



Sector Partnership for Optical
Knowledge and Education

SPOKE (specialist qualifications)

Project 1

Indicative Guidance

For Contact Lens Opticians

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Project 1 - Indicative guidance for Contact Lens Opticians

Methodology

This guidance was developed with input from a wide range of sector stakeholders, many of whom volunteered significant time and effort. A writing group was formed (31/05/23), working asynchronously as well as meeting on MS Teams, to devise the proposed indicators. Initial drafts were considered at a review meeting (25/08/23), with representatives of the writing group present. Feedback on the draft guidance was sought from the SPOKE Advisory and Review Group (ARG) through MS Teams and email before the document was refined and completed at the finalisation meeting held on 20/10/23.

Purpose

The guidance is intended to support course teams and approval panels by developing and expanding on the meaning of the outcomes as indicators and providing references to resources that address elements in more detail. It deliberately does not address how students may be developed to achieve the outcomes, focusing instead on the terminal level specified. Some suggestions for assessments that may be effective in measuring outcomes are also provided. The intent is to be inclusive of innovative practice and developments in the profession, whilst capturing the key features of registrants in the two professions as described by the outcomes. It should therefore not be viewed or deployed in a way that is constraining or assumes that it is entirely comprehensive. The SPOKE contributors consider it important that it is viewed as a live document, that is updated regularly with good practice examples as they are identified during approval and review processes, and expect that excellent practice will emerge that is not yet captured here.

Structure

An assessment typology and mapping table is provided to assist course teams with developing assessment strategies that are able to cover all outcomes effectively, without undue burden on the learner or delivery team. Relevant background resources, selected by the writing group, are listed at the end of the document.

Outcomes for Registration – Contact Lens Optician

Outcome 1. Uphold professional standards

Contact lens opticians establish relationships with others based on professional understanding and respect; acting as part of a multidisciplinary team they ensure that continuity of care across care settings is not compromised.

Outcome		Level	Indicator
O1.1	Establishes relationships with other professionals based on understanding, trust and respect for each other's roles in relation to contact lens and other care, and works collaboratively to ensure the delivery, transfer and continuity of care is assured and not compromised.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises the diverse contributions of both clinical and non-clinical colleagues including those from other professions. Adapts own communication methods, style and content to ensure the delivery of effective patient care. Recognises the varying roles of other allied health and medical professionals and their contribution to person centred care. Understands own scope of practice and when to refer to other members of the multi-disciplinary team.
O1.2	Undertakes a patient consultation in an appropriate setting, taking account of confidentiality and understands the issues involved in obtaining valid consent and maintaining dignity and respect in accordance with regulatory standards and contractual requirements.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adheres to legal requirements when gaining consent. Applies the various policies that a practice is required to have on display or on file including safeguarding children and adults, chaperone policy, complaints and data management. Records full patient history and maintains accurate and contemporaneous records in line with legal requirements in contact lens selection and aftercare management.
O1.3	Introduces self and role to the patient/carer and confirms patient/ carer identity.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates effective communication using verbal, non-verbal, and written skills. Seeks and communicates relevant information from and to patients in an effective and appropriate manner.

Outcome 2. Person centred care

Contact lens opticians must have a patient centred approach, be adaptive and work collaboratively with others in the best interests of the patient. They must understand their role appreciating uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to their knowledge and the process of contact lens fitting as part of a multidisciplinary approach to a patient's ocular health.

Outcome		Level	Indicator
O2.1	Assesses the communication needs of the patient/carer and adapts consultation appropriately (e.g., for language, age, capacity, physical or sensory impairments).	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands how to adapt own practice to ensure appropriate care of patients within scope of practice. Understands different elements of communication and can adapt communication to ensure all patients are managed appropriately.
O2.2	Works with the patient/carer in partnership to make informed choices, aiming for the optimal outcome for the patient which meets the professional aims of the practitioner.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks and communicates relevant information from and to patients and/or their carers in an effective and appropriate manner. Ensures the effective implementation of individual management plans, checking patient understanding by actively adapting their communication approach.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively seeks confirmation of patient understanding and involves patient in decisions made regarding their own healthcare.
O2.3	Identifies, recommends and fits contact lenses to achieve vision correction and/or eye health goals, including explaining where patient expectations cannot be met and/or when contact lenses cannot be fitted.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates suitability of soft/rigid lens for a patient based on clinical assessment of the lenses on the patient's eye and over-refraction to determine the most suitable spherical power. Elicits and communicates relevant information from and to patients in an effective and appropriate manner. Ensures the effective implementation of individual management plans, checking patient understanding by actively adapting their communication approach. Recognises and manages patient's expectations and aspirations, and situations where these cannot be met. Demonstrates how to deal effectively with patient concerns.
O2.4	Explains to the patient the potential risks and benefits of contact lens wear and any management options/treatment, including the importance of hygiene regimes, wearing compliance and when to seek further advice.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures the effective implementation of individual management plans, checking patient understanding by actively adapting their communication approach. Actively seeks confirmation of patient understanding of own responsibilities regarding their own healthcare and their continued eyecare needs.
O2.5	Encourages patients to take responsibility for their ocular health and to respond to contact lens and other health conditions appropriately.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures the effective implementation of individual management plans, checking patient understanding by actively adapting their communication approach. Actively seeks confirmation of patient understanding of own responsibilities regarding their own healthcare and their continued eyecare needs.
O2.6	Works within scope of practice and recognises when to refer or seek guidance from another member of the healthcare team or a specialist.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates an awareness of referral pathways and can accurately refer when appropriate. Recognises their scope of practice and the role of referral in effective person-centred care.

Outcome 3. Ocular examination

Contact lens opticians must conduct a detailed examination of the anterior eye and related structures using appropriate instrumentation and clinical techniques they have learned. They must apply their knowledge to understand the implications of their findings and identify appropriate clinical responses including diagnosis, clinical management, contact lens fitting or referral within scope of practice.

	Outcome	Level	Indicator
O3.1	Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate instrumentation and technology for detailed inspection of the anterior segment of the eye, related ocular adnexa and tear film. This should include methods of illumination, filters, other instrument attributes and related use of diagnostic stains.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the use of appropriate technology in consultation, referral and clinical data exchange including the relevance of technology used in the evaluation of the anterior segment. Understands the use of ophthalmic drugs and staining agents used in contact lens assessment.
O3.2	Assesses the anterior segment, related ocular adnexa and tear film in a systematic sequence.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justifies the choice of clinical procedures used and applies appropriate techniques for clinical investigations. Conducts a full anterior eye assessment of the patient, including assessment of tear film and records all aspects of the assessment.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an awareness of own limitations to conduct clinical examinations, and work within limits of competence. • Appraises the risk balance of clinical techniques used to examine patients. • Ensures patient and practitioner safety during all clinical processes and procedures.
O3.3	Assesses the curvature and regularity of the cornea and any other dimensions required for contact lens fitting.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes routine external measurements (such as HVID, VPA, VVID, Pupil Diameters) for each patient making accurate and contemporaneous records. • Adjusts equipment for own use and measures the curvature of the cornea completing accurate and contemporaneous records. • Communicates the investigation results and the results to the decision making process of lens selection.
O3.4	Evaluates results using evidence-based knowledge to make differential diagnoses and inform an appropriate management plan including referral within scope of practice when appropriate.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigates and interprets the results of history-taking and clinical findings (i.e., a recognition of abnormality and correct interpretation of common investigative tests) to formulate an appropriate management plan, recognising and acting when a referral is appropriate. • Recognises the clinical signs/presentation of common ocular abnormalities and appropriately advises and/or refers patients in line with professional guidance and local pathways. • Analyses the results of an examination to make a differential diagnosis. • Differentiates between sight-threatening and non-sight-threatening eye conditions and justify management choices, including appropriate referral.
O3.5	Has acquired knowledge of common systemic conditions and their ocular impacts and contact lens implications.	Knows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of epidemiology of common eye conditions and systemic conditions, which manifest in the eye. • Discusses signs, symptoms causes and management of conditions arising from contact lens wear.
O3.6	Recognises the signs and symptoms associated with relevant ocular conditions, (including, but not exclusively, anterior eye disease, dry eye, red eye and foreign body), differentiates normal from abnormal findings, manages the conditions appropriately and refers where necessary.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the clinical signs/presentation of common ocular abnormalities and appropriately advises and/or refers patients in line with professional guidance and local pathways. • Manages patients presenting with a range of anterior and/or posterior ocular conditions. • Recognises the clinical signs of sight- and life-threatening conditions that require immediate treatment and takes appropriate action. • Differentiates between sight-threatening and non-sight-threatening eye conditions and justify management choices, including appropriate referral.
O3.7	Recognises the signs, symptoms and contact lens implications of non-systemic (ocular) pathological conditions.	Knows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the clinical signs/presentation of common ocular abnormalities and appropriately advises and/or refers patients in line with professional guidance and local pathways. • Understands the anatomy, physiology and related pathology of anterior eye structures.
O3.8	Manages contact lens induced complications for all types of contact lenses.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages patients presenting with a range of anterior and/or posterior ocular conditions related to contact lens wear. • Analyses the results of an examination to make a differential diagnosis. • Justifies future actions and recommendations. • Completes full, written records of the aftercare. • Differentiates between sight-threatening and non-sight-threatening eye conditions and discusses suitable referral. • Understands when to refer to other members of the multi-disciplinary team.

O3.9	Uses appropriate grading scales, imaging and other available technological information and creates and maintains accurate and contemporaneous records of all patient advice and management decisions in line with relevant legislation.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records all aspects of the consultation, the findings of all tests and relevant communications with patients, their carers and colleagues, ensuring that records are accurate, legible, dated, signed, concise, contemporaneous and securely stored. Completes full, written records of the aftercare.
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Outcome 4. Verification and identification

Contact lens opticians exercise personal responsibility by checking lenses applying the methods and techniques they have learned to verify that they are correct as per contact lens specifications.

Outcome		Level	Indicator
O4.1	Understands how to assess using the appropriate instruments, the dimensional measurement and other features of contact lenses to identify where possible and enable their replication.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures and verifies optical appliances in line with relevant standards, guidelines, and evidence. Understands the use of technology related to the identification and verification of the dimensional measurements of a contact lens (for example radiuscope, band magnifier, v gauge, focimeter, thickness gauge).
O4.2	Understands how contact lens parameters are measured to International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standards of tolerance.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures and verifies optical appliances in line with relevant standards, guidelines, and evidence. Understands the use of technology related to the identification and verification of the dimensional measurements of a contact lens (for example radiuscope, band magnifier, v gauge, focimeter, thickness gauge).
O4.3	Recognises and differentiates between the design features of contact lenses	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands alternative design features of soft/rigid lenses, contact lenses for astigmatic patients and Toric lenses. Justifies contact lens corrections for presbyopic patients, myopia control including advice, contact lenses and principles of orthokeratology. Recognises lenses for specific conditions requiring visual benefit.

Outcome 5. Contact lens fitting and aftercare

Contact lens opticians take a shared approach to evidence-based decision-making (sometimes in complex and unpredictable contexts) by assessing patients' planned use / clinical needs and recommending an appropriate lens to achieve desired outcomes, managing the fitting and aftercare of patients with contact lenses and adapting the management plan where necessary.

Outcome		Level	Indicator
05.1	Takes a comprehensive history eliciting any information relevant to the fitting, aftercare and use of contact lenses.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes and records relevant history from individual patients and any other appropriate person involved in their care (relatives/carers and others).
05.2	Interprets and investigates appropriately the presenting symptoms of the patient.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interprets the results of history-taking and the examination of the refractive and ocular motor status and ocular health of individual patients to inform clinical decision-making and care management plans.
05.3	Interprets relevant patient records to ensure knowledge of the patient's ocular and contact lens history and management to date.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interprets the results of history-taking and the examination of the refractive and ocular motor status and ocular health of individual patients to inform clinical decision-making and care management plans.
05.4	Interprets relevant patient information (i.e., spectacle prescription, history and any relevant information supplied by any other health care practitioners) and clinical findings to assess the indications and contraindications for contact lens fitting.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interprets the results of history-taking and the examination of the refractive and ocular motor status and ocular health of individual patients to inform clinical decision-making and care management plans. Understands potential contra-indications to contact lens wear and the legal requirements of contact lens selection. Completes and records routine external measurements, with the results used to justify management choices.
05.5	Discusses contact lens options and makes appropriate recommendations allowing patients to make an informed choice; selects and fits the most appropriate contact lens and parameters for the planned use and clinical needs of the patient.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies, recommends, and fits soft or rigid contact lenses based on interpretation of own clinical data, as appropriate to support and enhance individual patients' vision, lifestyle and eye health and provides ongoing care. Justifies management choices.
05.6	Assesses the fitting of a contact lens (soft, rigid and new modalities/ materials where applicable) using a variety of techniques; adjusts lens parameters where appropriate.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses and justifies the suitability of fit of a soft/rigid corneal lens on a patient's eye, using appropriate technology and techniques.
05.7	Issues unambiguous and complete contact lens specifications which meet legal requirements.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues legally compliant contact lens specifications.
05.8	Instructs the patient in contact lens handling (i.e., hygiene, insertion and removal, etc.) and how to wear and care for the lenses including appropriate action to take in an emergency.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructs and advises patients in handling and removal of soft or rigid lens and how to wear and care for their fitted lenses.
05.9	Demonstrates a routine contact lens aftercare consultation in compliance with the requirements of the Opticians Act.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completes a full aftercare consultation for a contact lens patient. Communicates future actions and recommendations, and confirms patient understanding.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes full, accurate and contemporaneous records of the aftercare. • Issues a contact lens specification in line with legal requirements.
05.10	Investigates, identifies and manages any contact lens adaptation or aftercare issues.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes full, accurate and contemporaneous records of the aftercare justify management choices and resultant changes to management plans.
05.11	Informs patients of the importance of continuing contact lens aftercare and regular eye examinations and provide information on arranging aftercare and relevant emergency procedures.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks and communicates relevant information from and to patients and/or their carers in an effective and appropriate manner. • Ensures the effective implementation of individual management plans, checking patient understanding by actively adapting their communication approach. • Actively seeks confirmation of patient understanding and involves patient in decisions made regarding their own healthcare.
05.12	Selects and fits the most appropriate complex/specialist contact lens for the planned use and clinical needs of the patient (e.g., refractive management, therapeutic, prosthetic and cosmetic contact lenses); manages the ongoing contact lens care of own patients.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages and selects contact lenses including high and/or complex prescriptions in order to meet patients' visual and therapeutic needs. • Understands alternative design features of soft/rigid lenses, contact lenses for astigmatic patients and Toric lenses. • Justifies contact lens corrections for presbyopic patients, myopia control including advice, contact lenses and principles of orthokeratology. • Recognises lenses for specific conditions requiring visual benefit including bandage lenses and prosthetic lenses.
05.13	Recognises the signs and symptoms of sight threatening conditions/ ocular emergencies requiring immediate treatment and manages them appropriately.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages patients presenting with a range of anterior and/or posterior ocular conditions. • Recognises the clinical signs of sight- and life-threatening conditions that require immediate treatment and takes appropriate action. • Recognises signs, symptoms causes and management of conditions arising from contact lens wear and differentiates between sight-threatening and non-sight-threatening eye conditions actioning suitable referral.
05.14	Understands and applies relevant local protocols and professional guidance on the urgency of referrals e.g. The College of Optometrists' clinical management guidelines.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraises the need for and urgency of making a patient referral, using relevant local protocols and national professional guidance, and acts accordingly. • Understands when to refer to other members of the multi-disciplinary team.

Outcome 6. Learning and development

Contact lens opticians must maintain their clinical and contact lens knowledge and skills appropriate to their scope of practice; they must work within their areas of expertise and competence to achieve desired patient outcomes.

	Outcome	Level	Indicator
06.1	Understands common ocular conditions, presenting symptoms and urgency e.g., glaucoma, retinal detachment and age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in the context of contact lens practice.	Knows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the clinical signs/presentation of common ocular abnormalities and appropriately advises and/or refers patients in line with professional guidance and local pathways. • Discusses the Anatomy, physiology and related pathology of anterior eye and related structures. • Describes the management of ocular emergencies in contact lens practice.

O6.2	Understands the principles and maintains knowledge of evidence relating to myopia management.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribes appropriate optical appliances, suitably adjusted for paediatric patients at risk of myopia. • Understands myopia control with the use of contact lenses and associated patient advice, and principles of orthokeratology.
O6.3	Demonstrates knowledge of refractive techniques including the principles of binocular vision management in the context of contact lens practice	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies normative data in the interpretation of results of visual function tests. • Manages and assesses vision, refractive error, binocular status, and visual acuity. • Manages and assesses visual acuity with contact lenses in situ, determines the most appropriate spherical power with the use of over-refraction. • Conducts a binocular balancing assessment to determine final powers. • Completes full and contemporaneous records of all techniques.
O6.4	Understands the range of lenses available including soft, rigid and new materials/modalities	Knows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates contact lens products and advancement in technology in order to provide patients with the most appropriate optical appliances. • Understands alternative design features of soft/rigid lenses.
O6.5	Understands the clinical application of all contact lens types e.g., optical, therapeutic, protective, diagnostic, prosthetic and cosmetic	Knows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages and selects contact lenses including high and/or complex prescriptions in order to meet patients' visual and therapeutic needs. • Manages and selects lenses for specific conditions requiring visual benefit including bandage lenses and prosthetic lenses. • Understands the optical, therapeutic, protective, diagnostic and cosmetic use of contact lenses and related ocular conditions. • Identifies lenses for conditions requiring visual benefit including bandage lenses and prosthetic lenses.
O6.6	Understands and safely applies knowledge of the drugs and staining agents used in clinical practice, including any relevant risks and side effects.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adheres to legal requirements for the use and supply of common ophthalmic drugs. • Recognises the indications and contraindications of commonly used ophthalmic drugs and responds in light of these to uphold patient care and safety. • Obtains individual patients' informed consent to use common ophthalmic drugs to aid investigation, examination, diagnosis and treatment, including by advising on the potential side effects and associated risks of specific drugs. • Understands the use of ophthalmic drugs and staining agents used in contact lens wear.
O6.7	Understands the various forms of ocular surface diseases (e.g., dry eye) and maintains knowledge of available management options.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the clinical signs/presentation of common ocular abnormalities and appropriately advises and/or refers patients in line with professional guidance and local pathways. • Manages patients presenting with a range of anterior ocular surface conditions. • Understands signs, symptoms causes and management of conditions arising from contact lens wear. • Differentiates between sight-threatening and non-sight-threatening eye conditions and discusses suitable referral.
O6.8	Implements infection prevention and control in optical practice.	Does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely applies appropriate measures to minimise risk of infection, applying relevant current guidance. • Identifies risk of person-to-person transmission and transmission via object. • Identifies appropriate measures to minimise risk of infection, including: hand hygiene, surface disinfection, use of PPE, use of disposable items, (e.g. fluoret strips), where possible, decontamination of diagnostic contact lenses etc., proper treatment of open bottles of contact lens solutions/saline.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses appropriate methods to deal with disposal of controlled, clinical and offensive waste, including both non-hazardous and hazardous waste. • Carries out a risk assessment, applying appropriate principles. • Conducts a full aftercare for a contact lens wearing patient. • Adjusts investigation equipment prior to use.
O6.9	Understands the methods of disinfection of contact lenses / contact lens containers including awareness of the different solutions used in contact lens practice, their constituents, the importance of maintaining sterility and common pathogens.	Knows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructs and advises patients in handling soft or rigid lens and how to wear and care for their fitted lenses. • Evaluates the range of contact lens care solutions used in practice. • Understands the common constituents of a contact lens solution and their relevant uses and benefits and the potential contraindications to solution use.
O6.10	Applies current legislation to contact lens practice and understands the relevant legislation surrounding the use of common ocular drugs.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adheres to legal requirements for the use and supply of common ophthalmic drugs. • Recognises the indications and contraindications of commonly used ophthalmic drugs and responds in light of these to uphold patient care and safety. • Obtains individual patients' informed consent to use common ophthalmic drugs to aid investigation, examination, diagnosis and treatment, including by advising on the potential side effects and associated risks of specific drugs. • Evaluates the use of ophthalmic drugs and staining agents used in contact lens wear.
O6.11	Evaluates advances in contact lens practice, the evidence behind management strategies and any emerging safety concerns.	Knows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses appropriate technology in consultation, referral and clinical data exchange. • Keeps abreast of emerging technologies and their potential application in clinical practice. • Evaluates appropriate use of contact lenses for a range of patients such as astigmatic, presbyopic, myopia control and principles of orthokeratology. • Evaluates lenses for conditions requiring visual benefit including bandage and prosthetic lenses.
O6.12	Demonstrates a reflective approach to learning and own development of contact lens practice to ensure continued alignment with current best practice.	Shows How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to critically reflect- learning from previous shortcomings and utilizing best practice literature to inform future practice.
O6.13	Understands continuing education and professional requirements (e.g., continuing professional development (CPD)) within contact lens practice.	Knows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares and follows a personal development plan, utilising appropriate learning opportunities and relative to contact lens practice.

Assessment

Assessment is used to measure the achievement of learning outcomes and to drive and guide further learning. Assessments will need to be selected with due regard for the outcome to be assessed, the levels (both Miller's Pyramid and relevant Higher Education framework) at which that outcome must be met. Consideration should also be given to ensuring validity, reliability and fairness and accordingly marking rubrics, methods of standard setting (such as Angoff or Ebel), moderation and standardisation must also be considered as well as staff and student workload. A wide variety of resources exist in the literature to support and underpin individual assessment design as well as overall assessment strategies, and these are therefore not addressed here. The following materials are intended to summarise common methods of assessment and map these against possible GOC outcomes they might be deployed upon. The mapping table shows ways in which outcomes might be assessed, but it should be recognised that these are not the only ways to measure each outcome. Equally, outcomes may be assessed by only one method, or subjected to multiple methods, as determined by the provider's overall assessment strategy.

Typology of assessment methods

Written assessment

Research proposal/Audit proposal

Written work to describe a potential project activity, typically referencing current state of the art and relevant literature sources. May include resource considerations as well as Key Performance indicators (KPIs) and outputs.

Dissertation/Project thesis/Meta-analysis/Literature review

An extended piece of writing (typically 5000-15000 words) presenting and evaluating a project or evaluation of the literature or published data. May include introduction, methods, results, data analysis and discussion and take the form of a thesis or research article. Alternative forms may more strongly resemble a literature review. At level 6 this may provide relatively incremental insights into a research question, or summarise current thinking. At level 7/11 this should demonstrate a critical awareness of current knowledge, and the ability to tackle complex issues with some elements of originality.

Workbooks

A proforma template that is completed by the student. May often be used to scaffold or exemplify higher level activities such as reflective writing or practical reports.

Practical report

A structured report of an investigative or practical activity, typically structured in the Introduction, Methods Results And Discussion (IMRAD) format, or a subset of sections from IMRAD focussed on specific skills that were developed during the activity.

Problem solving task

A written response to a specified challenge or problem that proposes and justifies one or more solutions – demonstrating analytical, evaluation and applications of knowledge. May include research and information management elements as well as written communications skills. Lower-level problem solving tasks frequently including scaffolding questions or templates to guide student approaches to solutions.

Essays

An extended piece of writing (typically 2000-4000 words) addressing a specified question. May often take the form of thesis, antithesis, synthesis.

Case record review/Case report

A commentary summarising and evaluating the overarching learning that can be drawn from the review of multiple patient/case records.

Reflective writing

A focussed piece of writing that considers one or more experiences with a view to evaluating positive and negative features objectively, ideally in the context of current good practice and professional information sources or references. Outputs are intended to provoke improved performance over time and may include action planning and developmental activities.

Journaling/Logbook

An approach that diarises experiences, typically in a tabular or database format, often accompanied by narrative that summarises key features or learning points.

Performance/Practical

Oral / Poster presentation

A live or recorded spoken presentation accompanied by relevant media to convey information on a specified topic, and sometimes for a specified type of audience which may differ from the assessor. Typically requires research activities as well as visual and oral presentation skills. Live formats typically include question and answer elements.

Case discussion (unseen)

Students are asked to discuss the meaning and interpretation of history and diagnostic information from one or more patients, with whom they are not familiar, typically selected from a bank by the assessor. Often used to ensure that students correctly identify and respond appropriately to less common conditions that might otherwise be difficult to simulate or document.

Student selected case discussion

Students are asked to present and discuss one or more cases that they have experienced and documented, that meets specified conditions. Typically used to ensure that appropriate breadth of experience is assessed.

Patient history taking

Students are required to work with real or simulated patients to take and document their history. Commonly part of other “performance” based assessments.

Simulated patient assessments

Students are required to undertake common procedures using peers or actors as subjects. This may include “scripted” elements to mimic real life challenges and conditions.

Direct observation in practice

Students are observed working in a practice setting. Actors may be used instead of patients, to enhance consistency and standardisation. Has the advantage of realism, but can be challenging to standardise effectively.

Time limited assessment

It should be noted that purpose and utility of timed assessments may be varied by time, elements of choice, mechanism (handwritten or computer based), location (remote or in a hall), oversight (invigilated/proctored or unsupervised), unpredictability (unseen, take home, predetermined) and materials permitted to be used (limited or fully open book, limited or unrestricted use of online materials, provided materials, memory only). It is important to select and communicate the conditions under which time assessments will take place.

Multiple Choice Examination Questions (MCQs)

The candidate is required to select the correct answer from amongst a list of distractors. A variety of formats exist (single best answer, extended matching etc.) each with their own advantages. It is often considered difficult to write effective and rigorous questions and distractor answers, especially for higher level assessments, and particularly when deployed with open books or without invigilation or proctoring. Effective where strong problem solving or recall skills are required and can be subject to post hoc standard setting processes to remove poor performing questions.

Short answer questions

Often used to test comprehension or decision-making skills, especially when combined with a requirement to justify the answer.

Long answers/essays

Extended writing under exam conditions (typically 500-1000 words). Use depends on the conditions of the examination – and may range from testing memorisation of factual material (unseen, invigilated) to problem solving and evaluation (open book, and “take home”).

Scenario-led comprehension/ evaluation questions

The student is presented with a scenario, data, case reports or even a published article. Multimedia formats including videos may also be adopted. One or more questions are used to test any or all of understanding, data analysis, evaluation, problem solving, situational judgment and decision making.

Assessment Methods Mapping

Outcome		Level	Written assessment								Performance/Practical					Time limited assessment					
			Research proposal/Audit proposal	Dissertation/Project thesis/Meta-analysis/Literature review	Workbooks	Practical report	Problem solving task	Essays	Case record review/Case report	Reflective writing	Journaling/Logbook	Oral/ Poster presentation	Case discussion (unseen)	Student selected case discussion	Patient history taking	Simulated patient assessments	Direct observation in practice	OSCE	MCOs	Short answer questions	Long answers/essays
O1.1	Establishes relationships with other professionals based on understanding, trust and respect for each other's roles in relation to contact lens and other care, and works collaboratively to ensure the delivery, transfer and continuity of care is assured and not compromised.	Knows How							X							X					
O1.2	Undertakes a patient consultation in an appropriate setting, taking account of confidentiality and understands the issues involved in obtaining valid consent and maintaining dignity and respect in accordance with regulatory standards and contractual requirements.	Knows How								X		X		X	X						
O1.3	Introduces self and role to the patient/carer and confirms patient/ carer identity.	Shows How												X	X	X					

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O2.1	Assesses the communication needs of the patient/carer and adapts consultation appropriately (e.g., for language, age, capacity, physical or sensory impairments).	Knows How								X					X	X	X					
O2.2	Works with the patient/carer in partnership to make informed choices, aiming for the optimal outcome for the patient which meets the professional aims of the practitioner.	Knows How								X					X	X	X					
O2.3	Identifies, recommends and fits contact lenses to achieve vision correction and/or eye health goals, including explaining where patient expectations cannot be met and/or when contact lenses cannot be fitted.	Does													X	X	X	X				
O2.4	Explains to the patient the potential risks and benefits of contact lens wear and any management options/treatment, including the importance of hygiene regimes, wearing compliance and when to seek further advice.	Does													X	X	X	X				
O2.5	Encourages patients to take responsibility for their ocular health and to respond to contact lens and other health conditions appropriately.	Shows How								X					X	X	X					
O2.6	Works within scope of practice and recognises when to refer or seek guidance from another member of the healthcare team or a specialist.	Knows How								X	X		X	X	X		X					

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O3.1	Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate instrumentation and technology for detailed inspection of the anterior segment of the eye, related ocular adnexa and tear film. This should include methods of illumination, filters, other instrument attributes and related use of diagnostic stains.	Knows How				X						X							X		X		
O3.2	Assesses the anterior segment, related ocular adnexa and tear film in a systematic sequence.	Does													X	X	X						
O3.3	Assesses the curvature and regularity of the cornea and any other dimensions required for contact lens fitting.	Does													X	X	X						
O3.4	Evaluates results using evidence-based knowledge to make differential diagnoses and inform an appropriate management plan including referral within scope of practice when appropriate.	Does				X						X	X			X							X
O3.5	Has acquired knowledge of common systemic conditions and their ocular impacts and contact lens implications.	Knows			X												X	X					X
O3.6	Recognises the signs and symptoms associated with relevant ocular conditions, (including, but not exclusively, anterior eye disease, dry eye, red eye and foreign body), differentiates normal from abnormal findings, manages the conditions appropriately and refers where necessary.	Shows How										X			X	X					X		X
O3.7	Recognises the signs, symptoms and contact lens implications of non-systemic (ocular) pathological conditions.	Knows			X												X	X					X

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O3.8	Manages contact lens induced complications for all types of contact lenses.	Shows How										X		X		X				X
O3.9	Uses appropriate grading scales, imaging and other available technological information and creates and maintains accurate and contemporaneous records of all patient advice and management decisions in line with relevant legislation	Does							X					X	X	X				

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05.1	Takes a comprehensive history eliciting any information relevant to the fitting, aftercare and use of contact lenses.	Does										X	X	X	X	X					
05.2	Interprets and investigates appropriately the presenting symptoms of the patient.	Does											X	X	X	X					X
05.3	Interprets relevant patient records to ensure knowledge of the patient's ocular and contact lens history and management to date.	Shows How						X		X		X									X
05.4	Interprets relevant patient information (i.e., spectacle prescription, history and any relevant information supplied by any other health care practitioners) and clinical findings to assess the indications and contraindications for contact lens fitting.	Shows How							X			X		X		X					X
05.5	Discusses contact lens options and makes appropriate recommendations allowing patients to make an informed choice; selects and fits the most appropriate contact lens and parameters for the planned use and clinical needs of the patient.	Does										X	X		X		X				
05.6	Assesses the fitting of a contact lens (soft, rigid and new modalities/ materials where applicable) using a variety of techniques; adjusts lens parameters where appropriate.	Does										X			X	X	X				
05.7	Issues unambiguous and complete contact lens specifications which meet legal requirements.	Shows How			X	X							X								X
05.8	Instructs the patient in contact lens handling (i.e., hygiene, insertion and removal, etc.) and how to wear and care for the lenses including appropriate action to take in an emergency.	Shows How													X	X	X				
05.9	Demonstrates a routine contact lens aftercare consultation in compliance with the requirements of the Opticians Act.	Does										X		X	X						

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05.10	Investigates, identifies and manages any contact lens adaptation or aftercare issues.	Shows How								X		X	X		X					X	
05.11	Informs patients of the importance of continuing contact lens aftercare and regular eye examinations and provide information on arranging aftercare and relevant emergency procedures.	Shows How										X	X		X					X	
05.12	Selects and fits the most appropriate complex/specialist contact lens for the planned use and clinical needs of the patient (e.g., refractive management, therapeutic, prosthetic and cosmetic contact lenses); manages the ongoing contact lens care of own patients.	Shows How											X		X					X	
05.13	Recognises the signs and symptoms of sight threatening conditions/ ocular emergencies requiring immediate treatment and manages them appropriately.	Shows How						X	X	X			X								
05.14	Understands and applies relevant local protocols and professional guidance on the urgency of referrals e.g. The College of Optometrists' clinical management guidelines.	Knows How						X					X					X		X	

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O6.1	Understands common ocular conditions, presenting symptoms and urgency e.g., glaucoma, retinal detachment and age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in the context of contact lens practice.	Knows										X						X	X		X
O6.2	Understands the principles and maintains knowledge of evidence relating to myopia management.	Knows How										X						X	X		X
O6.3	Demonstrates knowledge of refractive techniques including the principles of binocular vision management in the context of contact lens practice	Shows How									X	X	X								
O6.4	Understands the range of lenses available including soft, rigid and new materials/modalities.	Knows			X			X			X								X		X
O6.5	Understands the clinical application of all contact lens types e.g., optical, therapeutic, protective, diagnostic, prosthetic and cosmetic.	Knows			X		X	X											X	X	
O6.6	Understands and safely applies knowledge of the drugs and staining agents used in clinical practice, including any relevant risks and side effects	Knows How							X			X	X						X		
O6.7	Understands the various forms of ocular surface diseases (e.g., dry eye) and maintains knowledge of available management options.	Knows How									X								X	X	
O6.8	Implements infection prevention and control in optical practice.	Does										X			X	X	X				
O6.9	Understands the methods of disinfection of contact lenses / contact lens containers including awareness of the different solutions used in contact lens practice, their constituents, the importance of maintaining sterility and common pathogens.	Knows How									X								X	X	X
O6.10	Applies current legislation to contact lens practice and understands the relevant legislation surrounding the use of common ocular drugs.	Shows How									X							X	X	X	

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O6.11	Evaluates advances in contact lens practice, the evidence behind management strategies and any emerging safety concerns.	Knows	X	X			X	X				X							X	X	
O6.12	Demonstrates a reflective approach to learning and own development of contact lens practice to ensure continued alignment with current best practice.	Shows How							X	X		X	X								
O6.13	Understands continuing education and professional requirements (e.g., continuing professional development (CPD)) within contact lens practice.	Knows							X	X								X			

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