

The University of Manchester
GOC FULL APPROVAL QUALITY ASSURANCE VISIT
BSc (Hons) Optometry and MSci (Hons) Optometry
24, 25, and 26 October 2023

Report confirmed by GOC	24 January 2024
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PART 1 – VISIT DETAILS

1.2 Programme details	
Programme title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSc (Hons) Optometry. • MSci (Hons) Optometry.
Programme description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BSc (Hons) Optometry programme is a three-year, full-time programme that adheres to the standard academic year. Upon successful completion of the programme students are able to progress onto the Scheme for Registration delivered by the College of Optometrists (CoO). The CoO is responsible for the clinical placement, all stage two competencies, and the qualifying examinations. • The MSci (Hons) Optometry programme is a four-year, full-time programme. Students wishing to take the MSci programme apply during the second year of the BSc programme, and the successful applicants commence the MSci programme in Year 3 of their studies. Year 3 of both programmes are the same aside from 10 credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSc students take a general research methods course (Evidence Based Optometric Practice). • MSci students focus on an advanced Glaucoma unit which is co-taught with postgraduate optometry/ophthalmology Continuing Professional Development (CPD) candidates. • In Year 4 of the MSci programme, students complete their pre-registration placements which are organised by the University of Manchester. • The MSci (Hons) optometry is a full route to registration. • This is the first time that both programmes have been considered at the same GOC quality assurance visit. This approach was proposed at the last GOC visit to the MSci programme on 23 and 24 June 2020, with the objective of ensuring an adequate number of days to review both programmes.
Current approval status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully approved (FA)
Approved student numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BSc (years 1-3) has a cohort cap of 100 per annum. The MSci (year 4) has a cohort cap of 12 per annum.

1.3 GOC Education Visitor Panel (EVP)	
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carl Stychin, Lay Chair.
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brendan Barrett, Optometrist. • Brian McCotter, Optometrist. • Graeme Stevenson, Dispensing Optician and Contact Lens Optician.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Fishburne, Lay member.
GOC representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaun de Riggs, Education Operations Officer.
Observers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate Furniss, Operations Manager (Education and CPD)

1.4 Purpose of the visit

Visit type	FULL APPROVAL QUALITY ASSURANCE VISIT
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The purpose of this full approval quality assurance visit was to:

1. Review the University of Manchester's (University) BSc & MSci (Hons) Optometry programmes (the programmes) to ensure they meet the requirements as listed in the *GOC's Temporary Accreditation and Quality Assurance Handbook: Routes to Registration in Optometry 2020* (handbook) and the *GOC Education A&QA-Supplementary Document-List of Optometry Requirements* (list of requirements).
2. Consider whether the programmes sufficiently meet the GOC's requirements to be granted continued full approval and make a recommendation to the executive on approval status.
3. Review the status of the outstanding condition set at the full approval quality assurance visit in June 2020.

1.5 Programme history		
Date	Event type	Overview
21 and 22 November 2018	Visit	GOC quality assurance visit to the BSc (Hons) Optometry programme.
23 and 24 June 2020		GOC quality assurance visit to the MSci (Hons) Optometry.
12/04/2023	Event	Observation of practical examinations (clinical management exam, and primary care exam) for the programme was undertaken by an Optometrist EVP member. An observation report for this visit was written and shared with the Education Visitor Panel.
April 2023 to May 2023	Event	Five practice placements visits for the programme took place on 25 April 2023, 4 May 2023, 18 May 2023, 23 May 2023, and 25 May 2023 by two Optometrist EVP members. Observation reports for these visits were written and shared with the Education Visitor Panel.
29/06/2023	Event	Observation of the Exam Board for the programme was undertaken by the Lay Chair. An observation report for this event was written and shared with the Education Visitor Panel.
29/08/2023	Event	Observation of the OSCEs for the programme was undertaken by the Dispensing Optician and Contact Lens Optician EVP member, and an Optometrist EVP member. Observation reports for this event were written and shared with the Education Visitor Panel.

PART 2 – VISIT SUMMARY

2.1 Visit outcomes	
The EVP is satisfied that the University of Manchester’s BSc (Hons) Optometry and MSci (Hons) Optometry programme should continue to be fully approved. The panel set two new conditions, provided four recommendations and offered three commendations.	
Summary of recommendations to the GOC	
Previous conditions – met/unmet	Two previous conditions are MET . Details regarding the previous condition is set out in section 2.2 .
New conditions	Two new conditions are set. Details regarding the conditions are set out in Part 3 .
New recommendations	Four recommendations are offered. Details regarding the recommendations are set out in Part 3 .
Commendations	Three commendations are offered. Details regarding the commendations are set out in Part 3 .
Actual student numbers	2022/23: Year 1: 93 (BSc) Year 2: 120 (BSc) Year 3: 91 (BSc & MSci) Year 4: 5 (MSci)
Approval status	The programmes remain fully approved.
Next visit	The programme, in its current form, is being taught out because UoM is intending to make a submission to the GOC for an adapted qualification (in line with the GOC’s new Education and Training Requirements – ETR) in 2024. During the transition period between two sets of GOC standards, another visit may be scheduled in line with the GOC’s current and / or future quality assurance policies, as deemed appropriate.
Factors to consider when scheduling next visit e.g., when students are in, hospital, audit etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should a further visit be scheduled, it should factor in the implementation of the GOC’s new ETRs. As well as the availability of students, placement providers, and external examiners.

2.2 Previous conditions		
The conditions listed below are extracted from the reports of the quality assurance visits that took place in November 2018 for the BSc (Hons) Optometry programme, and June 2020 for the MSci (Hons) Optometry programme.		
Requirement number	Condition number and description	Status
Page 21 of Optometry handbook (2015).	BSc (Hons) Optometry Condition 1 (November 2018): All supervisors, including those external to the University, must receive comprehensive guidance and training to ensure that they fully understand and comply with their responsibilities and obligations.	This condition was deemed MET by the GOC prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.

<p>Page 21 of Optometry handbook (2015).</p>	<p>BSc (Hons) Optometry Condition 2 (November 2018):</p> <p>Evidence of the governance in place to ensure in future that any clinical activity or element of practice-based learning is carried out under the supervision of a GOC registered and approved supervisor who meets GOC requirements.</p>	<p>This condition was deemed MET by the GOC prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.</p>
<p>Page 4 & 21 of Optometry handbook (2015).</p>	<p>BSc (Hons) Optometry Condition 3 (November 2018):</p> <p>Evidence that all students undertaking any training or assessment are registered with the GOC – and that the governance of this process is adequate and completed in a timely manner, including prior to graduation.</p>	<p>This condition was deemed MET by the GOC prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.</p>
<p>OP2.13 OP3.4 OP3.5 OP3.6 OP4.4 OP5.10 OP5.11</p>	<p>MSci (Hons) Optometry Condition 1 (June 2020):</p> <p>A comprehensive placement supervisor handbook containing guidance on roles and responsibilities, with particular emphasis on the sign-off of core competencies must be submitted.</p>	<p>This condition was deemed MET by the GOC prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.</p>
<p>OP2.13 OP3.4 OP3.5 OP3.6 OP4.4 OP5.10 OP5.11</p>	<p>MSci (Hons) Optometry Condition 2 (June 2020):</p> <p>Training, that contains an explanation of roles and responsibilities and the signing-off of core competencies, must be delivered to all placement supervisors</p>	<p>This condition was deemed as MET by the EVP at this visit.</p>
<p>OP2.13 OP3.4 OP3.5 OP3.6 OP4.4 OP5.10 OP5.11</p>	<p>MSci (Hons) Optometry Condition 3 (June 2020):</p> <p>A robust governance mechanism that identifies the potential risks that may affect the quality of the programme and the areas that require development must be implemented and evidenced.</p>	<p>This condition was deemed MET by the GOC prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.</p>
<p>OP2.13 OP3.4 OP3.5 OP3.6 OP4.4 OP5.10 OP5.11</p>	<p>MSci (Hons) Optometry Condition 4 (June 2020):</p> <p>The programme team must submit signed contracts with the placement providers.</p>	<p>This condition was deemed MET by the executive prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.</p>
<p>OP5.4 OP5.7</p>	<p>MSci (Hons) Optometry Condition 5 (June 2020):</p> <p>The external examiners must be given the opportunity to provide the required oversight on</p>	<p>This condition was deemed MET by the EVP at this visit.</p>

	both the professional and academic requirements of the programme.	
OP5.4 OP5.7	MSci (Hons) Optometry Condition 6 (June 2020): The external examiners must be provided with bespoke induction and training that focuses on the specific needs and requirements of the programme.	This condition was deemed MET by the executive prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.

2.3 Previous recommendations	
The recommendations listed below are extracted from the reports of the quality assurance visits that took place in November 2018 for the BSc (Hons) Optometry programme, and June 2020 for the MSci (Hons) Optometry programme.	
Description	Comments
BSc (Hons) Optometry 1. The Division of Pharmacy and Optometry should find ways of addressing the concerns raised on numerous occasions by different external examiners, some members of the academic staff, and discussed by the Panel in connection with the University's policy in relation to compensation on failed units.	The EVP did not identify any issues of concern regarding this recommendation at this visit.
MSci (Hons) Optometry 2. Panel discussions highlighted the need for comprehensive, written communication, guidance, and support to be provided to students before commencing the final year to give clarity on all on aspects of placements, including student roles and responsibilities, student/supervisor roles and relationships, using SharePoint and other data systems, recording patient episodes and competency assessment, and developing the research project.	The EVP did not identify any issues of concern regarding this recommendation at this visit.
MSci (Hons) Optometry 3. Assessment methods must be in line with current practice and routinely monitored, quality assured and developed.	The EVP did not identify any issues of concern regarding this recommendation at this visit.
MSci (Hons) Optometry 4. The provider must have a clear framework for obtaining feedback on programme quality from a variety of sources including patients, students, staff, supervisors, and employers. The views of external stakeholders must inform the future development of programme design, content, and delivery.	The EVP did not identify any issues of concern regarding this recommendation at this visit. However, please see recommendation 3 at Part 3 of this report.

2.4 Non-applicable requirements

The EVP recommends that some requirements be deemed fully or partially non-applicable to the **BSc (Hons) Optometry programme** at this stage due to its structure, level and the differing, but overlapping, roles and responsibilities of the College of Optometrists (CoO), for example: the University only provides evidence of competency in relation to GOC Stage 1 competencies of the route to registration.

The CoO is responsible for the GOC Stage 2 competencies during the clinical placement and ensuring all the elements of portfolio are completed under supervision. Therefore, the panel recommends that the following requirements be deemed non-applicable to the BSc (Hons) Optometry programme:

OP6.14	Upon completion of the pre-registration placement, the provider must inform the GOC that the student has achieved professional competence at Stage 2 so as to allow them to apply for entry to the GOC Register of Optometrists.
OP6.15	Students must be assessed as competent against each of the Stage 2 GOC Core Competencies.
OP6.16	Students must acquire the minimum amount of patient experience within each patient category (Appendix F).
OP6.17	Students must hold certified portfolios containing a record of both their patient experience and achievement of all core competency elements.
OP6.18	The portfolio must include evidence of how and when each individual element of competence was achieved by the individual student.
OP6.19	The portfolio must contain a case record for each individual patient episode contributing to the minimum requirements.
OP6.20	The portfolio must include evidence of the development of the student's professional judgement through critical thinking and reflection.

PART 3 – CONDITIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & COMMENDATIONS

Conditions are applied to training and assessment providers if there is evidence that the GOC requirements are not met.

Recommendations indicate enhancements that can be made to a programme, these may not be directly linked to compliance with GOC requirements.

3.1 Conditions set at this visit

The unmet requirements for this visit are set out below along with the conditions that are required to meet the requirements.

OP3.7	The provider must ensure students receive comprehensive guidance and support throughout any periods of practice-based learning.
Condition 1 MSci programme only	The panel requires that the provider produce a separate student handbook for the fourth year of the MSci (Hons) programme. This should include and articulate the relevant and appropriate responsibilities, expectations, protocols, points of contact, accountabilities, assessment, and final examination information.
Date due	Thursday 28 March 2024
Rationale	<p>During practice visit observations undertaken by the EVP and the meeting with students during the visit, the EVP were informed that they were lacking some key information pertaining to the MSci (Hons) programme. Furthermore, during a meeting with programme staff, the EVP were informed that there was not a separate student handbook for MSci students.</p> <p>In order to ensure that students receive comprehensive guidance and support throughout any periods of practice-based learning, the provider is required to produce a separate handbook for the fourth year of the MSci (Hons) programme to the GOC as evidence by Thursday 28 March 2024.</p>

OP5.4	The external examiners' remit must include all the professional requirements of the programme including any clinical portfolios.
Condition 2 BSc and MSci programmes	The Panel requires that the provider ensures that the external examiners are fully involved in the oversight of the professional requirements of both the BSc (Hons) and MSci (Hons) Optometry programmes.
Date due	31 January 2024
Rationale	<p>Whilst there was some evidence that the external examiners had some awareness of the professional requirements of the BSc (Hons) and MSci (Hons) programmes, the EVP were advised during the meeting with them that they had not been asked to comment on the clinical logbooks.</p> <p>In order to ensure that the external examiners' remit includes all of the professional requirements of the programme, including any clinical portfolios, the provider is required to confirm to the GOC by 31 January 2024 that external examiners are fully involved in the oversight of the</p>

	professional requirements of both the BSc (Hons) and MSci (Hons) Optometry programmes.
3.2 Recommendations offered at this visit	
The EVP offers the following recommendations to the provider.	
OP2.13	The provider must have adequate resources for the appointment, training, and review of assessors and any management of them (e.g., lead assessors and the appointment of external examiners).
OP3.5	Providers must ensure that external practice providers are made aware of their responsibilities for creating the right environment for effective practice-based learning to take place.
OP3.6	The provider must ensure that supervisors receive comprehensive guidance and training to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities and obligations.
OP4.4	Those responsible for the assessment and signing off of core competencies must be suitably qualified and have the appropriate skills, experience and training required to undertake assessment (outlined in Appendix I).
Recommendation 1 BSc and MSci programmes	The Panel recommends that the provider offers more systematic feedback on performance to clinic supervisors.
Rationale	During the meeting with clinic supervisors, the EVP heard that there was not a formal process for the provision of feedback to Clinic Supervisors and that they would find this beneficial for their ongoing development and learning. The EVP deemed that the implementation of a systematic feedback on performance to clinic supervisors would facilitate their ongoing training and development.

OP2.13	The provider must have adequate resources for the appointment, training, and review of assessors and any management of them (e.g., lead assessors and the appointment of external examiners).
OP3.5	Providers must ensure that external practice providers are made aware of their responsibilities for creating the right environment for effective practice-based learning to take place.
OP3.6	The provider must ensure that supervisors receive comprehensive guidance and training to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities and obligations.
OP4.4	Those responsible for the assessment and signing off of core competencies must be suitably qualified and have the appropriate skills, experience and training required to undertake assessment (outlined in Appendix I).
Recommendation 2 MSci programme only	The Panel recommends the provider institutes an annual programme of formalised and mandatory training (induction and refresher) for placement supervisors (MSci).

Rationale	During the meeting with placement supervisors, the EVP heard that there was not a formal induction or refresher training programme for placement supervisors. The EVP deemed that the institution of formalised and mandatory training (induction and refresher) would facilitate supervisors receiving comprehensive guidance and training to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities and obligations, and have the appropriate skills, experience and training required to undertake assessment.
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OP5.1	The provider must have a clear framework for obtaining feedback on programme quality from a variety of sources including patients, students, staff, supervisors, and employers.
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OP5.2	The views of external stakeholders must inform the future development of programme design, content, and delivery.
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Recommendation 3 BSc and MSci Programmes	The Panel recommends that the provider strengthen mechanisms for the provision of feedback from both patients and placement providers.
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Rationale	During the meeting with teaching staff, the EVP heard that patient involvement for both the BSc and MSci programmes had diminished subsequent to the impact and disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, during the meeting with placement providers, the EVP heard that the placement providers would welcome structured opportunities that enable them to provide formal feedback to the provider. The EVP deemed that the strengthening of mechanisms for the provision of feedback, including from both patients and placement providers, would facilitate the future development of programme design, content, and delivery for the BSc and MSci courses.
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OP5.6	The provider must have an effective mechanism to enable the monitoring and evaluation of assessments to ensure appropriate standards are maintained.
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Recommendation 4 BSc and MSci Programmes	The Panel recommends that the provider ensures that external examiners have sufficient time to review the quality and standards of assessments.
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Rationale	In the pre-visit documentation reviewed by the EVP before the visit, and during the meeting with external examiners during the visit, the EVP read and subsequently heard that there were occasions when the external examiners were not afforded adequate time to review assessment materials that had been sent to them by the provider. The EVP deemed that ensuring that external examiners have sufficient time to review the quality and standards of assessments would facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of assessments to ensure that appropriate standards are maintained.
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3.3 Commendations made at this visit

The EVP wishes to commend the provider for:

- The programme of multi-disciplinary learning activities offered to students on both the BSc (Hons) Optometry and MSci (Hons) Optometry courses.
- The strong relationship and quality of placement experience that the students receive at the Manchester Royal Eye Hospital on both the BSc (Hons) Optometry and MSci (Hons) Optometry courses.
- The quality of placement providers and the experience offered to students on the MSci (Hons) Optometry course.