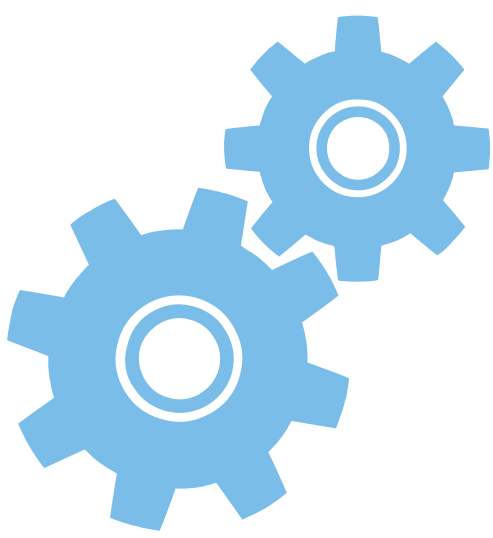
EDUCATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

KEY CHANGES

A **minimum Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) level** (or equivalent) for the qualifications we approve.

The level of a qualification shows how challenging the learning is, determined by The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FEHQ) of Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS).

Qualification	England, Wales & Northern Ireland	Scotland
Optometry	Level 7	Level 11
Dispensing optics	Level 6	Level 9 or 10
Independent prescribing	Level 7	Level 11
Contact lens	Level 6	Level 10



An **integrated approach** which integrates academic study, clinical experience and professional practice, instead of dividing theoretical and practical experience into two stages.

This means trainees will acquire **a single qualification** approved by the GOC leading to entry to the register, rather than two qualifications as most candidates did under the previous requirements.

GREATER PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Optometry and dispensing optics undergraduate qualifications **must integrate 48 weeks of patient-facing learning and experience in practice**, which will help build professional confidence, effective communication and professionalism to prepare students for broader and more varied clinical roles.

EMPHASIS ON PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY

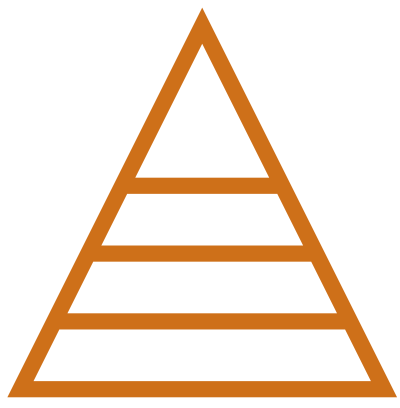
A greater focus on key skills such as **professional judgement, patient-centred communication, management of risk and diagnostic, consultation and clinical practice skills**.

In addition, students will focus on critical thinking, clinical-reasoning and decision-making; engagement in research-informed clinical practice; and ability to respond effectively to changing needs in each of the four nations.

Miller's Pyramid of Clinical Competence

Each outcome is described using a level based on an **established competence and assessment hierarchy** known as 'Miller's Pyramid of Clinical Competence' (knows; knows how; shows how; and does).

- **'Knows'**: Knowledge that may be applied in the future.
- **'Knows how'**: Knowing how to apply knowledge and skills in a defined context or situation.
- **'Shows how'**: Applying knowledge, skills and behaviour in a simulated environment or in real life repeatedly and reliably.
- **'Does'**: Acting independently and consistently in a complex situation of an everyday or familiar context repeatedly and reliably.





Trainees are **no longer required to have been practising as an optometrist for two years** before undertaking an additional supply (AS), supplementary prescribing (SP), or independent prescribing (IP) qualification.

As a result, providers may choose to integrate the AS, SP or IP qualification within their undergraduate optometry Level 7 programmes, resulting in the student acquiring two qualifications.

Visit www.optical.org/etr for more information

General Optical Council