THE COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

Scheme for Registration
Pre-Registration Trainee Analysis Report
June 2015 – April 2017

A statistical report on the demographic and performance data of a single cohort of pre-registration trainees

1. Introduction

1.1 The Scheme for Registration represents the principal route for entry into the profession. It assesses graduates from all the GOC-approved[1] universities offering optometry at undergraduate level. Graduates must achieve at least a 2.2 in their optometry undergraduate degree to enrol on the Scheme.

1.2 It is assumed that the reader of the report has a basic understanding of the assessment structure of the Scheme for Registration. A fuller summary of the Scheme for Registration can be found in Appendix B.

1.3 This report analyses the demographic data and performance data of a single cohort of **620** pre-registration trainees completing the Scheme for Registration. This amounted to 91% of 681 trainees who enrolled on the Scheme for Registration between 1 June 2015 and 31 May 2016. The performance data of the cohort was drawn on 11 April 2017. 61 trainees who withdrew from the Scheme for Registration or who had not completed the Scheme for Registration by the time the data was drawn were not included in the analysis. A breakdown of when the 620 trainees included in this analysis were enrolled on the Scheme for Registration can be found below:

Month enrolled	Total	%	Cumulative	%
June 2015	101	16	101	16
July 2015	300	48	401	64
August 2015	141	23	542	87
September 2015	63	10	605	97
October 2015	11	2	616	99
November 2015	1	<1	617	99
December 2015	2	<1	619	99
March 2016	1	<1	620	100

1.4 As the table in 1.3 demonstrates, the majority of trainees (87%) enrol on the Scheme for Registration between June and August. The proportion of trainees enrolling in June, the first month, doubled from 8% in the previous cohort to 16% in this cohort.

1.5 As the Scheme is a continuous and flexible assessment programme, with some trainees from the same cohort enrolling eight months after the initial enrolees, this report aims to offer a snapshot on 11 April 2017 of the demographic and performance data of those entering the profession in one enrolment year.

[1] During 2015 – 2017, there were nine GOC-approved universities: Plymouth University, City University, Anglia Ruskin University, Cardiff University, Aston University, The University of Manchester, Bradford University, Glasgow Caledonian University, Ulster University. Note that the University of Hertfordshire began offering an undergraduate course from September 2015.

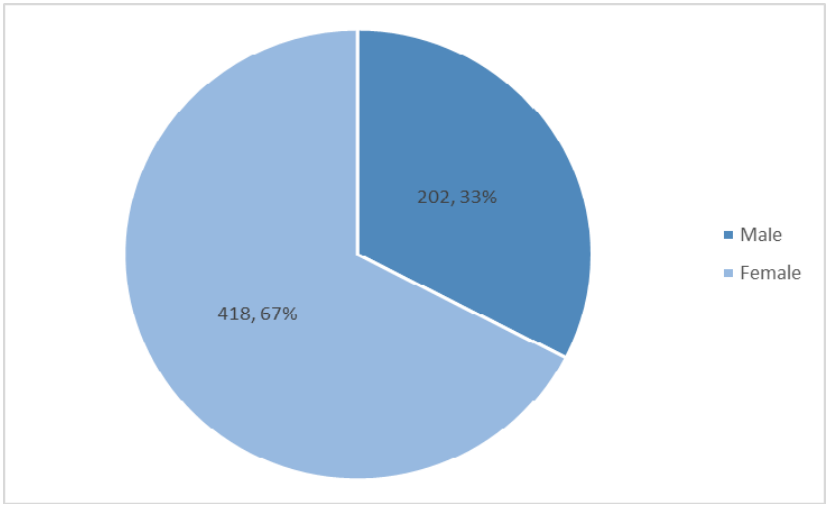
1.6 This is the third report released by the College; the previous reports analysed the 2014-2016 and 2013-2015 cohorts. Where appropriate, data from the most recent previous report is shown for comparison.

2. Demographic information

The sections below will detail the demographic make-up of the 2015-2017 cohort of pre-registration trainees. It is to be noted that this is a single cohort's data and, thus, may not be fully representative of past or future cohorts.

2.1 Gender

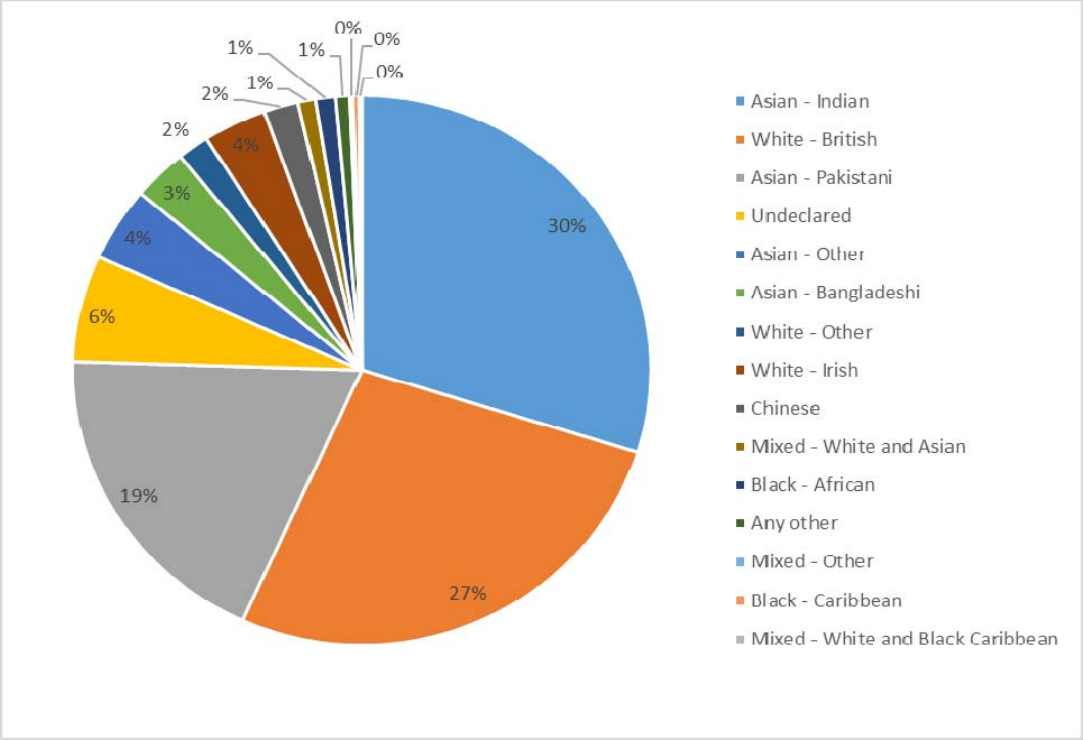
Female trainee optometrists in this cohort far outnumber their male counterparts.



2.2 Ethnicity

The three most common ethnicities of the 2015-2017 pre-registration cohort were: Asian Indian (30%), White British (27%) and Asian Pakistani (19%). A more detailed breakdown of the cohort's ethnicity distribution is detailed below with the previous cohort's figures provided for comparison:

Ethnicity	2015-2017		2014-2016	
	Total	%	Total	%
Asian - Indian	185	30	190	32
White - British	167	27	178	30
Asian - Pakistani	116	19	85	14
Undeclared	39	6	31	5
Asian - Other	27	4	29	5
White - Irish	22	4	20	3
Asian - Bangladeshi	19	3	13	2
Chinese	12	2	17	3
White - Other	11	2	21	4
Black - African	7	1	2	0
Mixed - White and Asian	6	1	7	1
Any other	5	1	6	1
Black - Caribbean	2	<1	1	0
Mixed - Other	1	<1	0	0
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	1	<1	1	0
Total	**620**		**593**	



Refining these data further, we can cross-tabulate gender with ethnicity:

Ethnic Origin	Female Trainees		Male Trainees		All Trainees	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Any other	4	1	1	0	5	1
Asian – Bangladeshi	11	3	8	4	19	3
Asian – Indian	116	28	69	**34**	185	30
Asian – Other	20	5	7	3	27	4
Asian – Pakistani	80	19	36	18	116	19
Black – African	4	1	3	1	7	1
Black – Caribbean	1	0	1	0	2	<1
Chinese	10	2	2	1	12	2
Mixed – Other	1	0	0	1	1	<1
Mixed - White and Asian	3	1	3	1	6	1
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	1	0	1	0	2	<1
Undeclared	22	5	17	8	39	6
White – British	123	29	44	**22**	167	27
White – Irish	16	4	6	3	22	4
White – Other	6	1	5	2	11	2
Total	**418**		**203**		**620**	

The figures highlighted show where the percentage representation of each ethnicity within the female and male populations differs by 3% or more from the average % representation of that ethnicity in the entire cohort. These show where there is a disproportionate and/or uneven representation of that ethnicity within a given gender. A summary of these findings for this cohort are:

- Trainees from an Asian Indian background (the most common ethnicity in the cohort) are disproportionately represented among male trainees, with 34% of this cohort's male trainees declaring this ethnicity compared to 28% of female trainees. This is the same as the 2014-2016 cohort, but a reversal of the 2013-2015 cohort.
- Trainees from a White British background are disproportionately represented among females, with 29% of this cohort's female trainees declaring this ethnicity compared to 22% of male trainees. This is again continues the trend from the 2014-2016 cohort, but is a reversal of the 2013-2015 cohort.

2.3 Geographical region

Using trainees' practice addresses, we were able to document the distribution of the 2015-2017 trainees across regions of the UK as of 6 April 2017:

Region	2015-2017		2014-2016	
	Total	%	Total	%
London	109	18	113	19
South East	72	11	41	7
Scotland	65	10	63	11
North West	62	10	71	12
West Midlands	61	10	62	10
South West	55	9	47	8
East	50	8	34	6
Yorkshire & the Humber	45	7	47	8
East Midlands	38	6	49	8
Wales	27	4	30	5
North East	25	4	17	3
Northern Ireland	11	2	19	3

These data demonstrate the relatively unequal distribution of pre-registration optometrists throughout the United Kingdom. The main differences from the previous year's report include an increase in placements in the South East of England and a slight decrease in the North West and East Midlands.

Cross-tabulating these regional data against the university each trainee attended creates the following distribution, with the region with highest number of trainees from that university highlighted.

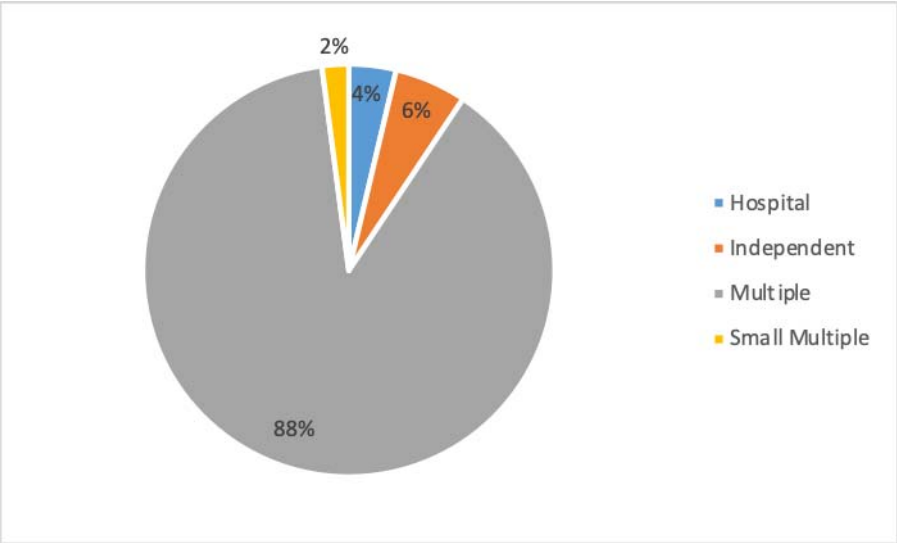
University	East Midlands	Eastern	London	North East	North West	Northern Ireland	Scotland	South East	South West	Wales	West Midlands	Yorkshire & the Humber	Total
Anglia Ruskin	4	**21**	9	1	1	0	0	8	3	3	2	2	**54**
Aston	13	6	18	0	5	0	0	16	10	3	**42**	6	**119**
Bradford	13	5	7	12	27	0	5	7	4	0	6	**29**	**115**
Cardiff	1	2	8	1	5	0	0	13	**19**	**19**	4	1	**73**
City	4	12	**58**	1	2	0	0	16	1	0	2	0	**96**
Glasgow Caledonian	1	0	0	0	0	1	**50**	1	1	0	0	0	**54**
Manchester	2	1	3	6	**21**	0	1	3	5	1	4	5	**52**
Plymouth	1	3	3	1	1	0	1	3	**7**	1	1	2	**24**
Ulster	0	0	2	3	0	**10**	8	5	5	0	0	0	**33**
Total	**38**	**50**	**109**	**25**	**62**	**11**	**65**	**72**	**55**	**27**	**61**	**45**	**620**

Broadly speaking, these data indicate that, as in the previous reports, students continue to undertake their pre-registration training in the same region as their chosen university. This suggests that each university continues to feed its own region's pre-registration optometric workforce.

2.4 Workplace

Pre-registration placements were divided into the following categories:

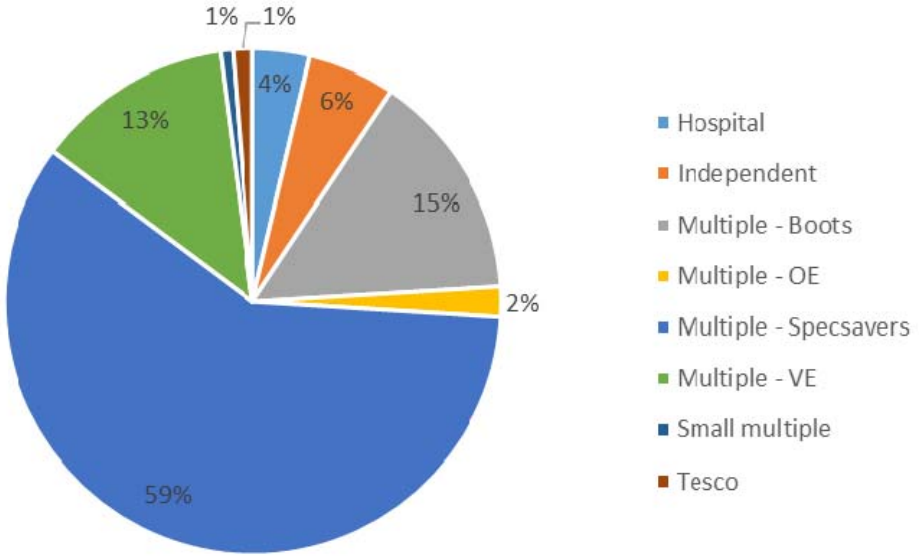
Multiples (Specsavers, Boots, Vision Express and Optical Express), smaller multiples (Scrivens, Tesco Opticians, Black & Lizars), independent practices and hospitals. The distribution of trainees within each of these sectors is shown below:



As shown, larger multiple practices continue to provide the vast majority (88%) of pre-registration training placements for this cohort. This is an increase of 3% from the 2014-2016

cohort. Independent practices offer the second highest number of placements (6%). This is a 3% decrease compared to the previous cohort.

A more detailed breakdown of pre-registration placements by workplace is found below:



Within the multiple sector, specsavers provided the largest number of placements with 67%. This is an increase of 6% from 2014-2016. This equates to 59% of the total number of pre-registration placements for this cohort, an 5% increase from 2014-2016.

2.5 Summary

From these data, a typical pre-registration optometrist from this cohort, like the previous cohort, is likely to undertake the Scheme for Registration in or around the area in which they studied optometry at undergraduate level. They are more likely to be female than male. If female, a trainee is equally likely to be from an Asian Indian or White British background. If male, a trainee is most likely to be from an Asian Indian background. Regardless of gender, trainees continue to be most likely to work in the multiple sector, particularly for Specsavers, with the number of trainees in independent practices decreasing.

3 Undergraduate performance

Below is the proportion of degree classifications awarded to those trainees in this cohort sample.

Degree	Total	%	2014-16 %
First	143	23	21
2:1	305	49	47
2:2	146	24	25
MOptom	14	2	4
CPS	7	1	2
OPS	5	1	1
Total	**620**	**100**	**100**

The distribution of degree classifications has remained more or less static year-on-year. The main proportion of trainees (49%) entering the Scheme for Registration achieve a 2:1 classification, followed by those achieving a 2:2 (24%) and then those achieving a first class degree (23%). A small proportion of trainees (4%) enter the Scheme for Registration via a number of alternative routes, such as: completing an MOptom degree alongside their pre-registration training, undertaking further study once already trained as a dispensing optician (CPS) or completing additional study to upgrade a third class optometry undergraduate degree (OPS).

3.1 Undergraduate performance and gender

Cross-tabulating undergraduate degree performance against gender yields the following results:

Degree	2015-2017			2014-2016		
	% female trainees	% male trainees	% all trainees	% female trainees	% male trainees	% all trainees
First	27	16	23	22	17	21
2.1	49	51	49	49	43	47
2.2	21	29	24	24	30	25
MOptom	2	0	2	3	5	4
CPS	>1	>1	1	1	4	2
OPS	1	4	1	1	1	1

As was the case for the previous cohort, these data suggest that, for this cohort, female students performed slightly better than male students at undergraduate level, with 76% of females achieving either a first / 2:1 degree class compared to 67% of males.

4 Performance in the Scheme for Registration

To judge performance through the Scheme for Registration, progress gradings were created for the Stage 1, Stage 2 and OSCE stages against which trainees could be categorised. Standard and Struggling were used to define performance at Stage 1, whilst Best, Standard and Struggling were used to grade performance at Stage 2 and the OSCE. The gradings are defined in the table below:

SfR Stage	Best	Standard	Struggling
Stage 1	3 or 4 visits to sign off 75 elements of competence*		5+ visits to sign off 75 elements of competence
Stage 2	1 attempt to pass	2 attempts to pass	3+ attempts to pass
OSCE	1 attempt to pass	2 attempts to pass	3+ attempts to pass

* It was felt inappropriate to distinguish between needing three and four visits at Stage 1 as it was not felt this indicated any stronger a performance from the trainee and could be linked to a number of other variables.

The table below lists the number and percentage of trainees who fall into each of these categories at each stage, with data from the 2014-2016 cohort provided for comparison.

Scheme for Registration Stages	Best		Standard		Struggling	
Stage 1: 2015-2017		514	(83%)		106	(17%)
Stage 1: 2014-2016		498	(84%)		95	(16%)
Stage 2: 2015-2017	330	(53%)	191	(31%)	99	(16%)
Stage 2: 2014-2016	299	(50%)	191	(32%)	103	(17%)
OSCE: 2015-2017	490	(79%)	107	(17%)	23	(4%)
OSCE: 2014-2016	461	(78%)	99	(17%)	33	(6%)

Key conclusions from this data are:

- If a trainee in this cohort struggled, this tended to occur in the work-based assessment, which in turn appeared to prepare trainees well for the final OSCE examinations.
- 84% of trainees in this cohort passed Stage 2 by their second attempt, with just over half of trainees passing first time. Stage 2, however, when compared with the OSCE, did require a higher number of second attempts (31%). The number of trainees needing further additional resits slightly decreased from last year.

- The first-time pass rate for the OSCE amongst this cohort continues to be strong (79%) and shows a slight increase on the previous cohort. This is unsurprising as the OSCE is designed to resample trainees' competence in content upon which they have already been assessed and acts as a final check that competence has been maintained. The number of struggling trainees at the OSCE stage remains low (6%), with 96% of trainees passing the OSCE in this cohort by their second attempt.

4.1 Analysing trainee performance from one stage to another

To interrogate this data further, trainee performance from one stage to another in the assessment framework was analysed to investigate whether trainee performance at each stage correlated.

Given the two gradings at Stage 1 (Standard and Best) and three gradings at Stage 2 and OSCE (Best, Standard, Struggling), there are 18 possible combinations of grading, or trainee profiles, over the three assessment stages. These are listed below, together with the number of trainees falling into each category. All profiles are represented by at least one trainee.

Profile	Stage 1	Stage 2	OSCE	Trainees 2015-2017	Trainees 2014-2016
A	Standard	Best	Best	218 (35%)	221 (37%)
B	Standard	Best	Standard	45 (7%)	39 (7%)
C	Standard	Best	Struggling	11 (2%)	8 (1%)
D	Standard	Standard	Best	127 (20%)	120 (20%)
E	Standard	Standard	Standard	26 (4%)	28 (5%)
F	Standard	Standard	Struggling	4 (1%)	6 (1%)
G	Standard	Struggling	Best	69 (11%)	57 (10%)
H	Standard	Struggling	Standard	13 (2%)	12 (2%)
I	Standard	Struggling	Struggling	1 (1%)	7 (1%)
J	Struggling	Best	Best	42 (7%)	22 (4%)
K	Struggling	Best	Standard	10 (2%)	5 (1%)
L	Struggling	Best	Struggling	4 (1%)	4 (1%)
M	Struggling	Standard	Best	24 (4%)	30 (5%)
N	Struggling	Standard	Standard	8 (1%)	4 (1%)
O	Struggling	Standard	Struggling	2 (1%)	3 (1%)
P	Struggling	Struggling	Best	10 (1%)	11 (2%)
Q	Struggling	Struggling	Standard	5 (1%)	11 (2%)
R	Struggling	Struggling	Struggling	1 (1%)	5 (1%)

Performance of trainees across the two cohorts is very consistent. As a number of these profiles are negligible in terms of trainee representation, the top five profiles for this cohort's performance are listed below. Numbers in square brackets represent the change from the previous cohort. The first four most represented profiles are the same as in the previous cohort, with Profile J replacing Profile M as the fifth most common profile.

Profile	Stage 1	Stage 2	OSCE	Trainees
A	Standard	Best	Best	218 (35%) [-2%]
D	Standard	Standard	Best	127 (20%) [-%]
G	Standard	Struggling	Best	69 (11%) [-%]
B	Standard	Best	Standard	45 (7%) [-%]
J	Struggling	Best	Best	42 (7%) [+3%]

Conclusions that can be drawn from this data are:

- Profile A, the most represented profile, shows that 35% of trainees required no resits or additional visits at any stage of the pre-registration training. However, this shows a decrease of 2% from the previous cohort and a 7% decrease from the 2013-2015 cohort.
- Profile D, the second most represented profile, shows that, like the previous cohort, 20% of trainees needed a single resit at Stage 2 and no additional visits or resits at any other stage of the Scheme. This adds to the argument that Stage 2 is the stage at which trainees struggle most.
- Combining profiles A and D shows that 55% of trainees in this cohort needed a maximum of one resit at Stage 2 to complete the Scheme successfully.
- It should be noted that, relatively, the other three profiles are smaller than profiles A and D (which between them make up over half of this cohort.)
- Profile G, the third most represented profile, shows that 11% of trainees needed more than one resit attempt at Stage 2 but no additional visits or resits at Stage 1 or the OSCE. This suggests that Stage 2, for a tenth of this cohort, was an assessment sticking point for them, but that their performance at Stage 2 did not correlate with their performance in Stage 1 and the OSCE. This correlates with the previous report's data.
- Profile J represents a small (7%), but important, group of trainees who struggled during Stage 1 of the Scheme and replaces Profile M as the fifth most represented profile. Following Stage 1, the Profile J trainees required no further resits before completing the Scheme for Registration. This could suggest that the targeted, formative assessment that takes place in Stage 1 identifies and addresses gaps in knowledge and competence at an early stage. This means that trainees are then not held back in future assessments.

4.2 Performance against demographic data

To be able to cross-analyse performance against other variables effectively, each trainee's performance was simplified from the 18 possible profiles listed above. Each trainee in the cohort was given a single grading and was judged overall on their worst performance at any stage of the assessment process. This meant that trainees were judged overall as either 'Best', 'Standard' or 'Struggling' as defined below:

Grading	Description	Profile(s)	Trainees 2015-2017	Trainees 2014-2016
Best	Trainee required 3/4 visits at Stage 1 and passed Stage 2 and the OSCE first time with no resits.	A	218 (35%)	221 (37%)
Standard	Trainee required 3/4 visits at Stage 1, a single resit at Stage 2, and/or a single resit at the OSCE.	B, D, E	198 (32%)	187 (32%)
Struggling	Trainee required 5+ visits at Stage 1 and/or 2+ resits at Stage 2 and/or 2+ resits at the OSCE.	C, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R	204 (33%)	185 (31%)

4.2.1 Performance against gender

The table below shows the number of female and male trainees who fall into the performance categories as defined above.

2015-2017

Category	Female Trainees		Male Trainees		All Trainees	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Best	156	37	62	31	218	35
Standard	132	32	66	33	198	32
Struggling	130	31	74	36	204	33
Total	**418**	**67**	**202**	**33**	**620**	**100**

2014-2016

Category	Female Trainees		Male Trainees		All Trainees	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Best	162	40	59	32	221	37
Standard	131	32	56	30	187	32
Struggling	113	28	72	39	185	31
Total	**406**	**65**	**187**	**32**	**593**	**100**

Conclusions that could be drawn from these data are:

- As at undergraduate level, female trainees outperformed male trainees, with 5% more males than females defined as Struggling. However, this compares to an 11% difference in the previous cohort data suggesting the attainment gap between the genders has narrowed.
- This is supported by the fact that the relative percentage of female trainees classified as 'Best' (i.e. requiring no additional visits or resits) is 5% higher than that of male trainees, a decrease from 8% in the previous cohort, and 10% two cohorts ago.
- More female trainees are classed as Struggling (3%) and fewer are classed as Best in this cohort compared with the previous cohort. Conversely, fewer male trainees are defined as struggling and more as Standard (a change of 3%). This is further evidence that there was less of an attainment gap between the genders in this cohort than in the previous cohorts.

4.2.2 Performance against degree

The tables below cross-tabulate the number of trainees with each undergraduate degree class/route into the Scheme against the different performance categories, as defined above:

NB the corresponding percentages represent the proportion of each degree class/route in each performance profile e.g. 50% of those trainees with a first class degree fall into the 'Best' grading:

2015-2017

Degree	Best		Standard		Struggling		Grand Total
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
First	71	50	47	33	25	17	143
2:1	118	39	101	33	86	28	305
2:2	24	16	43	29	79	54	146
MOptom	1	7	4	29	9	64	14
CPS	3	43	2	29	2	29	7
OPS	1	20	1	20	3	60	5
Total	**218**	**35**	**198**	**32**	**204**	**33**	**620**

2014-2016

Degree	Best		Standard		Struggling		Grand Total
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
First	69	55	38	30	18	14	125
2:1	113	41	86	31	80	29	279
2:2	27	18	46	31	77	51	150
MOptom	6	27	11	50	5	23	22
CPS	6	50	4	33	2	17	12
OPS	0	0	2	40	3	60	5
Total	**221**	**37**	**187**	**32**	**185**	**31**	**593**

In the 2015-2017 group, the percentage of trainees awarded a first class degree and being categorised as Best fell from 2014-2016 by 5%, with the percentage of Struggling trainees with this degree increasing by 7%. This follows a similar change between the 2013-2015 and 2014-2016 cohort.

The following tables break down performance by assessment stage:

4.2.3.1 Stage 1

2015-2017

Degree	Standard		Struggling		Grand Total
	Total	%	Total	%	
First	132	92	11	8	143
2:1	265	87	40	13	305
2:2	98	67	48	33	146
MOptom	10	71	4	29	14
CPS	7	100	0	0	7
OPS	2	40	3	60	5
Total	**514**	**83**	**106**	**17**	**620**

2014-2016

Degree	Standard		Struggling		Grand Total
	Total	%	Total	%	
First	116	93	9	7	125
2:1	237	85	42	15	279
2:2	110	73	40	27	150
MOptom	19	86	3	14	22
CPS	12	100	0	0	12
OPS	4	80	1	20	5
Total	**498**	**93**	**95**	**16**	**593**

4.2.3.2 Stage 2

2015-2017

Degree	Best		Standard		Struggling		Grand Total
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
First	89	62	42	29	12	8	143
2:1	166	54	89	29	50	16	305
2:2	67	46	49	34	30	21	146
MOptom	4	29	5	36	5	36	14
CPS	3	43	2	29	2	29	7
OPS	1	20	4	80	0	0	5
Total	**330**	**53**	**191**	**31**	**99**	**16**	**620**

2014-2016

Degree	Best		Standard		Struggling		Grand Total
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
First	76	61	40	32	9	7	125
2:1	153	55	82	29	44	16	279
2:2	50	33	55	37	45	30	150
MOptom	10	45	10	45	2	9	22
CPS	8	67	3	31	1	8	12
OPS	2	40	1	20	2	40	5
Total	**299**	**50**	**191**	**32**	**103**	**17**	**593**

4.2.3.3 OSCE

2015-2017

Degree	Best		Standard		Struggling		Grand Total
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
First	129	90	12	8	2	1	143
2:1	243	80	53	17	9	3	305
2:2	97	66	37	25	12	8	146
MOptom	11	79	3	21	0	0	14
CPS	6	86	1	14	0	0	7
OPS	4	80	1	20	0	0	5
Total	**490**	**79**	**107**	**17**	**23**	**4**	**620**

2014-2016

Degree	Best		Standard		Struggling		Grand Total
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
First	117	94	7	6	1	1	125
2:1	219	78	51	18	9	3	279
2:2	99	66	34	23	17	11	150
MOptom	16	73	4	18	2	9	22
CPS	10	83	1	8	1	8	12
OPS	0	0	2	40	3	60	5
Total	**461**	**78**	**99**	**17**	**33**	**6**	**593**

Conclusions that could be drawn from these data are:

- There continues to be a correlation between undergraduate performance and performance on the Scheme. The higher your degree classification, the less likely you are to require additional visits or resits at any stage of the Scheme. For example, 50% of those trainees with a first class degree required no additional visits or resits in contrast to 16% of trainees with a 2:2. Conversely, only 17% of trainees with a first class degree were classed as 'Struggling' at any point in the Scheme, compared to 54% of trainees with a 2:2. However, the correlation for this cohort is less marked than the previous, with trainees with first class degrees requiring more resits than their 2014-2016 and 2013-2015 counterparts.

- Trainees who completed the Optometry Progression Scheme (OPS), upgrading their third class degree to a 2:2 or above have shown a marked improvement on the Scheme compared to the previous cohort, with 80% of such trainees being classed as Best (the Scheme average being 79%). Numbers for this group, though, are low and any conclusions drawn should be taken with caution.

Final Conclusions

As with previous cohorts, the data for 2015-2017 continues to reveal a complex picture of interacting variables determining performance.

There continue to be correlations between performance and certain demographic and previous performance variables which remain static between the two cohorts. Firstly, female trainees continue to outperform male trainees, although for the first time, there is a suggestion that this gap is narrowing. Secondly, degree performance at undergraduate also continues to strongly correlate with performance on the Scheme across all stages.

When comparing the data between this report and the report for the previous cohort, the following may be noted:

- The gender distribution across the two cohorts is stable but continues to be heavily skewed towards female trainees.

- Ethnicity distribution is consistent across reports but, but the gender balance within the two largest ethnicity groups, Asian Indian and White British, has switched in this report compared to last year's.

- The number of pre-registration placements in multiple practices continues to grow, with the majority taking place in Specsavers. Specsavers increased their proportion of trainees by 5% from the previous cohort.

- Generally, performance among trainees remains consistent. Female trainees still outperform their male counterparts, but data from this cohort suggests the attainment gap between the genders is narrowing.

- As in the 2014-2016 cohort, Stage 2 continues to be the area in which trainees are having more difficulty. If a trainee is going to need a resit or additional visit it is likely to be in this synoptic, practical assessment.

APPENDIX A

Common areas of failure in the Scheme

The following tables describe the most commonly failed elements of competence/areas of practice for this cohort at each of the assessment stages. These are supported by a commentary by the Lead Assessor (for the work-based assessment stages) and a senior examiner (for the OSCE examination) explaining, from their experience, where trainees make mistakes with respect to these areas.

1.1 Stage 1

Comp failed	Descriptor	Lead assessor remarks
2.2.4	Creates and keeps full, clear, accurate and contemporaneous records	• Records are incoherent due to poor handwriting • Records are missing critical clinical information eg accurate patient advice, BVD, copy of referral letter • The record shown is not contemporaneous
5.2.1	Manages the aftercare of patients wearing soft lenses	• Poor clinical technique on direct observation • Failure to detect fluorescein staining • Illogical routine • Trainee is unable to identify contact lens complications from images or offers a weak management plan for the complication
4.1.2	Measures and verifies optical appliances taking into account relevant standards where applicable	• Basic lack of knowledge on practice focimeter • Failure to practise focimetry of varifocals prior to visit 1
8.1.1	Assesses binocular status using objective and subjective means	• The trainee needs to show the recording of both objective and subjective BV measures on the patient records • Poor technique with cover test • Inadequate record keeping eg no deviation recorded or no record of which eye is effected in a heterotropia • No record of size of deviation
3.1.3	Examines the fundi using both direct and indirect techniques	• Poor technique, trainee not examining 8 positions of gaze • Direct - trainee being too far away from the patient • Indirect - poor use of illumination. Lack of understanding about how to interpret and record the image seen

5.1.2	Instructs the patient in soft lens handling and how to wear and care for them	• Poor knowledge of lens banks in the practice • Poor knowledge of contact lens solutions available
7.1.1	Refracts a range of patients with various optometric problems by appropriate objective and subjective means	• Poor technique, retinoscopy outside tolerance • Relyies too heavily on duochrome and ignoring +1.00 Blur result
2.2.3	Is able to work within the law and within the codes and guidelines set by the regulator and the profession	• Unable to differentiate between the roles of different professional bodies eg GOC, College of Optometrists, AOP
6.1.11	Understands the treatment of a range of common ocular conditions	• Poor knowledge of treatment of common conditions eg AMD, cataracts, glaucoma
5.1.3	Chooses, fits and orders rigid lenses	• Lack of experience and understanding • Too used to contacting CL manufacturers for advice • Trainee does not know what to do next if a lens does not fit

1.2 Stage 2

Comp % failed	Descriptor	Lead assessor remarks
Routine	Routine Eye Exam	• Poor history and symptom taking with closed questions • Poor retinoscopy technique (result out of tolerance) • Poor subjective technique • Poor ophthalmoscopy technique
Contact Lenses	Soft Contact Lens Fitting and Aftercare	• Poor history and symptom taking eg missing GH, POH including contact lens history • Poor assessment of fit • Failure to detect staining during the aftercare • Poor management of patient's symptoms
6.1	The ability to manage patients presenting with eye disease including sight-threatening eye disease	• Patient records show incorrect management of patient • Candidates cannot identify images of common ocular conditions
4.1	The ability to interpret and dispense a prescription using appropriate lenses and facial and frame measurements	• Inadequate dispense records where measurements are missing • Poor understanding of calculating vertical differential prism • Poor knowledge of the full range of lens options for patients • Poor understanding of lens designs
8.1	The ability to assess and make appropriate prescribing and management decisions based on the ocular motor status of the patient	• Unable to provide suitable diagnosis or management in the case scenario provided by the assessor • Records presented do not match patient records required

1.3 OSCE

Comp	Station area	Chief examiner remarks
1.1.1 1.1.2 1.1.3	The ability to communicate effectively with a diverse group of patients with a range of optometric conditions and needs	• Lack of empathy • Failing to respond to patient concerns • Avoidance of dealing with the subject at hand and becoming vague and unclear with the patient • Resorting to jargon in explanations • Not considering relevancy of information • Lack of experience
4.1.2 4.1.4 4.1.5	The ability to interpret and dispense a prescription using appropriate lenses and facial and frame measurements.	• Lack of practice with manual instrumentation • Not including all relevant detail • Trainees too used to automated devices or computer based systems • Trainees favour refraction and forget to continue dispensing up to the end of their pre reg
6.1.12 6.1.14	The ability to manage patients presenting with eye disease, including sight threatening eye disease	• Lack of experience with patients with certain eye diseases • Poor recognition of relevant signs and symptoms • Unfamiliar with college guidance and / or local protocols • Failure to diagnose / manage
2.2.6	Makes an appropriate judgement regarding referral and understands referral pathways.	• Lack of experience in writing referral letters perhaps due to dependency of letters automatically generated by practice software • Not recognising key signs or symptoms • Inappropriate diagnosis and / or speed of referral • Unfamiliar with college guidance and / or local protocols
3.1.5	Investigates the visual fields of patients with all standards of acuity and analyses and interprets the results.	• Unable to interpret visual field plots • Unable to determine location of affected region/lesion in the visual pathway • Unable to identify the possible cause of a defect
5.2.2	Manages the aftercare of patients wearing rigid gas permeable contact lenses.	• Lack of experience with rigid lenses • Unable to assess the quality of a fit of a rigid lens • Poor understanding of management of aftercare issues

		• Unable to appropriately adjust a lens specification

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Appendix B

1.1 The Scheme for Registration is run and administered by The College of Optometrists (the College) and is accredited by the General Optical Council. The College is the professional body for optometry. It qualifies the profession and delivers the guidance and development to ensure optometrists provide the best possible care. We promote excellent through the College's affixes, by building the evidence base for optometry, and raising awareness of the profession with public, commissioners, and health care professionals.

1.2 The Scheme for Registration was first piloted in 2004, with full roll out for all pre-registration trainees from 2005. It replaced the College's Professional Qualifying Examination (PQE Part 2) and is a post-graduate programme assessing competence against the General Optical Council's (GOC) Stage 2 elements of core competence for optometrists. (Stage 1 core competencies are assessed during an undergraduate programme delivered in GOC approved courses in universities.)

1.3 The Scheme for Registration represents the principal route for entry into the profession. It assesses graduates from all the GOC-approved[2] universities offering optometry at undergraduate level. Graduates must achieve at least a 2:2 in their optometry undergraduate degree to enrol on the Scheme.

1.4 Following graduation, trainee optometrists must find a pre-registration training placement in a practice or hospital in which to complete the Scheme for Registration.

1.5 Pre-registration trainees can only practise under supervision and must arrange adequate supervision arrangements in their placements. Principal supervisors are responsible for the trainee during their training and must have been qualified for more than three years with the GOC.[3]

1.6 The Scheme for Registration comprises two stages of work-based assessment (Stage 1 and Stage 2) and a final Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) examination which is carried out in an examination centre. Successful completion of the Scheme allows optometrists to register with the GOC and practise without supervision.

1.7 Stage 1 of the work-based assessment is usually comprised of four quarterly visits carried out by the same College-appointed assessor. An assessment plan for each visit is provided by the College, which details the elements of competence to be assessed at each visit. Each visit is a structured assessment comprising of direct observation of techniques on real patients and a discussion of the trainee's own clinical records. Stage 1 is designed to be formative, with trainees receiving

[2] During 2014 – 2015, there were nine GOC-approved universities: Plymouth University, City University, Anglia Ruskin University, Cardiff University, Aston University, The University of Manchester, Bradford University, Glasgow Caledonian University, Ulster University. Note that the University of Hertfordshire started offering an undergraduate course from September 2015.

[3] More details regarding supervision arrangements can be found in the relevant section of the Scheme for Registration handbook.

constructive feedback on unachieved elements of competence from the assessor and an action plan to address deficiencies in competence. It is also designed to be flexible to the needs, experience and ability of the trainee; assessors tailor assessment plans and the number of visits required at Stage 1 for each trainee.

1.8 Stage 2 of the work-based assessment is comprised of a single assessment visit carried out by a different College-appointed examiner. Trainees are observed carrying out a routine eye examination and contact lens fitting and aftercare on mystery patients provided by the College. A representative sample of the records used in Stage 1 as evidence are then resampled at Stage 2 to form the basis of an extended case discussion.

1.9 The OSCE examination is made up of 16 five-minute clinical tasks and a rest station. Each station assesses the trainees' skills, including history taking, communication, data interpretation, clinical examination and practical skills. During the OSCE, trainees may be tested on any of the GOC Stage 2 elements of competence assessed in Stages 1 and 2 of the work-based assessment. The OSCE acts as a final check that competence across the framework has been achieved and maintained. The College hosts four OSCE examinations per year (January, March, July and September).

1.10 Trainees have 27 months or four attempts at the Final Assessment OSCE to complete the Scheme for Registration, whichever comes first.