

CPD for University Employed Optometrists and Educator Optometrists

Introduction

The purpose of this short communication is to provide additional information for the group of optometrists employed by universities.

Optometrists employed by a University may be registered to examine patients under either:

- a) the General Optometrist scope of practice, or
- b) the Educator Optometrist scope of practice.

The differences between these scopes of practice include:

- i) the qualifications for eligibility to the particular scope,
- ii) the locations at which patient examinations may take place
- *Educator Optometrists may only practice clinical optometry in a University setting as part of the activities associated with their University employment.*

Information

The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCA Act, 2003) requires that practitioners demonstrate ongoing competence. To ensure ongoing competence of optometrists, the NZ Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board has set a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirement of a minimum of 15 credits per year for every optometrist. All optometrists have received a newsletter from the Board about these requirements.

These apply to Optometrists practicing with the scope of practice for Optometry (optometrist) **and** those practicing with the scope of practice for Educator Optometrist (educator optometrist).

Optometrists practicing with the scope of practice for Optometry (TPA endorsement) (optometrist with TPA endorsement) and the scope of practice for Educator Optometrist (TPA endorsement) must obtain a minimum of 5 additional credits per year specifically in therapeutic care.

To gain the required number of credits, optometrists employed at a university can:

- i) attend CPD events that are accredited by the CPD Accreditation Committee of the NZ Board,
- ii) undertake other CPD activities and submit an individual portfolio (dossier) for evaluation by the Board's CPD Accreditation Committee.

The guidelines on the next page are those provided by the Board for application for credit for other CPD activities undertaken by individual optometrists.

Eligible CPD Activities

Some of activities undertaken as part of the duties of a university employed optometrist may be eligible to be included in the application for CPD credits.

Examples include:

- i) Conference presentations which include a major clinical, cultural or ethical component but which are not solely focused on these areas (where repeated, only the first occurrence may be counted),
- ii) Preparation and first publication or presentation of original work in peer reviewed journals or at major conferences,
- iii) Preparing new material for presentation in a university teaching situation. Applications need to be supported by an annual portfolio containing appropriate documentation including references and learning outcomes, and countersigned by the head of department or other academic referee.

To assist optometrists in university employment compile an individual portfolio the following information is provided:

- i) the activity for which credit is claimed must be at post graduate standard [activities that are part of undergraduate teaching in the BOptom programme will not qualify],
- ii) repeated activities (for which credit has previously been awarded) are not eligible
- iii) the individual portfolios of optometrists in University employment must be approved by the Head of Department before being forwarded to the CPD accreditation committee.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUAL CPD ACTIVITIES

Applications from individual optometrists for recognition of overseas or other CPD that has not been formally accredited by the Board will be considered. This will require the optometrist to provide:

- A copy of the event program
- Sufficient information about the learning component to assess quality
- Brief details of the presenter(s) for the program
- Proof of hours attended

The intention is to submit to the Accreditation Committee sufficient information for them to make a judgment about quality and time spent. For this type of material it is likely that they will set it at a bronze level which yields an average of 1 credit for every two hours of CPD activity.

For assessment, the Committee will require an information dossier setting out the above information for each activity.

The Committee will assess only ONE dossier per APC holder per year.

Dossiers require a minimum of 90 days for approval. The final date in each CPD year for acceptance of a Dossier is 1 August.

Please direct enquiries to:

CPD Accreditation Committee
c/- NZAO CPD Recording Program
PO Box 1978; Wellington
cpd@nzao.co.nz