

Investigation Committee: Candidate Information Pack

Vacancies for two Dispensing Optician/Contact Lens Optician registrant members for the Investigation Committee

Ref: GOC04/23

October 2023

This information pack is available in alternative formats (for example large print).

Please submit your request to the Governance Team (appointment@optical.org)

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Welcome Letter



Thank you for expressing your interest in becoming a member on our Investigation Committee.

We are seeking to appoint two dispensing optician/contact lens optician registrant members to the GOC Investigation Committee.

The Investigation Committee has a mixture of lay and professional members. It meets in private to consider allegations that a registrant may not be fit to practise (where case examiners cannot agree) and referrals from case examiners for an assessment of the registrant's health or performance.

As well as helping us to protect the public and regulate the profession, being a member of the Investigation Committee gives you the opportunity to share your unique skills and experience while learning from others. We are committed to supporting personal and professional development in the role.

If you welcome the challenge of helping to shape optical regulation at this time, we will be delighted to hear from you. Please email appointment@optical.org for further information and we will aim respond to your query within 48 hours. You may also contact us by telephone. Please quote reference **GOC04/23** on all correspondence.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr Anne Wright CBE, Council Chair
October 2023

Timeline

Key dates for this appointment are as follows:

Application Deadline

Sunday 19 November 2023 (midnight)

Interviews

Tuesday 19 December 2023

Appointment Start Date

Monday 15 January 2024

Induction*

January 2024

*Subject to all of the appointment processes having been completed beforehand, the successful candidates will be expected to attend schedule inductions.

About the GOC

Background

We are the regulator for the optical professions in the UK. We currently register around 30,000 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student opticians and optical businesses.

We have four core functions:

Setting standards for the performance and conduct of our registrants.

Approving qualifications leading to registration

Maintaining a register of those who are qualified and fit to practise, to train or carry on business as optometrists and dispensing opticians

Investigating and acting where registrants' fitness to practise, train or carry on business is impaired

Legislation

Our primary legislation is the Opticians Act 1989 (as amended) and we also have a series of related rules that describe how we carry out our statutory functions. This information can be found on our [website](#).

Our values

The interests of patients and the general public are at the heart of all we do, and we aspire to the timeless seven (Nolan) public sector principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership).

Our values underpin the way we work with each other, and with the public, our registrants and partner organisations:

- We act with **integrity**
- We pursue **excellence**
- We **respect** other people and ideas
- We are **agile** and responsive to change
- We show **empathy**
- We behave **fairly**

Overview of the Role of Investigation Committee member

Members of the Investigation Committee consider allegations that a registrant may not be fit to practise (where case examiners cannot agree) and referrals from case examiners for an assessment of the registrant's health or performance. Members of the Investigation Committee act as key decision makers for cases at the investigation stage of the fitness to practise process.

The workload for the Investigation Committee is relatively low, there being on average approximately four meetings per year. Investigation Committee meetings currently take place remotely via Microsoft Teams, although some may take place in central London.

The initial tenure for both roles will be four years with the possibility of reappointment subject to satisfactory appraisal.

The Investigation Committee comprises registrant and lay members with different backgrounds, skills, knowledge and experience.

For more information about the Investigations Committee please click [here](#).

Appointment Information and Expectation

Remuneration and Time Commitment

Members are paid a daily fee of £319 (effective from 1 April 2023). This fee is taxable and subject to Class 1 National Insurance (NI) contributions. It is not pensionable. This is in line with our [member fees policy](#).

Members can claim expenses, at rates set centrally, for travel and subsistence costs incurred on Council business as set out in our [expenses policy](#).

This role is part time with a commitment of approximately ten days per year, including time spent preparing for meetings. Hearings will usually take place via MS Teams but may on occasion be held at the GOC Offices in London.

Appointment and Tenure of Office

The initial tenure will not exceed four years (any decision on reappointment will be subject to the needs of Council and a satisfactory member review, up to a combined maximum of eight years).

Member Reviews

All Investigation Committee members are required to take part in our [member review process](#), which involves self-assessment and one to one meetings with a member of the Investigation Committee. A satisfactory review will normally be required for Investigation Committee members to continue to hold office.

Training and Development

Appropriate training and induction will be provided and tailored to the appointed candidate. Induction will take place prior to appointment where possible. All members are expected to undertake routine refresher training on key areas – such as information governance and equality, diversity and inclusion as a condition of appointment.

Standards in Public Life

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct including impartiality, integrity and objectivity in the execution of the role and its responsibilities.

To ensure that these values are maintained by those in public service, the successful candidate will be required to subscribe to our code of conduct on appointment.

You must also confirm that you understand the standards of probity required by public appointees outlined in the “Seven Principles of Public Life”. These principles are

included within our [Code of Conduct](#).

You should be aware that this post is a public appointment or statutory office, rather than a job and therefore is not subject to the provisions of employment law.

Disqualification

Appointments to healthcare professional regulatory bodies are governed by regulations which include details of the circumstances in which an individual may be disqualified from holding office.

The criteria for disqualification from appointment as a Committee member are set out in Part 2 of [The General Optical Council \(Constitution\) Order 2009](#). Please read this carefully before you submit an application.

Management of Interests

You should note your requirement to declare any interests you hold which relate to the advertised role. These are:

- Business or personal interests that might be relevant to our work, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest were you to be appointed, should be declared at the application stage.
- Any close personal relationships with any GOC employees, workers or Council, committee, Hearings Panel members or Investigation Committee members. Any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest will be fully explored by the selection panel at shortlisting and interview stage. Candidates will be given an opportunity to propose how they would manage or eliminate the conflict.

It is possible that certain interests will not be manageable or might be dealt with as a condition of appointment (for example, a candidate needing to terminate their conflicting activity in order to take up the role).

We strongly recommend that you read our [Management of Interests policy](#), and consider any interests that may conflict with the role before deciding to apply.

Examples of interests that may require the candidate to give up their interest prior to taking up appointment as a member of the GOC's Investigation Committee include:

- member of Council or the Hearings Panel;
- GOC Case Examiner;
- GOC employee;
- GOC Education Visitor Panel member; and
- Independent members of the GOC Council or non-statutory committees.

On appointment you will be required to declare any interests you hold which could conflict or be perceived to conflict with your role as a lay independent member. In order to be transparent, these interests will be published on our website.

If you wish to discuss an interest before submitting your application, please email appointment@optical.org or call the Governance team on 0207 307 9482.

Person Specification

Candidates will be required to provide in their application examples of how their experience matches the essential criteria outlined below. Candidates who additionally provide examples of how their experience matches the desirable criteria outlined below may be better positioned to demonstrate that they meet the challenges of the appointment. For applicants who have a similar level of skills, knowledge and experience evidenced against the essential criteria, an assessment against the desirable criteria will be made in order to rank applications.

Essential Criteria

E1. Demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, dealing with people and issues honestly, fairly and with respect

E2. Ability to analyse and interpret complex information and evidence, demonstrating impartiality, intellectual flexibility and sound judgment

E3. Ability to build supportive relationships and work as a team; welcoming and showing regard to the views and advice of others and supporting collective decision making

E4. Ability to listen, communicate and influence effectively, articulating clear reasoning

E5. Ability to understand and operate within a complex legislative framework – thinking logically and weighing evidence to achieve well-founded impartial decisions using reasoning

E6. A qualified dispensing optician/contact lens optician with current “hands on” experience in optical primary and/or secondary care; and/or significant involvement in other roles, for example optical education, commissioning, manufacturing, delivery of specialised local service delivery such as glaucoma, cataract and diabetic screening; domiciliary care and clinical-based secondary care, delivery of CPD or in research.

Desirable Criteria

D1. Understanding of professional regulation and its impact on public protection

D2. Demonstrable commitment to accountability – taking personal responsibility and holding others to account

D3. Handling and managing complaints

We are committed to ensuring that in exercising all of our functions we operate in a fair and transparent manner and in a way that is free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Within all of our functions, we are committed to promoting equality; valuing diversity; being inclusive; and meeting our equality duties.

We will not discriminate based on age; disability; gender; gender identity; race/ethnicity; religion or belief; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership; maternity/paternity and pregnancy; and geographical locations outside of London.

How to Apply

Your Application

Please apply with the following:

- your CV outlining your employment history, any relevant voluntary work, public service or other experience; together with any relevant professional, academic or vocational qualifications, and email contact details for two referees;
- [the application form](#), stating how your experience matches the essential and desirable criteria for the vacancy you are applying for; and
- an EDI monitoring form

Equality Monitoring

We would welcome applications from individuals who are disabled and from diverse ethnic backgrounds as these are currently under-represented on our Council and committees.

When submitting your [application](#), you will also be asked to complete equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) monitoring information. This is to ensure all candidates are treated fairly, through our process. The form can be accessed [here](#).

Please note the information you submit will be treated in the strictest confidence and used for monitoring purposes only. This will be separated from your application and will not be seen by anyone directly involved in the selection process.

Deadline

Please complete your application by **midnight on Sunday 19 November 2023**.

If you have any questions, please email them to appointment@optical.org and we will aim to respond to you within 48 hours. You may also contact us by telephone on 0207 307 9482.

Appointments Process

For more information on our appointments process, read our [Member Appointments Guidance](#).

We will process your application as quickly as possible and keep you informed at key stages. **Please read the information below carefully, which outlines important information and our process once we receive your application:**

- We will acknowledge receipt of your CV, application form and EDI form (by email) and check it for completeness and eligibility.
- This will be followed by an interview with an appointments panel. The appointments panel for these appointments will be comprised of:
 - Lesley Reid (Former Investigations Committee DO Member)
 - William Stockdale (Registrant (DO) Council member)
 - Ranjit Sondhi (Independent Member)
- The appointments panel will rely only on the information you provide in your CV and application form whether you have demonstrated that you meet selection criteria, as set out in the person specification.
- Where 30 or more applications are received for a role, applications will be “pre-assessed” before being forwarded to the full appointments panel for consideration. In this event, you should be aware that your application might not be considered in full by all appointment panel members.
- Candidates shortlisted for interview will be notified by **Friday 8 December 2023**.
- If you have **not** heard from us by this date, please assume you have not been invited to interview. This will be confirmed to you via email at a later date. Please note that individual feedback will only be available to candidates who attend interview (but are not appointed).
- Interviews will take place remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday 19 December 2023**.
- Where a candidate is unable to attend an interview on the published dates, the selection panel *may* consider a new date, but at their discretion and in light of those interviewed first time.
- If invited to interview, the selection panel will question you about your experience and expertise and ask specific questions to find whether you meet the selection criteria.

- Written references from two referees and other due diligence checks (including Google/LinkedIn/Facebook searches, director/trustee checks) for the candidates invited to interview will be undertaken after interview. Please ensure that your referees are aware and will be able to respond when contacted.
- All candidates who have been interviewed will be notified of the outcome once the final decision has been made, which we expect to be by **Friday 22 December 2023**.
- On appointment, you will receive further information about training and induction.



Equal Opportunities and Accessibility

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

We strive to be as diverse as the public we protect and welcome applications from everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity and geographical locations outside of London. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all, and appointments will be made solely on merit. We believe that for any organisation to be successful, it needs to work with the most talented and diverse people available. We positively encourage applications from people from all communities and backgrounds and with a broad range of experience.

To ensure all candidates are treated fairly, we monitor diversity at all stages of the appointments process. The application process includes a monitoring section which is submitted online. Providing this information is optional, but we would be grateful for your co-operation.

Information provided will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for monitoring purposes only. It will not be seen by anyone directly involved in the selection process and will not be treated as part of your application. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individuals to be identified. Monitoring information gathered from application processes is published annually in our [monitoring report](#).

Access Requirements

We have a duty to promote equality of opportunity for people who have disabilities. One of the ways we are doing this is through identifying barriers to opportunity facing people with disabilities and making reasonable adjustments to remove them.

If you would like to discuss your requirements for reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process in more detail, please contact the Governance team on 0207 307 9482. If you would like more information on reasonable adjustments please read this link: <https://www.gov.uk/reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-workers>

Data Protection

Our data protection policy is published on our [website](#). We are required to retain information about the people who apply for public appointments, and make this available for audit purposes, if requested to do so. Our retention policy in relation to the information we collect in respect of public appointments is that we keep the following information for one year for unsuccessful candidates and six years for successful candidates and then it is destroyed:

- initial contact details, including your name and address;
- application form and any supporting documentation; and
- monitoring information.

Some of the information requested on the application form will be made public if you are appointed (e.g. your name, brief career/background history, other public appointments held, any other information that it is in the public interest to disclose). Moreover, we may be required to release information, including personal data, on request under the UK Data Protection Act 2018. However, we will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality, and where possible will look to gain consent from the individual. Nor will we act in contravention of our obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Questions and Concerns

We aim to process all applications as quickly as possible. However, if you have a complaint about the process used in this recruitment campaign, please refer to our [Corporate Complaints and feedback Procedure](#) which provides guidance on what can and cannot be considered and how to raise concerns. In the first instance, you should raise your concern/complaint informally within 72 hours of the action you are complaining about.

General Optical Council
10 Old Bailey
London
EC4M 7NG

Tel +44 (0)20 7580 3898

www.optical.org

Email: goc@optical.org

Twitter: [@GOC_UK](https://twitter.com/GOC_UK)

The GOC is a charity registered in England and Wales (1150137)