

Candidate Information Pack

Companies Committee

Three vacancies for members representing the interests of business registrants (body corporates)

Ref: GOC03/22

November 2022

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

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

Contents

1.	Welcome Letter	3
2.	Timeline	4
3.	About the GOC.....	5
4.	Companies Committee.....	7
5.	Appointment Information and Expectation	8
6.	Person Specification	11
7.	How to apply	13
8.	Appointments process.....	14
9.	Equal Opportunities and Accessibility	16
10.	Your data.....	17



Welcome Letter



Thank you for expressing your interest in these positions and for taking the time to read this information pack, which I hope gives you all the details you need to apply.

We are seeking to appoint three members to the Companies Committee, which represents the interests of GOC business registrants (body corporates), who can demonstrate that they are acting on behalf of a body corporate and able to represent a business registered with the GOC.

It is essential for public protection and confidence in the professions that our Council has access to a wide range of expertise on our committees. The Companies Committee plays a vital role in enhancing our work and informing the decisions made by our Council.

This is a great opportunity for personal development. The work is challenging, varied and you will be able to learn from the experience of your committee colleagues as well as sharing your own.

We are looking for individuals who bring a fresh perspective and we particularly welcome applications from candidates who can reflect the mix of our business registrants, individual registrants, and patients. You will need to be able to demonstrate effective communication skills and have the ability to develop constructive and supportive working relationships.

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.

Being a committee member gives you the opportunity to share your particular skills and experience while learning from others too. 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 to respond to your query within 48 hours. Please quote reference **GOC03/22** on all correspondence.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Wright".

Dr Anne Wright CBE, Council Chair
November 2022

Timeline

Key dates for this appointment are as follows:

Application Deadline

Sunday 27 November 2022 (midnight)

Interviews

Thursday 19 and Friday 20 January 2023

Appointment Start Date

Monday 13 February 2023

Induction

Week commencing Monday 20 February 2023

Advisory Panel Meeting

9.15 – 13.00, Friday 10 March 2023

9.15 – 13.00, Monday 12 June 2023

Key contact: appointment@optical.org

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 optometrists and dispensing 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 may be 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**

Companies Committee

The purpose of the Companies Committee is to advise and give assistance to the Council (whether or not in response to a request from them) on matters relating to business registrants (body corporates), other than matters required by the Opticians Act 1989 (as amended) to be considered by the Investigation Committee, the Registration Appeals Committee or the Fitness to Practise Committee. The Committee may also be required to provide advice to the Chief Executive and Registrar.

The Companies Committee currently meets together with the Standards, Education and Registration Committees as an Advisory Panel about two or three times a year.

Read the [current terms of reference for the Companies Committee](#) and the [current terms of reference for the Advisory Panel](#).

We welcome applications from candidates who can demonstrate they represent the interests of GOC business registrants (called 'body corporates'). Candidates may be a GOC registrant (an optometrist or dispensing optician) or lay (i.e. not registered with the GOC, such as a practice manager). However, you must be able to demonstrate that you are acting on behalf of a body corporate and able to represent a business registered with the GOC.

In practical terms, you should have the necessary authority to represent and speak on behalf of the business registered with the GOC you are applying on behalf of. You can [search our register](#) to check to see if your organisation is a body corporate.

Body Corporates

A body corporate is regarded as an optical business which meets one of the following criteria:

- the majority of the directors are registered optometrists or registered dispensing opticians;
- was included in a health service ophthalmic list on 20.11.1957;
- the greater part of the applicant's business consists of activities other than the testing of sight and fitting and supply of optical appliances; and that so much of its business as consists of the testing of sight is carried on under the management of a registered optometrist; and that so much of its business as consists of the fitting and supply of optical appliances is carried on under the management of a registered optometrist or registered dispensing optician; or
- the applicant is an Industrial & Provident Society and the testing of sight is carried on under the management of a registered optometrist and the fitting and supply of optical appliances is carried on under the management of a registered optometrist or dispensing optician.

Appointment Information and Expectation

Remuneration and Time Commitment

Companies Committee members are remunerated up to £319 per day in accordance with our [member fees policy](#). The member fee includes time for reading and preparation.

The appointed members will be expected to commit approximately 2-4 days per year. Meetings will usually take place online via Microsoft Teams. You will therefore require a laptop and a stable internet connection to participate. Very occasionally we may hold meetings at the GOC offices - 10 Old Bailey, London EC4M 7NG - or other suitable venues.

Appointment and Tenure of Office

The length of term of office is determined by the Nominations Committee. The initial appointment will be for a maximum of four years, and committee members may be reappointed for a further four years. Committee members may serve a maximum period of eight years in any period of 20 years. We will be undergoing some legislative changes in the future which may mean that the Council's Committees may change or could be disbanded.

Reappointment (subject to the maximum period of service) will be dependent on a satisfactory performance appraisal and the ongoing requirements of the Nominations Committee.

Member Reviews

All Committee members are required to take part in our [member review process](#), which involves self-assessment and one to one meetings with the Chair of the respective committee and third-party feedback on completion of a specified term of office. A satisfactory review will normally be required for 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 after appointment. 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 or Hearings Panel 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.

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 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 3934.

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.

Eligibility Criteria

Candidates must be able to:

- confirm that they have the authority to act on behalf of a body corporate; and
- provide details of the relevant business registered with the GOC.

Essential Criteria

- E1. An active interest in ensuring public safety of optical services in the UK.
- E2. Ability to listen, communicate and influence effectively.
- E3. Ability to read, analyse and distil substantial volumes of documentation and, as part of a committee, exercise sound judgement in formulating advice, making recommendations or reaching decisions.
- E4. Ability to participate in discussions and decision making actively and constructively, using evidence to build consensus within a multi-disciplinary group or committee.
- E5. Commitment to equality and diversity; aware of how individual actions contribute to and make a difference to the equality agenda.
- E6. Authority to represent a body corporate listed on the GOC register.

Desirable Criteria

- D1. An understanding of primary and/or secondary health care services for patients in relation to any of the following: paediatrics; low vision; dementia; or learning difficulties.
- D2. Leadership and management experience in one of the following: in the charitable, professional body or regulatory sectors; in higher or further education management; in commerce or industry; in the delivery of healthcare or public services.

- D3. Current experience of delivery of optical primary and/or secondary care services; or significant involvement with current practice in other roles, for example, within higher education or research.
- D4. Experience of governance, business management and human resourcing in the public or private sector.
- D5. Understanding of the delivery of optical services and its market environment.
- D6. Understanding of professional regulation and its impact on service delivery, standards, professional development and education.

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 on age; disability; gender reassignment; race/ethnicity; religion or belief; gender; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity or geographical locations outside of London.

How to Apply

Your Application

Please apply with your CV and a statement of no more than 2 sides of A4 giving examples of how your experience matches criteria in the person specification. You should aim to address all the essential criteria in your statement and one or more of the desirable criteria. Your CV should outline your employment history, any relevant voluntary work, public service or other experience; together with any relevant professional, academic or vocational qualifications.

Please note that if invited to interview you will be expected to evidence that you are authorised to represent the interest of a business registrant (a GOC registered body corporate). This evidence can include a letter from the business (a GOC registered body corporate) in support of your application and stating that you have authority to represent their interests if selected, or if you are the business owner, proof that you are registered as such with Companies House.

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 throughout our process. The form can be accessed [online](#). Once completed, submit this with your application.

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 27 November 2022**.

Please email your completed application to appointment@optical.org.

If you have any questions, please email them to address above and we will aim to respond to you within 48 hours. You may also contact us by telephone on 0207 307 3934.

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, statement and EDI form (by email) and check it for completeness and eligibility.
- The selection panels for these appointments will be comprised of¹:
 - Clare Minchington (Audit, Risk and Finance Committee Chair)
 - Deidre McAree (Companies Committee member)
 - Nigel Sully (Independent member).
- The selection panel will rely only on the information you provide in your CV and statement and whether you have demonstrated that you meet the 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 selection panel for consideration. In this event, you should be aware that your application might not be considered in full by all selection panel members.
- **Candidates shortlisted for interview will be notified in the week commencing Monday 12 December 2022.**
- We will respond to you before the Christmas holidays with the outcome of your application. 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 the week commencing Monday 16 January 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.
- If invited to interview, the selection panel will question you about your experience and expertise and ask specific questions to find out whether you meet the selection criteria.

¹ Please note the panel may change depending on panellists availability

- Written references from two referees and other due diligence checks (including Google/LinkedIn/Facebook searches, director/trustee checks) will be undertaken after a successful 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 the end of January 2023.
- On appointment, you will receive further information about training and induction.

Equal Opportunities and Accessibility

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

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, from all 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 an EDI monitoring form which is submitted online.

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 [EDI monitoring report](#). Our approach to monitoring can be viewed on our [website](#).

Access Requirements

We are committed to equality in the workplace. As a Disability Confident organisation, we are committed to playing a leading role in changing attitudes for the better. We are changing behaviour and cultures in our own business, in our networks and our communities, and ensuring we have robust inclusive recruitment practices. This ensures that we draw from the widest possible pool of talent, secure high-quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard working as well as improve employee morale and commitment by demonstrating that we treat all employees fairly. This commitment extends to our recruitment activity for Council and committee members, and any application would be considered in line with our Disability Confident commitments.

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 3934 or governance@optical.org. If you would like more information on reasonable adjustments [you can read more on the Government website](#).

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 and in accordance with our [Member Appointments Guidance](#) which will be applied consistently to all applicants. However, if you have a complaint about the process used in this recruitment campaign, please refer to our [Corporate Complaints 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.

You can raise your concern by email (appointment@optical.org) or telephone 020 7580 3898).

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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)