Careers in non-medical eyecare professions

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Eyecare professionals

OPHTHALMOLOGIST
OPTOMETRIST
ORTHOPTIST
OPHTHALMIC NURSE
DISPENSING OPTICIAN
OPTICAL TECHNICIAN
OPTICAL ASSISTANT
Vision Sciences at GCU

BSc(Hons) Optometry
BSc(Hons) Orthoptics
BSc Ophthalmic Dispensing

Only provider of vocational non-medical eyecare programmes in Scotland

Only UK institution offering all three programmes
BSc(Hons) Optometry
BSc(Hons) Optometry

Optometrists:
Detect and manage sight problems and eye disorders
Prescribe and dispense spectacles, contact lenses and other visual aids
Can undertake further training to become “independent prescribers”
Careers in optometry

Excellent job prospects
Community (“high street”) practice
• Independent practice
• Multiple group (e.g. Specsavers, Boots, Vision Express, Optical Express)
Hospital
Academic and research

Salary
Around £25k-£28k on qualification, rising to £36k-£50k after 5-10 years
(practice owners may earn considerably more)
BSc(Hons) Optometry

Four year degree programme
Highly vocational
Clinical training from Year 1
• On-campus Vision Centre (eye clinic)
• Provides access to specialist clinical services, e.g.
  • Paediatrics
  • Additional support needs
  • Visual stress
  • Contact Lenses
• Hospital placements during final year
Qualifying as an optometrist

After completing an Optometry degree, graduates must undertake a one-year supervised “pre-registration” period.

This allows registration with the General Optical Council as an optometrist.
BSc(Hons) Optometry

Highers: AABBB (Must include Maths, English and 2 sciences)
Physics at least at National 5 (A)
Advanced Highers considered
Relevant work experience is highly desirable
Is optometry for me?

Enjoy maths, physics and biology?
Enjoy problem solving?
Good attention to detail?
Enjoy meeting new people (all ages and backgrounds)?
Well organised?
Professionally minded?
Enjoy learning?
BSc(Hons) Orthoptics
BSc(Hons) Orthoptics

Orthoptists:
Diagnose and manage range of eye conditions
Paediatric work focused on strabismus ("squint") and amblyopia ("lazy eye")
Rehabilitation of older patients with stroke and other neurological conditions
Primarily employed within NHS
Work within a team
Careers in orthoptics

Excellent employment prospects
Opportunities mainly in NHS, working as part of team with ophthalmologists/optometrists/nurses/neurologists/other health professionals
Internationally recognised qualification

Salary
Starting at NHS Band 5 (£22k-£28k), rising to NHS Band 7 with experience/specialisation (£31k-£41k)
BSc(Hons) Orthoptics

Four year degree programme
Highly vocational
Small programme
• 12-15 students in each year group
Co-teaching with other Vision programmes
Hospital placements from first trimester of Year 1
• Opportunities across UK and beyond

Registerable degree, i.e. no pre-registration year after graduation
(Orthoptists regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council)
BSc(Hons) Orthoptics

Highers: BBBBC (Must include 2 sciences)
Maths, English and Physics at least at National 5 (B)
Advanced Highers considered
Work experience essential (interested applicants should contact local hospital eye department)
Is orthoptics for me?

Enjoy maths, physics and biology?
Enjoy meeting new people, especially children and older adults?
Enjoy working as part of a team?
Enjoy problem solving?
BSc Ophthalmic Dispensing
BSc Ophthalmic Dispensing

Dispensing opticians:
Fit and supply spectacles
Manage optical practices
May expand into contact lens fitting and supply of specialist optical appliances ("low vision" aids)
May own a practice
Careers as a dispensing optician

Good employment prospects
Community ("high street") practice
• Independent Practice
• Multiple group (e.g. Specsavers, Boots, Vision Express, Optical Express)

Industry
Management (Optical and other)

Salary
• Starting salary £14k-£18k, rising to ~£25k with experience
• Managers/specialists salary range £25k-£35k
• Practice owners can earn considerably more
BSc Ophthalmic Dispensing

Three year foundation degree
Highly vocational
• On-campus Vision Centre
• Off-campus placements

After completing a degree, graduates must undertake a one-year supervised “pre-registration” period (this may be undertaken part-time alongside degree)
This allows registration with the General Optical Council as a dispensing optician
BSc Ophthalmic Dispensing

Highers: BBC (Must include one science)
Maths, English and Physics at least at National 5 (C)
Work experience desirable
Is ophthalmic dispensing for me?

Enjoy science?
Enjoy business studies?
Good attention to detail?
Well organised?
Enjoy meeting new people (all ages and backgrounds)?
Like to lead a team?