



THE COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

Higher Qualifications Accreditation Panel Terms of Reference

Purpose

To approve applications from course providers for College accreditation and reaccreditation of Professional Certificate, Professional Higher Certificate and/or Professional Diploma courses in subjects including Contact Lens Practice, Glaucoma, Low Vision, Medical Retina and Paediatric Eye Care, as appropriate.

Objectives

- To receive advice from the relevant Subject Expert Group on each course application, the subject experts having considered the provider's course submission (including completed questionnaire and any appendices), with reference to the approved College learning outcomes for the qualification.
- To use the Subject Expert Group advice, together with their own experience and judgement, to decide whether or not the course can be recommended for accreditation (or reaccreditation) by the College.
- To provide such feedback as is required to assist the course provider in developing or revising their course to meet College requirements for accreditation, or in the event of an unsuccessful application.

Scope

The Accreditation Panel will focus on considering applications from providers for accreditation (or reaccreditation) to offer courses with an approved College framework.

Frequency of Meetings

The Accreditation Panel will meet four times a year, or more if required, either in person or by teleconference. The Subject Expert Groups will provide their advice remotely and will only meet occasionally if required.

Authority

The Accreditation Panel will report to the Education and Standards Committee.

Membership of the Panel

- A pool of optometrists from which to draw the following for any meeting or submission review:
 - Two optometrists with suitable expertise and experience of working in hospital or community practice.

- One experienced optometric educationalist.

Membership of the Subject Expert Groups

- A pool of subject experts from which to draw the following for any submission review:
 - Two optometrists who are subject specialists.
 - One ophthalmologist with specialist expertise in the subject, as necessary.

Appointments for the Accreditation Panel and the Subject Expert Group will be for up to two three-year periods and arrangements will be put in place towards the end of this time to ensure that there is a rolling membership.

Meeting Attendance

Meetings of the Accreditation Panel will be chaired by the Director of Education or their representative.

Views will be sought from all members of the Accreditation Panel irrespective of whether or not they are able to attend meetings, and a consensus sought for any final decision.

Members of the College staff will attend Accreditation Panel meetings as appropriate and as advised by the Director of Education.