

Optometry BSc (Hons) Programme Specification

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/ug/optometry-bsc/>

Academic Year:	2023/24
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Target Degree Award:	Bachelor of Science with Honours in Optometry [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Level 6]
Interim/Exit Awards:	(Honours/) Degree of Bachelor in Vision Science [FHEQ Level 6]; Diploma of Higher Education in Vision Science [FHEQ Level 5]; Certificate of Higher Education in Vision Science [FHEQ Level 4]
Subject Benchmark Statement:	Optometry (QAA 2015)
Programme Accreditation:	General Optical Council
Programme Admissions:	September
Programme Mode of Study:	3 years full-time [UCAS Code B510]

Please note: Graduates are required by the General Optical Council to achieve a minimum degree award of Second Class Honours, Second Division classification (2:2) in Optometry to be permitted to enter the pre-registration period in practice.

Please note: This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

Minor Modification Schedule

1. April 2020: Third variation from regulations confirmed.
2. October 2020: Specification reformatted and made accessible (first pass)
3. June 2021: Annual changes for 2021 academic year
4. May 2022: Annual changes for 2022 academic year, inclusion of clinical competence modules in stages 1 & 2, improved document accessibility.
5. Feb 2024: Annual changes 2023 academic year

Introduction

Optometrists are healthcare professionals whose primary role involves measurement and optical correction of sight defects (refractive errors), and detection and recognition of ocular disease and dysfunction. Optometrists are trained to supply and fit (dispense) optical appliances such as spectacles, contact lenses and low vision aids. Optometrists are also trained to undertake assessment of binocular vision and to diagnose and manage (non-pathological) binocular vision anomalies.

In the United Kingdom, the optometry profession is the largest provider of primary eye care and is responsible for a sizeable proportion of ophthalmic referrals to the secondary

care sector. Many of these referrals are of patients with sight-threatening conditions, including cataract, glaucoma, hypertension and diabetes.

The overall aim of the full-time degree programme in Optometry is to educate and train students to carry out all the functions described above, to communicate skilfully and knowledgeably with patients and other professionals, and to uphold high standards of professional integrity and behaviour.

Students of optometry must acquire a detailed knowledge and understanding of the human eye in health and disease, as well as the skills to examine the eye, supply and fit optical appliances, and diagnose and manage ocular conditions. The work calls for a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail, and a measure of manual dexterity; all skills that students will have the opportunity to develop during the programme. Also necessary is an interest and ability in scientific work, and the ability to communicate and empathise with people and to win their confidence. Students must also function as autonomous learners having, or being able and willing to develop, the ability to engage in independent and self-directed study.

The aims and learning outcomes of the programme are informed by the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) benchmark statement for Optometry 2015, the UK General Optical Council (GOC) specification for Optometry learning outcomes and clinical competencies 2016, and the University of Bradford Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy.

Programme Aims

The programme is intended to provide:

- A1 A supportive, structured learning environment that encourages an attitude of continuing professional development and independent lifelong learning.
- A2 A diversity of approaches to teaching and learning, incorporating both formative and summative methods of assessment.
- A3 Integration of theoretical, practical and clinical aspects of the curriculum.
- A4 Incremental development of students' learning and clinical skills development through the stages of the programme.

The programme is intended to encourage the development of:

- A5 A systematic understanding of the basic and clinical sciences relevant to the practice of optometry.
- A6 A professional attitude towards patients and colleagues.
- A7 A range of transferable (key) skills.
- A8 Interpersonal and communication skills, including effective use of relevant information technologies.
- A9 Awareness of the legal, ethical and commercial context of optometric practice.

A10 Ability to think critically and proficiency in clinical reasoning.

A11 Insight into research and scientific method.

A12 Clinical competencies required for entry to the pre-registration period in optometry practice.

Programme Learning Outcomes

To be eligible for the FHEQ Level 4 award of Certificate of Higher Education in Vision Science, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

1. The principles behind techniques used for the investigation of the visual function of the human eye.
2. The methods available for the correction of ametropia.
3. The fundamental techniques behind the assessment of ocular health.
4. The ethical principles underlying the practice of optometry and the role of optometry in a health care system.
5. The skills required to obtain and communicate relevant information from and to patients.
6. The principles underlying evidence-based practice.

Additionally, to be eligible for the FHEQ Level 5 award of Diploma of Higher Education in Vision Science, students will be able to:

7. Demonstrate an understanding and application of the principles behind techniques used for the investigation of the visual function of the human eye.
8. Demonstrate an understanding and application of the methods available for the correction of ametropia.
9. Apply a range of techniques to assess ocular and systemic health and recognise abnormal findings.
10. Apply ethical principles to the examination of patients.
11. Employ a range of skills to communicate effectively with patients and other health care professionals.

Additionally, to be eligible for the FHEQ Level 6 Degree award of Bachelor with Honours in Vision Science, students will be able to:

12. Detect and correct or relieve defects of visual function.
13. Detect ocular disease or the ocular side effects of systemic disease.
14. Produce and agree an appropriate management plan with a patient including referral to another health professional where appropriate.

15. Demonstrate knowledge of the fundamental legal principles underlying optometry practice.

16. Critically appraise optometric/vision science research.

Additionally, to be eligible for the FHEQ Level 6 Degree award of Bachelor with Honours in Optometry, students will be able to:

17. Complete the requirements for a professional Certificate of Clinical Competence, which includes an appropriate number of patient episodes and demonstration of the full range of clinical competencies as defined by the General Optical Council.

Curriculum

Units on the curriculum (Modules) are organised in the University's Academic Year system where Semester 1 starts in September and Semester 2 in January. All modules on the programme are core and studied across this Academic Year.

Stage 1 Modules

Title	Code	Credit	Level
Clinical Competence and Professionalism 1	OPT4016-Z	0	FHEQ 4
Evidence-based Practice and Professionalism	OPT4007-B	20	FHEQ 4
Ocular Health Assessment 1	OPT4012-D	40	FHEQ 4
Physiology of Vision & Perception	OPT4004-B	20	FHEQ 4
Pure & Visual Optics	OPT4003-B	20	FHEQ 4
Refraction & Refractive Error	OPT4002-B	20	FHEQ 4

At the end of Stage 1 students will be eligible to exit with the award of Certificate of Higher Education in Vision Science if they have achieved at least 120 credits and achieved Programme Learning Outcomes 1-6.

Stage 2 Modules

Title	Code	Credit	Level
Ophthalmic Lenses & Dispensing	OPT5002-B	20	FHEQ 5
Clinical Optometry & Communication Skills	OPT5004-B	20	FHEQ 5
General and Ocular Pharmacology	OPT5006-B	20	FHEQ 5
The Assessment and Management of Binocular Vision	OPT5008-B	20	FHEQ 5
Ocular Health Assessment 2	OPT5014-B	20	FHEQ 5
Contact Lens Practice	OPT5011-B	20	FHEQ 5
Clinical Competence and Professionalism 2	OPT5019-Z	0	FHEQ 5

At the end of Stage 2, students will be eligible to exit with the award of Diploma of Higher Education in Vision Science if they have achieved at least 240 credits and achieved Programme Learning Outcomes 1-11.

Stage 3 Modules

Title	Code	Credit	Level
Clinical Case Studies	OPT6014-B	20	FHEQ 6
Clinical Competence	OPT6012-Z	0	FHEQ 6
Clinical Practice and Professional Studies	OPT6017-D	40	FHEQ 6
Evidence-based Optometry 2	OPT6013-B	20	FHEQ 6
Management of Ocular Disease	OPT6019-D	40	FHEQ 6

At the end of Stage 3, students will be eligible to exit with one of 3 awards as follows:

- Students will be eligible for the award of Ordinary Degree of Bachelor in Vision Science if they have successfully completed 120 credits in both Level 4 and 5 and 60 credits at level 6. The Vision Science award does not confer permission from the GOC to enter the pre-registration period in optometric practice.
- Students will be eligible for the award of Honours Degree of Bachelor in Vision Science if they have successfully completed at least 360 credits and achieved Programme Learning Outcomes 1-16. This award is made to students who have fulfilled the requirements for a University of Bradford honours degree but have not achieved the Certificate of Clinical Competence (OPT6012-Z). The Vision Science award does not confer permission from the GOC to enter the pre-registration period in optometric practice.
- Students will be eligible for the award of Honours Degree of Bachelor in Optometry if they have successfully completed at least 360 credits, achieved Programme Learning Outcomes 1-17 and satisfied the General Optical Council requirements for Clinical Competence by completing OPT6012-Z. An Optometry Honours Degree First Class, Second Class First Division or Second Class Second Division confers permission from the GOC to enter the pre-registration period in optometric practice.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Key skills are embedded throughout the curriculum. A wide variety of teaching methods appropriate to the learning outcomes are employed throughout the programme. They focus progressively on student-centred approaches to learning, such that students are expected to take increasing responsibility for their learning as they progress through the programme, in order to encourage development of the attributes needed for lifelong learning and continued professional development.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment provides an evaluation of the students' competence in meeting specified objectives, but it is also an essential part of the teaching and learning process. Properly selected assessment tasks signal the importance of particular content, concepts and skills, influence approaches to study and help students to allocate their time appropriately. Constructive and timely feedback on assessment helps students to gain a sense of achievement and progress, an appreciation of the performance and standards expected in a particular discipline or professional area, and to learn from their endeavours.

The Optometry programme aims to select from a range of assessment methods for each module. All modules include both formative and summative assessments.

Formative assessment has a developmental purpose and is designed to help students learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and on how it can be improved and/or maintained. Examples of formative assessments include in-lecture polling of answers to questions with immediate feedback, specific tests to be completed prior to teaching sessions where answers are discussed, or designated assessments completed online with feedback provided electronically.

Reflective practice by students sometimes contributes to formative assessment but is always used to allow students to identify areas of success and also areas requiring further work. Most practical sessions incorporate opportunities for reflective practice.

Summative assessment is used to indicate the extent of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme. Summative assessment includes written exams and demonstration of practical or clinical ability or competence.

In addition, some of the assessments in later stages of the programme, for example in clinical practice, clinical case studies and the research element, are synoptic in nature. Synoptic assessments are those that encourage students to combine elements of their learning from different parts of a programme and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area. A synoptic assessment normally enables students to show their ability to integrate and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth in the subject. It can help to test a student's capability of applying the knowledge and understanding gained in one part of a programme to increase their understanding in other parts of the programme, or across the programme as a whole.

Assessment Regulations

This Programme conforms to the standard University Undergraduate Assessment Regulations which are available at <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations/>

However, there are three variations to these regulations on this programme:

- There is no compensation. This means that all modules must be passed at 40% or higher in order to progress between stages and be eligible for a final award of Bachelor of Science with Honours.

- There is no referral. This means that all modules must be passed at each stage of study prior to starting the next stage of study.
- For the module OPT6017-D (Clinical Practice and Professional Studies), students must pass specified individual components at 40% as outlined in the module descriptor.

Admission Requirements

The University of Bradford is ranked 6th in the UK for Optometry (Complete University Guide 2022) and welcomes applications from all potential students. **A maximum of 110 students are admitted to the Optometry programme each year.** Offers of places are made following detailed consideration of individual applications.

We take into consideration a number of factors when assessing your application. It's not just about your grades; we take the time to understand your personal circumstances and make decisions based on your potential to benefit from your studies and of your ability to succeed in the optometry degree and profession.

English, Mathematics and Science Requirements

Applicants need 5 GCSEs at grade 4/C or above, including English Language, Mathematics, and **two** Sciences (or Double Award) of Biology, Chemistry and/or Physics. We regret that we cannot admit UK students with equivalent RQF Level 2 qualifications such as Key Skills to the Optometry programme. However, applicants seeking entry with RQF Level 3 Access to HE Diplomas will only be required to hold one GCSE Science at grade 4/C.

Students whose first language is not English must have a minimum IELTS score of level 6.5, with no sub-test less than 5.0 (5.5 in the case of international applicants needing a visa), or the equivalent score(s) in an alternative accepted language test. For details of these and of equivalent qualifications from your country, visit:

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/international/entry-requirements/>

Typical Applicant Profiles

Applicants seeking entry through the UCAS scheme should expect to need **136** points from the current tariff in addition to the above requirements.

- A-Levels: AAB including at least 2 sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics) and preferably a 3rd science, a related subject (such as Psychology, Geography, Computing) or a key supporting subject (such as English Language). The practical element in Science A-Levels must be passed.
- Access to HE: D39M6 or other equivalent tariff score in Science, Medicine, Science and Engineering, Dentistry, Pharmacy or Medical Sciences.
- Other qualifications: As listed on the course website
<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/ug/optometry-bsc/> or on application.

The Bradford Foundation Year certificate is not accepted for entry to this programme. International applicants completing the Year Zero route for Optometry will need to achieve 70% overall, 70% in both optional modules and at least 50% in English Language for Specific Academic Purposes.

Professional Requirements

All students of Optometry in the UK are required to register with the General Optical Council (GOC) from the date on which they enrol on the Optometry programme, and to maintain this registration thereafter. The cost for this is £30 per year. The GOC also requires student registrants to adhere to its Code of Conduct and the GOC may take disciplinary action against any student found to be in breach of this Code. For more information about registration and what it means, visit the GOC website:

<https://optical.org/en/publications/declarations-guidance-for-students/>

Whilst not mandatory, a period of paid employment in an optical practice (supported by an employer reference) will strongly support an application.

Access and Recognition of Prior Learning

Applications are welcome from students with non-traditional qualifications, and/or significant personal/professional experience.

The University of Bradford has always welcomed applications from disabled students. To discuss adjustments or to find out more about support and access, you may wish to contact the Disability Service before you apply at: www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/before

Applications are particularly welcomed from adult learners (those aged 21+ at the start of the programme), armed forces families, carers and care leavers, estranged or orphaned learners, refugees and asylum seekers, and Romani or Traveller families. Offers can be made at 128 UCAS points for eligible students. To find out more about the University of Bradford Progression Scheme, visit the webpage:

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/applicants/progression-scheme/>

If applicants have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme. For more details visit our RPL webpage at:

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/teaching-quality/prior-learning/>

Please note that the UCAS tariff and numbers admissible to the programme may vary; this document provides admission information relevant to the contemporary recruitment cycle and requirements may now be different. The course website lists the most current admissions requirements:

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/ug/optometry-bsc/>