, for example.

More detailed guidance on supervision and these other areas is set out below.

## **Responsibilities**

### **(a) The College**

The College:

- Facilitates the job recruitment process and provides the employer with access to a software platform used to place advertisements, view applications and make offers.
- Acts as the point of liaison with the University for all matters relating to the student's performance and progression.
- Provides professional development support to the student, including access to the logbook.
- Arranges, carries out and records all student assessment during CLiP.
- Provides induction, training, accreditation and ongoing support for Supervisors and Assessors.
- Provides access, via the CLiP Portal software platform, to information on the student's progress to the employer, professional services teams and University.

### **(b) The Employer**

When an employer registers with the College to provide a CLiP job opportunity, it is agreeing to:

- Comply with all the requirements included here about the student's employment, their supervision and access to facilities and equipment.
- Comply with this guidance over the course of the CLiP programme.
- Be part of the quality assurance procedures the College has in place.
- Make the required contribution to the College for each student placed.

### **(c) The University**

The University:

- Organises short periods of clinical experience through the first three years of the degree, to develop the student's patient-facing experience.
- Ensures that students have completed the pre-requisite learning at the required levels to be able to start CLiP.
- Informs other partners, in a timely manner, if there are any problems with a student's progress.
- Provides continued learning and instruction during the CLiP period, including content for the weekly learning day, to meet expectations placed on degree providers.

## Arrangements for the student's employment

### (a) Job application process

The College sets up and manages the process for employers to advertise CLiP opportunities and for students to apply. This needs to happen using the CLiP Portal, within defined dates each year. The schedule for the job application process will be:

Month	Stage of job application process
January	Job vacancies submitted on CLiP Portal
	Applications open by end of January
February	Mid-February deadline for applications
	Interviews and offers
March	Mid-March deadline for employers to complete interviews
April	Early April deadline for employers to make offers
	Early Mid-Aprily deadline for students to accept offers
June	Second round applications open
July – August	Interviews and offers for second round applications
September	Third round of applications, in which the College engages in one-to-one support for unplaced students

Within these key dates, there will be a significant amount of activity and update from the College, including advice and support for employers to set up vacancies on the Portal and support for students who have problems applying.

Using the CLiP Portal means that rules can be set in place for the job application process. This means that, while students are allowed to hold an offer made, they are only allowed to hold one offer at a time and there is a deadline by which they need to make a final decision.

### (b) Employment contract

The practice will need to give the student written conditions of service and terms of employment which offer:

- Paid employment for four working days per week in which the student is required to work between 28 and 31 hours, with the four days being roughly equal working hours, start and finish times to vary by location.
- Around 20 hours per week working in the testing room with patients, with remaining hours allocated to other areas of the practice.
- One full learning day, Monday to Friday, in which the student is not required at the practice, which is reserved for the student's learning time and need not be paid.
- Cover for the student under the practice's liability insurance.

Some of the required four working days per week may be scheduled on weekends but a student should not be expected to work on both Saturday and Sunday on a regular basis.

Provided the four supervised working days and the learning day are provided, the practice and the student may agree that additional days can be worked, subject to employment law. Students are advised that they should consider any impact of additional work on their learning and progression. Any work the student does above the four required working days must not be supervised practice for the purposes of CLiP assessment and cannot not be logged in the CLiP Portal. For example, a student could, with their agreement, work additional hours as an optical assistant or other role within their scope of practice.

Although we do not stipulate levels of pay, the College considers it good practice to invest in the student's development and to offer a full time salary equal to at least National Living Wage. This should make the opportunity attractive to more students within the application process.

The term of the student's contract should be at least 11 months but can extend to 12 or more. Most students will have set dates for starting and finishing CLiP, depending on their degree programme, which means the initial contract would usually be limited to a year, starting in January or July.

In addition, there could be certain adjustments which the employer is required to make to allow for disabilities or other circumstances. Students should inform you of any required workplace adjustments, while the College will alert you to any reasonable adjustments for assessment, if required.

### **(c) Student learning day**

The CLiP student is an employee, but also remains a university student working. The student continues to be in touch with the University while they are on CLiP and will need to engage in weekly learning and assessment activity.

To allow time for this, employers need to provide a learning day on which the student is not required to attend the place of work and has no work-related responsibilities. The employer does not need to schedule any activities for the learning day, this is the University's responsibility. Activities arranged on the learning day will generally be remote so that travel is not required.

The learning day, as noted above, must be arranged for one day per week, Monday to Friday. It is understood that employers will need to be flexible about which day the student takes for the learning day and, where possible, the University will not request a regular day each week. However, some Universities may have specific requirements for learning which will be communicated in advance and would need to be negotiated with the employer. This may include limited periods of assessment-related activity which may be handled as study leave.

#### **(d) Continuity of service following CLiP**

It is expected that students will enjoy and appreciate the support and career development they have received on CLiP and will want to discuss working in the same setting on completion of their degree. The experience of other professional subjects, where academic study and work-based learning are integrated, suggests that students often opt to continue in service, particularly when an offer is made during the working period. However, the contracts will be a matter between the employer and the student and, as such, tie-in arrangements may be included, provided they are made clear as part of the job offer during the application process.

In most cases, CLiP comes toward the very end of the degree so the student will be able to register with the GOC soon after the point they complete CLiP. Even in these circumstances, the student will probably have at least one assessment element to complete before the degree is awarded and they can register with the GOC.

In some arrangements, the student will need to return to the university for some remaining months of study following CLiP. In such cases, the employer could offer work to the student outside of their study time, maintain some keep-in-touch days and/or contract with them to return to the practice when they qualify. The College will work with the University and employer to ensure continued contact and maintenance of clinical skills.

#### **(e) Use of the CLiP Portal**

Registered CLiP Employers have access to the CLiP Portal, a software platform developed to manage all stages of CLiP, including handling applications for jobs, logging work-based learning activity and recording assessment. Details of the place of employment, the student and the members of the supervisory team will need to be stored in the Portal. All parties will have access, with user roles assigned so that all involved can access consistent, correct information.

## Expectations for the CLiP student experience

### (a) Types of experience offered

The employer needs to provide the student with a range of professional experience. There must be an emphasis on Optometric clinical practice but the student should also gain experience of all elements of the usual work of the practice. As such, the work the student carries out will include some tasks which non-optometrist members of the team may usually be allocated, such as administrative work or dealing with general patient enquiries. However, there should be regular opportunity to conduct full eye examinations, contact lens appointments and dispensing to gain the required experience as an optometrist.

### (b) Opportunities for clinical practice and training

The student needs to have access to a consulting room and to be allocated patients for at least 20 hours per week. The room must be available for the student to see patients, with space for a supervisor to attend and observe if required. The student will need to have access to resources and equipment needed to carry out patient consultations.

The recommended number of patients a student should see each day is:

Timeframe	Number
Up to CLiP Part 1 Remote visit (around 9 weeks in)	No more than 4-5 patients per day
Up to CLiP Part 1 Face-to-face visit (around 18 weeks in)	No more than 6-8 patients per day
Up to CLiP Part 2 Remote visit (around 5 weeks into Part 2)	No more than 8-10 patients per day
Up to CLiP Part 2 Face-to-face visit and beyond (around 13 weeks into Part 2)	No more than 12 patients per day

### (c) Staff resources and time committed to supervision

The student must be supported by a supervisor or supervisory team, formed of suitably qualified staff who are allowed the time to fulfil this role. The student's supervisor or at least one member of the supervisory team, with the correct scope of practice to meet legal requirements for supervision, will need to be in the practice on the same days as the student is working.

Supervisors do not have to be in the room while the student consults with a patient at all times. However, a judgement will need to be made about what levels of oversight are required. These are expected to be higher in the first weeks or months of CLiP. They will also need to be present whenever the task is considered to carry high risk or the patient has complex needs.

More details on changes to supervisory arrangements and the required roles for CLiP are set out in the next section.

#### **(d) Exposure to a range of clinical experience**

The student will need to see as wide a range of patient types and visual conditions as possible within the practice. Where a student does not have the opportunity to see certain patient types within the practice, supervisors may need to involve the University and the College to discuss ways in which the student can gain this experience.

#### **(e) Equipment and resources**

The main resources the employer needs to provide to support the student are the use of the consulting room for conducting eye examination and access to the supervisory team for support, as detailed above. In addition, the equipment which needs to be available for the student's use is set out below.

#### **Equipment to be provided by the employer**

Amsler charts manual

Colour tests – two versions to screen for all possible defects

Direct ophthalmoscope

Distance and near oculomotor balance tests

Distance and near tests suitable for:

- adults
- young children

Focimeter

Keratometer

Measuring device for accommodation – RAF rule

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Slit-lamp biomicroscope

Test for stereopsis

Threshold controlled visual field equipment

Tonometer – both contact applanation and non-contact applanation (and calibration equipment)

Trial lenses, trial frame and accessories including pinhole

#### **Equipment the student will be expected to own**

Indirect lens (e.g. 'Volk lens')

Pen torch

Retinoscope

## **CLiP structure and assessment framework**

### **(a) Delivery models**

As students will need to complete CLiP during their degree, the times at which they start and finish work need to be fixed and will follow one of two models:

- In Model A, students will start in January of Year 3 and should complete within a year. They will need to complete their studies for the degree programme with the University after CLiP.
- In Model B, students will complete most elements of the degree programme by the end of Year 3 and take CLiP in Year 4, starting in July and should complete within a year. They will need to complete some final assessments with the University after CLiP.

We will encourage employers to be flexible on start dates, to ensure they have a larger pool of applicants to draw from, and the default set-up in the CLiP Portal when you create a vacancy is that the student can start in January or July. It is possible to change this if you need to opt for one start date only.

### **(b) Assessment**

To ensure that students consolidate core skills before they are assessed on more challenging clinical outcomes, the assessment of CLiP is organised in two stages, and the student will need to pass all elements of CLiP Part 1 before proceeding to CLiP Part 2. We would expect the most common arrangement to be for the student to complete both CLiP Parts 1 and 2 with the same employer.

This approach allows for greater flexibility in dealing with any failed elements of assessment, and means that any student who needs it will have the chance to re-take one part only rather than the entire year.

The main assessed elements of CLiP Part 1 are:

- Remote visit, CLiP 1R: A two-hour visit, conducted online, with five tasks, three of them assessed. These focus on health and safety legislation, use and supply of ophthalmic drugs and records of patient interactions. The Assessor will also discuss the student's Service Evaluation Project and discuss their work setting and supervision.
- Face-to-face visit, CLiP 1F: A three-and-a-half hour visit, in the student's practice, with nine tasks, seven of which are assessed. These include observation of clinical examination skills with a supplied patient and dispense and verification. Checking and discussion of logbook records includes consent, patient care and diagnosis & decision-making. The Assessor will also carry out checking and verification of the Service Evaluation Project and discuss work setting and supervision.
- Service Evaluation Project: Students will be provided with workbooks (including guiding questions and timelines) to guide them in developing an enquiry-led project relating to service evaluation and improvement within their practice. This will include: evaluation of the current state of play (audit);

opportunities for and risks of change; and proposals for value maximisation and risk mitigation.

The Project will also include consideration of ways of improving patient experience and patient outcomes.

Following the CLiP 1F visit and discussion with the Assessor, the work will be assessed by an assigned College marker.

Students who successfully complete CLiP Part 1 may progress to CLiP Part 2. The main assessed elements are:

- Remote visit, CLiP 2R: A two-hour and 30 minute visit carried out online, comprising seven tasks, five of which are assessed. Four of the tasks are review and discussion of logbook records covering low vision, paediatrics, non-tolerance and the use of drugs. The Assessor will also discuss a 360° review and feedback on the student and coaching. There is also discussion of a Personal Development Plan the student prepares in advance of the session, and of work setting and supervision.
- Face-to-face visit, CLiP 2F A three-hour visit, carried out in the student's practice, with five tasks, four of which are assessed. This includes a complete eye examination, with a supplied presbyope patient, and a specialist dispense. The review of logbook records will focus on diagnosis, management and referral and the Assessor will use images from the assessment toolkit to test students' knowledge and application. The student and Assessor will also discuss the student's learning and development, with reference back to the Personal Development Plan from the last visit.

More detail on the CLiP assessment visits can be found in the CLiP Assessment Handbook and in the [CLiP Assessment](#) area of the College website.

The way assessments are structured will provide opportunities for students to re-take assessments if they are not successful at the first attempt and stay on track with the CLiP structure. Assessment visits will be grouped into tasks, so students who fail an element would need to re-sit that task rather than the entire visit. Depending on the nature of the task, the re-take could happen remotely or at the next visit.

The GOC Education and Training Requirements do not allow extensive re-sit opportunities. Students will be given two attempts at completing each task. Where a student fails a task, the College will usually arrange a separate assessment visit within the following weeks for the student to attempt it again. The only exception to this in CLiP 1R, in which some outcomes are assessed again at the CLiP 1F visit.

If any task has not been successfully completed by the end of CLiP 1 or CLiP 2, then that part of CLiP must be repeated in full, to ensure time and experience to consolidate and improve the relevant clinical skills.

The student will be allowed one more attempt to complete the CLiP Part in full. If they fail any tasks on this second attempt at the whole part, they will be given the opportunity to attempt each task again a second time if required.

As a result, the maximum number of times any task can be attempted is four, provided no exceptional circumstances are taken into account.

### **(c) Assessment visit schedule**

The tables below give an indication of the main CLiP start dates and assessment windows, depending on the student's University. See the College website for dates for the current year.

#### **Standard CLiP dates**

Students at Anglia Ruskin University, Aston University, Cardiff University, Teesside University and most students with City St George's and University of Huddersfield will be on standard CLiP dates as follows:

Standard CLiP dates

<b>Early July</b>	CLiP Part 1 start
<b>Late August to mid-September</b>	Window for CLiP 1R assessments
<b>Early to late November</b>	Window for CLiP 1F assessments
<b>Early to mid-January</b>	CLiP Part 2 start
<b>Early to late February</b>	Window for CLiP 2R assessments
<b>Mid-April to early May</b>	Window for CLiP 2F assessments
<b>Mid-late June</b>	Usual CLiP end date

#### **Later start CLiP dates**

Students at University of Lancashire, University of Plymouth, Ulster University and students at City St George's and University of Huddersfield with late examination board results will be on the later CLiP dates as follows:

Later start CLiP dates

<b>Last week of July</b>	CLiP Part 1 start
<b>Mid-September to early October</b>	Window for CLiP 1R assessments
<b>Late Nov. to early December</b>	Window for CLiP 1F assessments
<b>End of January</b>	CLiP Part 2 start
<b>Early to late March</b>	Window for CLiP 2R assessments
<b>Early May to early June</b>	Window for CLiP 2F assessments
<b>Early to mid-July</b>	Usual CLiP end date

## January start CLiP dates

Students at University of Hertfordshire and some other students whose progress has been delayed will be on January start dates:

<b>Usually, the second full week of January</b>	CLiP Part 1 start
<b>Early to late March</b>	Window for CLiP 1R assessments
<b>Early to late May</b>	Window for CLiP 1F assessments
<b>Early July</b>	CLiP Part 2 start
<b>Mid to late August</b>	Window for CLiP 2R assessments
<b>Mid-October to early Nov.</b>	Window for CLiP 2F assessments
<b>Week commencing 13 Dec.</b>	Usual CLiP end date

**Note:** *Bradford and UWE details to be confirmed and updated here*

### (d) Arrangements for resits

Any student who fails one or more parts of an assessment visit (which will be made up of separate tasks, each with their own pass/fail element) will be given the opportunity to resit with no additional fee. Depending on the type of task, this may be arranged remotely or in the practice, around three weeks after the original visit. The aim would be to secure a successful result for the whole visit in advance of the next visit date.

A student who failed one or more parts of an assessment visit at the second attempt (assuming that extenuating circumstances are not presented or granted) will be required to re-take the CLiP part. This would happen at the next available opportunity, with both parts of CLiP being delivered by the College twice a year.

Here are some examples of how student re-takes would be arranged:

#### **Model A student needing to re-sit a CLiP Part 1 assessment task:**

The student started CLiP Part 1 in January and passes the remote visit stage of assessment. At the second stage, the face-to-face visit, they pass the patient-facing elements of assessment but fail one of the tasks on contact lens decision-making.

The elements of the face-to-face assessment which the student passed are recorded on the CLiP Portal and do not have to be repeated. A follow-up assessment visit is arranged three weeks later, for repeat of the contact lens task, and the student is able to work with their supervisor on preparation for this.

At the rearranged assessment opportunity, the student passes the task and is now recorded as successfully completing the CLiP Part 1 face-to-face visit. The student continues CLiP and will now just have to find out whether they passed the Service Evaluation Project.

**Model A student needing to re-take CLiP Part 1:**

The student started CLiP Part 1 in January but fails a task at the CLiP 1 face-to-face. A resit is arranged and the student is given support and advice prior to this. When the resit is unsuccessful, the student is required to re-take the whole of CLiP Part 1.

The student is able to join CLiP Part 1 on the Model B schedule, starting in July, so has until August/September to gain more experience and prepare for the next round of assessment. Their original CLiP completion date of end of December will now be the following June, with CLiP Part 2 taken on the Model B schedule between January and June.

As the Model A student needs to complete their studies with the University, the date for completion would depend on when they are able to re-join and complete the degree. Where possible, Universities will support students to completion without a break in studies.

**Model B student needing to re-take CLiP Part 2:**

The student started CLiP in July and had passed all assessment elements of CLiP Part 1 by the end of December. CLiP Part 2 starts in January but the student is unsuccessful in one of the tasks at the face-to-face visit and does not pass the rearranged resit opportunity two weeks later. As such, the student will need to re-take CLiP Part 2.

The student is able to join CLiP Part 2 on the Model A schedule, starting in July, so has until September to get prepared for the assessments. The student's original date of completion for CLiP was the end of May and is now the end of December.

On successful completion of CLiP Part 2, the student will still need to complete final assessments with the University, and timing of this will depend on the University.

## **Arrangements for supervision**

### **(a) Changes to supervision arrangements**

The College followed guidance on supervision published by the Sector Partnership for Optical Knowledge and Education (SPOKE) in the development of CLiP. As such, employers familiar with Scheme for Registration arrangements will note some key changes in the guidance set out below, including:

- Supervisory roles are different to the Scheme 'Principal Supervisor' and 'Additional Supervisor'.
- More flexibility in the experience requirements for staff fulfilling these roles – no set requirement for the equivalent of a Principal Supervisor to have two years' post-qualifying experience; and
- Opportunities for newly-qualified registrants to become involved in supervision of specific tasks or areas.
- Scope for larger practices, or smaller practices working together, to create a team to support the student, with the allocation of supervisory tasks.
- Different rules on the number of students any individual can supervise.
- Enhanced College support for all types of supervisor, including new training courses and the CLiP Portal, which will include logbook and risk framework tool.

### **(b) Supervisory roles**

Arrangements for CLiP supervision take account of the fact that some employers will need to have one individual supervising a student, while others will be able to engage a team.

The University will appoint an Academic Tutor to support and monitor progression of the student while on CLiP. This Tutor will be in contact with the student and may also engage with the student's supervisory team and the College about the student's progress.

Within the employing organisation, every CLiP student will need to be supervised by a 'Practice Educational Lead' as a minimum requirement. Where resources allow, the Practice Educational Lead can be supported by a 'Practice Task Supervisor', or more than one, and the Practice Educational Lead may allocate supervision tasks, appropriate to each Practice Task Supervisor's knowledge and experience, to this individual or to a supervisory team.

The Practice Educational Lead (hereafter 'Practice Lead') will generally need to demonstrate significant experience of supervising in order to take on the role, whereas a Practice Task Supervisor ('Task Supervisor') need have no prior experience and may be a newly-qualified Optometrist or a member of another profession.

Whatever the supervisory role taken, anyone supervising a CLiP student will need to be a College member to access the required training materials, software platform

and support. Any Task Supervisors who are members of other professions will be able to obtain Associate Membership of the College.

### **(c) Requirements for taking on a supervisory role**

The Practice Lead will need to:

- Be registered as an Optometrist with the General Optical Council.
- Be up-to-date with the current CPD cycle, maintaining this on an ongoing basis.
- Be a full and current member of the College of Optometrists.
- Complete the College training for a Practice Lead (in the case of current Scheme supervisors, there will be selected modules to convert to CLiP).
- Have appropriate indemnity insurance in place.

The Practice Lead will not need to have two years' post-qualifying experience but instead will need to meet at least one of the following:

- They must have supervised at least one student to the point of registration as an Optometrist (on the Scheme or CLiP); or
- They may submit a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their contribution to the supervision of student optometrists at all stages of the process;
- They would need to be mentored and supported by another established Practice Lead, or someone who is eligible to be one, throughout the supervision of their first student.

The Task Supervisor does not have to be an Optometrist but will need to:

- Be an optical professional registered with the General Optical Council or other registered medical professional.
- Be up-to-date with the current CPD cycle, maintaining this on an ongoing basis.
- Be an Associate Member of the College of Optometrists (or hold full membership, if an Optometrist).
- Supervise only those activities which are within their own scope of practice, if they are not an Optometrist.
- Complete the College training for a Task Supervisor.
- Have appropriate indemnity insurance in place.

It is expected that newly-qualified optometrists will be able to gain experience as Task Supervisors and will in due course be able to use this as evidence of the experience required to become a Practice Lead.

### **(d) Requirements for supervision in the workplace**

Students do not need to have a supervisor present in the room at all times when carrying out eye examinations. However, at least one member of the supervisory

team needs always to be present on the premises while the student is engaged in tasks which can only be undertaken by registered professionals. It is important that the student and supervisor always know who is supervising any particular activity. The level of supervision required is a matter of professional judgement for the responsible supervisor. The CLiP Portal will provide a dashboard (see below) based on the student's logbook that will help to inform this.

The student will record all their activity, and their reflections on practice, in the logbook area of the CLiP Portal. The supervisory team, as College members, have access to view the student's logbook, with user roles assigned which allow sign-off and comment on activities as appropriate to their role. The Practice Lead is expected to monitor and support student progress by maintaining oversight of the logged sessions and providing feedback to the student. This would be particularly important at certain key stages, such as when a student is approaching assessment periods and is expected to have achieved an appropriate range of experience. Again, the CLiP portal and dashboard will enable this oversight and developmental conversations.

#### **(e) CLiP progression and dashboard**

The College has developed a risk framework which Practice Leads and their supervisory teams can use to assess and rate the student's progress. Different rating levels are attached to different tasks, types of patient and the varying levels of complexity of patient complaints. This risk framework and rating system will replace the Scheme system of needing to reach certain numbers of encounters.

In broad terms, the student will start CLiP with a high risk rating and will need to be directly supervised by the supervisory team or Practice Lead for much of the time. The team and Practice Lead will start to review records of the student's activity to confirm that the student has carried out certain tasks and patient interactions safely on a regular basis. Where a student is struggling with completion of particular tasks, opportunities for reflection and feedback will be provided through the logbook. Progress to a lower risk category on the dashboard will only occur when tasks are agreed by the supervisor as completed successfully.

The student's risk rating will continue to be re-assessed and it will be expected that they are capable of carrying out many core activities independently after a number of weeks. Other, higher risk, patients and tasks will require closer monitoring for longer periods.

### (f) Time commitment

As an approximate guide to how much time supervisors will need to spend working with the student:

Stage	Supervision requirements
First 16 weeks	The student will spend around 15 hours per week engaged in activity which involves a member of the supervisory team, such as carrying out eye examinations which need close supervision, receiving training or discussing interactions and development with a supervisor.
16 – 30 weeks	The student will spend around 10 hours per week engaging in tasks which involve a member of the supervisory team (examples as above). The number of hours the student spends with supervisors would be expected to reduce significantly throughout this period.
30 – 44 weeks	The student will spend around 1-2 hours per week engaging in tasks which involve a member of the supervisory team.

Within these guidelines, it is expected that these guide hours would be accumulated in short bursts, with the student and supervisor liaising briefly around patient interactions and other duties, rather than spending extended blocks of time together.

### (g) Number of students per Supervisor

In a supervisory team which has sufficient experience, the Practice Lead could delegate practically all day-to-day support for the student and observation of their clinical practice. In such cases, the Practice Lead would still be expected to oversee the student's progress and liaise with them, but this could be less than one hour per week if the student were in later stages of CLiP and supported by other supervisors. In such cases, the Practice Lead could be involved in:

- monitoring the student's progress on the CLiP Portal;
- reviewing records and the team's sign-off of interactions;
- discussing student progress with Task Supervisors; and
- Coaching and assessment preparation with the student(s).

A Practice Lead who is fully supported in this way, and does not need to engage in any direct observation or support of student activity, could be expected to lead on the progress of up to 8 students.

If a student is being supervised by one Practice Lead with no supervisory team support, the Practice Lead would not be able to delegate for this kind of activity and would need to be allowed the required time to observe and support the student.

Realistically, a Practice Lead supervising students without Task Supervisors would be limited to two students.

#### **(h) Moving from Scheme for Registration to CLiP supervision**

As indicated above, experience gained by Principal Supervisors on the Scheme for Registration is recognised as suitable experience for CLiP supervision. Any Principal Supervisor on the Scheme who is preparing to supervise as a CLiP Practice Lead will only be asked to complete the CLiP-specific training module rather than the entire course.

#### **(i) Opportunities for new supervision arrangements**

The new arrangements for supervision will enable different ways of working and we would encourage employers to consider how the rules outlined above may allow for new arrangements. For example, the Practice Educational Lead, if working with a team, could potentially be shared between practices who would not otherwise be able to commit a member of the team to supervision. The Practice Lead could also have supervisory team members in different locations, which could enable collaborations with other working environments, such as high street practice and hospital.

#### **(j) Mentoring**

If a potential Practice Lead has limited experience of supervision, has not taken a student through all the learning outcomes/competencies or has not supervised for more than five years, we ask them to have a suitable Mentor in place. If this is set up, they can still take on a Practice Lead role.

This is what we expect from a mentoring arrangement:

- The Mentor will need to have supervised at least one pre-registration optometrist on CLiP / Scheme for Registration from start to finish i.e. full range of outcomes or competencies.
- This experience needs to be from the last four-five years
- They do not need to be in the same practice as the CLiP student and supervisors. It would be preferable to have someone in the same area, but a distance arrangement is fine if that is required.
- We suggest that Practice Lead and Mentor set up an introductory meeting and a short weekly meeting or call to discuss progress. This is mainly for the Practice Lead to raise any questions arising from work with the student as they occur.
- The mentor should be set up with similar access to the student's records as the Practice Lead has i.e. CLiP Portal access to the student.

## Quality assurance

The College delivers CLiP as a partner of the universities, so is responsible for setting standards for the student's experience and ensuring these are maintained. In doing so, the College is answerable not only to the university programme partners, but also to the oversight bodies which quality-assure their processes. We therefore need to follow set process and procedure in appointing partners and recording information about what is happening during CLiP.

As such, the College asks employers to complete a registration exercise when committing to offer a CLiP job opportunity, providing key details and confirming commitment to providing a certain level of service. This will include:

- Required resources and equipment are available for the student to use.
- A Practice Lead and/or a supervisory team will be available and will have the required time allowed to carry out their duties.
- Indemnity insurance is in place.
- Acceptance of information agreement and storage of information on the CLiP Portal.
- The employer agrees to inform the College if any problems occur or there are concerns about the student's performance.
- The employer will participate in annual feedback surveys relating to CLiP.

College Assessors will be checking in with the student and supervisors, particularly at the face-to-face visits, to ensure that the student's experience is as it should be.

As part of the overall College quality assurance process, an external verifier will be appointed and the CLiP Partnership Board (University representatives) and CLiP Oversight Board (University and Employer representatives) will meet on a regular basis. The reports considered at these meetings will be focussed on the overall CLiP experience and will include feedback from stakeholders, including employers. We will expect these oversight bodies to suggest actions for the College to follow up, in a cycle of continuous improvement.

Universities will also make use of the assessment and performance data recorded by the College in their own quality assurance processes.

## Dealing with problems

By agreeing to become a registered employer with the College, and to provide a work-based learning opportunity for a student, the CLiP Employer agrees to work with the student and supervisory team in line with the expectations outlined in this Handbook. To be clear, the employer will not be held liable for unforeseen circumstances which prevent the student from completing CLiP or from completing it on time. For example, a Supervisor may not remain available for the whole of CLiP, or the student could become ill for a significant period of time. However, we ask that employers consider occurrences such as this when applying to take on a student and set out the contingency plans they need to have in place.

The employer will have a direct contractual relationship with the student and when problems arise during the course of CLiP, the employer will be able to use their usual process and guidance, such as disciplinary procedures, to deal with them. However, the College sets out certain problems of a serious nature which will need to be reported to the College, and potentially other partners, when the employer becomes aware. These are:

- The student failing to attend work and so not completing the required time in practice.
- Concerns about patient safety or other aspects of the student's performance at work.
- The employer being unable to maintain the student's supervision and training for any reason.

Assessor visits incorporate quality assurance of the work setting and supervision arrangements. This is a check that student and supervisor are satisfied with the CLiP experience and can be a forum in which problems are raised by the employer and made known to the College.

As the facilitator of CLiP, the College will maintain overall responsibility for ensuring that the student receives the required learning and training experience. If the employer, members of the supervisory team or the student have any concerns about the CLiP experience, the first approach should be made to the Practice Lead to discuss ways to resolve the issue.

Problems can be referred to the College team by contacting [clip@college-optometrists.org](mailto:clip@college-optometrists.org), outlining the details or asking us to arrange a call. If the College becomes involved in these discussions, our aim will be to resolve any challenges pragmatically and as quickly as possible. We will encourage all parties to raise concerns as early as possible when they arise, so that they can be dealt with at an early stage of CLiP.

## **Registration and employer contribution**

### **(a) Registering as a CLiP employer**

Employers can register as CLiP Employers independently by visiting [our website](#). Employers who are part of multiple store groups should check with their professional services teams before proceeding, as the registration may be completed on their behalf.

### **(b) Employer contribution for CLiP services**

As CLiP involves provision of services to both universities and employers, the costs of delivery will be shared. As such, the contribution that employers are asked to make is significantly lower than the current Scheme for Registration fees. The Employer contribution will become due on the day the student starts work and will cover any required re-sits of assessment tasks within CLiP Parts 1 and 2.

If the student failed a re-sit attempt and needed to take a whole CLiP Part again, this would require extending the period of the student's CLiP contract. If agreeing to extend, the Employer would then be asked to pay half of the Employer contribution to cover the repeat of the CLiP Part.

The College understands that the pre-registration supervisor training grant is maintained for CLiP students.

The CLiP Employer contribution for students starting in 2025 and 2026 is £1,900 per student.

<b>Document version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Update</b>
1.1	02/12/2024	First version
1.2	01/12/2025	Job application schedule amended Recommended patient numbers added QA and dealing with problems updated Employer contribution added
1.3	26/06/2026	CLiP schedules replaced Supervisor mentoring section added

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