Template 2: Criteria Narrative (Standards for Approved Qualifications)

Version 1

This template requires the provider to set out the details of how it will meet each individual standard.

Guidance on how to complete this template can be found in the document titled: **Templates library and guidance (for optometry and dispensing qualifications)**

**Please complete the box for each criterion as required for the relevant stage of your application / adaptation submission (within Forms 1A and 2A).**

**Standard 1: Public and patient safety**

Approved qualifications must be delivered in contexts which ensures public and patient safety and support students’ development and the demonstration of patient-centred professionalism.

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S1.1** | **There must be policies and systems in place to ensure students understand and adhere to the GOC’s Standards for Optical Students and understand the GOC’s Standards of Practice for Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S1.2** | **Concerns about a student’s fitness to train must be investigated through robust, fair proportionate processes and where necessary, action taken and reported to the GOC. (The GOC Acceptance Criteria and the related guidance in annex A should be used as a guide as to how a fitness to train matter should be investigated and when it should be reported.)** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S1.3** | **Students must not put patients, service-users, the public or colleagues at risk. This means that anyone who teaches, assesses, supervises, or employs students must ensure students practise safely and that students only undertake activities within the limits of their competence, and are appropriately supervised when with patients and service-users.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S1.4** | **Upon admission (and at regular intervals thereafter) students must be informed it is an offence not to be registered as a student with the GOC at all times whilst studying on a programme leading to an approved qualification in optometry or dispensing optics.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

**Standard 2: Admission of students**

Recruitment, selection, and admission of students must be transparent, fair, and appropriate.

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S2.1** | **Selection and admission criteria must be appropriate for entry to an approved qualification leading to registration as an optometrist or dispensing optician, including relevant health, character, and fitness to train checks. For overseas students, this should include evidence of proficiency in the English language of at least level 7 overall (with no individual section lower than 6.5) on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scale or equivalent.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S2.2** | **Recruitment, selection, and admission processes must be fair, transparent and comply with relevant regulations and legislation (which may differ between England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and/or non-UK), including equality and diversity legislation.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S2.3** | **Selectors (who may include academic and admissions/administrative staff) should be trained to apply selection criteria fairly, including training in equality, diversity, and unconscious bias, in line with legislation in place in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and/or Wales.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S2.4** | **Information provided to applicants must be accurate, comply with relevant legislation and include: • the academic and professional entry requirements required for entry to the approved qualification; • a description of the selection process and any costs associated with making the application; • the qualification’s approved status;  • the total costs/fees that will be incurred;• the curriculum and assessment approach for the qualification; and • the requirement for students to remain registered as a student with the GOC throughout the duration of the programme leading to the award of the approved qualification.  If offers are made to applicants below published academic and professional entry requirements, the rationale for making such decisions must be explicit and documented.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S2.5** | **Recognition of prior learning must be supported by effective and robust policies and systems. These must ensure that students admitted at a point other than the start of a programme have the potential to meet the outcomes for award of the approved qualification. Prior learning must be recognised in accordance with guidance issued by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and/or Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)/Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)/Qualifications Wales/Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland and must not exempt students from summative assessments leading to the award of the approved qualification, unless achievement of prior learning can be evidenced as equivalent.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

**Standard 3: Assessment of outcomes and curriculum design**

The approved qualification must be supported by an integrated curriculum and assessment strategy that ensures students who are awarded the approved qualification meet all the outcomes at the required level (Miller’s Pyramid: knows; knows how; shows how; and does).

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.1** | **There must be a clear assessment strategy for the award of an approved qualification. The strategy must describe how the outcomes will be assessed, how assessment will measure students’ achievement of outcomes at the required level (Miller’s Pyramid) and how this leads to an award of an approved qualification.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.2** | **The approved qualification must be taught and assessed (diagnostically, formatively and summatively) in a progressive and integrated manner. The component parts should be linked into a cohesive programme of academic study, clinical experience, and professional practice (for example, Harden’s spiral curriculum9), introducing, progressing, and assessing knowledge, skills and behaviour until the outcomes are achieved.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.3** | **The approved qualification must provide experience of working with: patients (such as patients with disabilities, children, their carers, etc); inter-professional learning (IPL); and team work and preparation for entry into the workplace in a variety of settings (real and simulated) such as clinical practice, community, manufacturing, research, domiciliary and hospital settings (for example, Harden’s ladder of integration10). This experience must increase in volume and complexity as a student progresses through a programme.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.4** | **Curriculum design, delivery and the assessment of outcomes must involve and be informed by feedback from a range of stakeholders such as patients, employers, students, placement providers, commissioners, members of the eye-care team and other healthcare professionals. Stakeholders involved in the teaching, supervision and/or assessment of students must be appropriately trained and supported, including in equality and diversity.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.5** | **The outcomes must be assessed using a range of methods and all final, summative assessments must be passed. This means that compensation, trailing and extended re-sit opportunities within and between modules where outcomes are assessed is not permitted.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.6** | **Assessment (including lowest pass) criteria, choice, and design of assessment items (diagnostic, formative and summative) leading to the award of an approved qualification must seek to ensure safe and effective practice and be appropriate for a qualification leading to registration as an optometrist or dispensing optician.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.7** | **Assessment (including lowest pass) criteria must be explicit and set at the right standard, using an appropriate and tested standard-setting process. This includes assessments which might occur during learning and experience in practice, in the workplace or during inter-professional learning.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.8** | **Assessments must appropriately balance validity, reliability, robustness, fairness, and transparency, ensure equity of treatment for students, reflect best practice, and be routinely monitored, developed and quality controlled. This includes assessments which might occur during learning and experience in practice, in the workplace or during inter-professional learning.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.9** | **Appropriate reasonable adjustments must be put in place to ensure that students with a disability are not disadvantaged in engaging with the learning and teaching process and in demonstrating their achievement of the outcomes.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.10** | **Summative assessments directly related to the outcomes demonstrating unsafe practice must result in failure of the assessment.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.11** | **There must be policies and systems in place to plan, monitor and record each student’s achievement of outcomes leading to awards of the approved qualification.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.12** | **The approved qualification must be listed on one of the national frameworks for higher education qualifications for UK degree-awarding bodies (The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS)), or be a qualification regulated by Ofqual, SQA or Qualifications Wales. Approved qualifications in optometry must be at a minimum RQF, FHEQ or Credit and Qualifications Framework Wales (CQFW) level 7 or Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) / FQHEIS level 11. Approved qualifications in dispensing optics must be at a minimum RQF, FHEQ or CQFW level 6 or SCQF/FQHEIS level 10.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.13** | **The outcomes must be delivered and assessed in an environment that places study in an academic, clinical, and professional context which is informed by research and provides opportunities for students to develop as learners and future professionals.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.14** | **There must be a range of teaching and learning methods to deliver the outcomes that integrates scientific, professional, and clinical theories and practices in a variety of settings and uses a range of procedures, drawing upon the strengths and opportunities of context in which the qualification is offered.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.15** | **In meeting the outcomes, the approved qualification must integrate at least 1600 hours/48 weeks of patient-facing learning and experience in practice. Learning and experience in practice must take place in one or more periods of time and one or more settings of practice.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.16** | **Outcomes delivered and assessed during learning and experience in practice must be clearly identified within the assessment strategy and fully integrated within the programme leading to the award of an approved qualification.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.17** | **The selection of outcomes to be taught and assessed during learning and experience in practice and the choice and design of assessment items must be informed by feedback from stakeholders, such as patients, students, employers, placement providers, members of the eye-care team and other healthcare professionals.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.18** | **Assessment (if undertaken) of outcomes during learning and experience in practice must be carried out by an appropriately trained and qualified GOC registrant or other statutorily registered healthcare professional who is competent to measure students’ achievement of outcomes at the required level (Miller’s Pyramid).** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.19** | **The collection and analysis of equality and diversity data must inform curriculum design, delivery, and assessment of the approved qualification. This analysis must include students’ progression by protected characteristic. In addition, the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion must be embedded in curriculum design and assessment and used to enhance students’ experience of studying on a programme leading to an approved qualification.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.20** | **Students must have regular and timely feedback to improve their performance, including feedback on their performance in assessments and in periods of learning in practice.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S3.21** | **If a student studies abroad for parts of the approved qualification, any outcomes studied and/or assessed abroad must be met in accordance with these standards.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

**Standard 4: Management, monitoring, and review of approved qualifications**

Approved qualifications must be managed, monitored, reviewed and evaluated in a systematic and developmental way, through transparent processes that show who is responsible for what at each stage.

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.1** | **The provider of the approved qualification must be legally incorporated (i.e., not be an unincorporated association) and provide assurance it has the authority and capability to award the approved qualification.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.2** | **The provider of the approved qualification must be able to accurately describe its corporate form, its governance, and lines of accountability in relation to its award of the approved qualification.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.3** | **There must be a clear management plan in place for the award of the approved qualification and its development, delivery, management, quality control and evaluation.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.4** | **The provider of the approved qualification may be owned by a consortium of organisations or some other combination of separately constituted bodies. Howsoever constituted, the relationship between the constituent organisations and the ownership of the provider responsible for the award of the approved qualification must be clear.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.5** | **The provider of the approved qualification must have a named person who will be the primary point of contact for the GOC.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.6** | **There must be agreements in place between the different organisations/people (if any) that contribute to the delivery and assessment of the outcomes, including during periods of learning in practice. Agreements must define the role and responsibility of each organisation/person, be regularly reviewed, and supported by management plans, systems and policies that ensure the delivery and assessment of the outcomes meet these standards.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.7** | **The approved qualification must be systematically reviewed, monitored, and evaluated using the best available evidence, including feedback from stakeholders, and action taken to address any concerns identified. Evidence should demonstrate that as a minimum there are: • feedback systems for students and placement providers; • structured systems for quality review and evaluation; • student consultative mechanisms; • input and feedback from external stakeholders (public, patients, employers, commissioners, students, and former students, third sector bodies, etc.); and • evaluation of business intelligence including the National Student Survey (NSS), progression and attainment data.**  **To ensure that:  • provision is relevant and current, and changes are made promptly to teaching materials and assessment items to reflect significant changes in practice and/or research; • the quality of teaching, learning support and assessment is appropriate; and • the quality of placements, learning in practice, inter-professional and work-based learning, including supervision, is appropriate.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.8** | **There must be policies and systems in place for: • the selection, appointment, support, and training of external examiner(s) and/or internal and external moderator(s)/verifiers; and • reporting back on actions taken to external examiners and/or internal and external moderators/verifiers.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.9** | **There must be policies and systems in place to ensure the supervision of students during periods of learning and experience in practice safeguards patients and service-users and is not adversely affected by commercial pressures.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.10** | **There must be policies and systems in place for the identification, support, and training for all who carry responsibility for supervising students. The provider responsible for the award of the approved qualification must know how and by whom a student is being supervised during periods of learning in practice.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.11** | **Students, and anyone who teaches, assesses, supervises, employs, or works with students, must be able to provide feedback and raise concerns. Responses and action taken to feedback and concerns raised must be evidenced.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.12** | **Complaints must be considered in accordance with good practice advice on handling complaints issued by the Office for the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education in England and Wales (or equivalent).** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.13** | **There must be an effective mechanism to identify risks to the quality of the delivery and assessment of the approved qualification, ensure appropriate management of commercial conflicts of interest and to identify areas requiring development.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S4.14** | **There must be systems and policies in place to ensure that the GOC is notified of any major events and/or changes to the delivery of the approved qualification, assessment and quality control, its organisation, resourcing, and constitution, including responses to relevant regulatory body reviews.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

**Standard 5: Leadership, resources, and capacity**

Leadership, resources, and capacity must be sufficient to ensure the outcomes are delivered and assessed to meet these standards in an academic, professional, and clinical context.

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S5.1** | **There must be robust and transparent mechanisms for identifying, securing, and maintaining a sufficient and appropriate level of ongoing resource to deliver the outcomes to meet these standards, including human and physical resources that are fit for purpose and clearly integrated into strategic and business plans. Evaluations of resources and capacity must be evidenced, together with evidence of recommendations considered and implemented.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S5.2** | **There must be sufficient and appropriately qualified and experienced staff to teach and assess the outcomes. These must include: • an appropriately qualified and experienced programme leader, supported to succeed in their role; • sufficient staff responsible for the delivery and assessment of the outcomes, including GOC registrants and other suitably qualified healthcare professionals; • sufficient supervision of students’ learning in practice by GOC registrants who are appropriately trained and supported in their role; and • an appropriate student:staff ratio (SSR), which must be benchmarked to comparable provision.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S5.3** | **Staff who teach and/or assess the outcomes must be appropriately qualified and supported to develop in their professional, clinical, supervisory, academic/teaching and/or research roles. These must include: • opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD), including personal, academic and profession-specific development; • effective induction, supervision, peer support, and mentoring; • realistic workloads for anyone who teaches, assesses or supervises students; • for teaching staff, the opportunity to gain teaching qualifications; and • effective appraisal, performance review and career development support.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S5.4** | **There must be sufficient and appropriate learning facilities to deliver and assess the outcomes. These must include: • sufficient and appropriate library and other information and IT resources; • access to specialist resources, including textbooks, journals, internet and web-based materials; • specialist teaching, learning and clinical facilities to enable the delivery and assessment of the outcomes; and • enrichment activities, which may include non-compulsory, non-assessed elements.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |

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| No. | Criteria |
| **S5.5** | **Students must have effective support for health, wellbeing, conduct, academic, professional, and clinical issues.** |
| **Provider’s commentary** (Please refer to the **Evidence Framework** for the type of evidence required to demonstrate how you meet, or intend to meet, the criterion above) 1xA4 page max. | |