



End-point assessment plan for Dispensing optician apprenticeship standard

Apprenticeship standard number	Level of this end-point assessment (EPA)	Integrated
ST0774	6	Statutory integrated

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Introduction and overview

Dispensing opticians are subject to statutory regulation by the General Optical Council (GOC). The GOC sets the standards of proficiency required for entry to the professional register and these are the occupational standards for registered Dispensing opticians. The GOC also has the statutory duty to set the requirements of programmes necessary to support the achievement of the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) set out in the standards of proficiency and the KSBs in the occupational standard. The apprenticeship standard and the delivery of the apprentices training must be aligned to all relevant GOC standards to ensure that apprentices are eligible for entry to the GOC register on completion. It is against the law for anyone to work as a Dispensing optician without being registered with the GOC. The end-point assessment (EPA) assesses whether apprentices have also passed the apprenticeship and is based on the same professional knowledge, skills and behaviours as the occupational standard.

This document sets out the requirements for EPA for the Dispensing optician statutory integrated apprenticeship standard. It is for the end-point assessment organisations (EPAO) that must be a GOC Approved Awarding Body, who need to know how EPA for this apprenticeship must operate. It will also be of interest to apprentices, their employers and GOC Approved Awarding Body.

Apprentices will typically spend 36 months on-programme working towards the occupational standard.

The EPA period should only start, and the EPA be arranged, once the employer and GOC Approved Awarding Body are satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard and all of the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met. It is expected that the gateway will be reached on completion of all qualification modules of a qualification approved by the GOC to enable professional registration with GOC as a Dispensing optician.

The EPA period is expected to typically last 1 month beginning when the apprentice has passed the EPA gateway.

The EPA will determine the overall apprenticeship standard and grades of:

- fail
- pass

This apprenticeship has a statutory integrated EPA. The EPA will use the assessment arrangements in use for other entry routes into this occupation and will be completed simultaneously, as outlined in this EPA plan. Alignment of the integrated EPA is permitted because the following criteria are met:

1. the occupation (profession) must be regulated by a statutory regulator that carries out a range of functions in relation to the occupations they regulate, including making sure individuals have the necessary qualifications and/or experience to practice the occupation and taking any necessary enforcement action
2. the occupational standard and statutory integrated EPA meet the apprenticeship requirements

EPA summary table

On-programme (typically, 36 months)	Training to develop the occupation standards knowledge, skills and behaviours (aligned to the GOC Requirements for Approved Qualifications in Optometry or Dispensing Optics March 2021)
End-point assessment gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprentice has met the knowledge, skills and behaviours • Employer and GOC Approved Awarding Body are satisfied the apprentice has consistently demonstrated they meet the KSBs of the occupational standard • Achieved English and maths qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules. • Completed the required modules, taking into account any recognition of prior learning (RPL) of the following approved qualification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A qualification approved by the GOC to enable professional registration with GOC as a Dispensing optician • Completed the pre-qualifying period (PQP) portfolio and it is signed-off by their practice and academic assessor • Successfully completed the practice visit
End-point assessment (which would typically take place within 1 month)	<p>The EPA consists of the assessment unit. The apprentice is not required to carry out any additional assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The apprentice must pass the assessment unit <p>The Approved Awarding Body submits the required documentation to GOC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notice of the decision of pass or fail <p>The apprentice must notify the GOC to update their registration from student to fully qualified once notified by the awarding body</p>
Professional recognition	<p>Registration with:</p> <p>General Optical Council (GOC)</p>

Gateway

The EPA period should only start once the employer and GOC course provider are satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard.

The EPA starts with the examination board (HEI) or Awarding Body/ training provider external quality assurance scrutiny of claimed certificates and finishes when GOC recognised provider:

- makes a decision on pass or fail.
- the Approved Education Provider emails a secure pass list to GOC which includes required personal details of apprentices who have received a pass

The apprentice must have completed the following gateway requirements prior to beginning their EPA:

- Achieved English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.
- Completed all required modules, taking into account any recognition of prior learning (RPL) of the following approved qualification:
 - A qualification approved by the GOC to enable professional registration with GOC as a Dispensing optician

The apprentice will also have successfully completed a pre-qualifying period (PQP) portfolio and this will have been signed off by their practice and academic assessor, as well as successfully meeting the requirements of the practice visit signed off by an independent assessor.

The apprentice separately applies for full registration once they have achieved a pass.

EPA

The EPA is:

The statutory process aligned with the regulator's requirements and must have an external examiner present when considering achievement of the GOC recognised Dispensing opticians qualification or programme or confirmation of achievement through external quality assurance undertaken by an Awarding Body in line with a GOC recognised qualification or programme.

The EPA starts with the examination board (HEI) and finishes when the recognised course provider sends the certified list of apprentices to the GOC. The apprentice is not required to carry out any additional assessments.

or

The EPA starts with the Awarding Body / training provider external quality assurance scrutiny of claimed qualification or programme and finishes when the recognised course provider sends the certified list of apprentices to the GOC. The apprentice is not required to carry out any additional assessments.

Independence of the EPA will be assured through:

- the examination board, which will include an external and appropriately qualified person or organisation, that is not an employee of the course provider and has no involvement with the pre-registration apprentice in their day-to-day work being responsible for the final decision on the GOC approved Dispensing optician qualification or programme and confirms the apprentice has met the education outcomes required for registration with the GOC or the end-point assessment organisation which will conduct the EPA in line with quality assurance processes associated with a recognised qualification accepted for registration with the GOC;

or

- confirmation of achievement through external quality assurer scrutiny of claimed certificates from the Awarding Body in line with a GOC recognised qualification or programme

Grading

Name of grade	Grade descriptor
Pass	Has met the GOC Requirements for Approved Qualifications in Optometry or Dispensing Optics March 2021
Fail	Does not meet the GOC Requirements for Approved Qualifications in Optometry or Dispensing Optics March 2021

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Apprentice	<p>As a minimum, the apprentice should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete the constituent parts of the programme successfully • meet all apprenticeship gateway requirements • understand the structure and requirements of the apprenticeship
Employer	<p>As a minimum, the employer should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the apprentice to achieve the KSBs outlined in the occupational standard • determine when the apprentice is working at or above the level of occupational competence outlined in the occupational standard and has met all apprenticeship gateway requirements, taking account of the advice of the GOC Approved Awarding Body
The EPAO (GOC Approved Awarding Body)	<p>As a minimum the EPAO (GOC Approved Awarding Body) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be a GOC Approved Awarding Body for the Dispensing optician apprenticeship • conform to the requirements of the apprenticeship providers and assessment register (APAR) • work with the employer to ensure that the apprentice is given opportunities to develop the KSBs outlined in the occupational standard and monitor their progress during the on-programme period • confirm to the employer that gateway requirements have been met • offer a qualification approved by the GOC to enable professional registration with GOC as a Dispensing optician • use appropriate recording documentation to ensure a clear and auditable mechanism for recording the decisions • maintain robust internal quality assurance (IQA) procedures and processes, and conduct these on a regular basis • conform to the requirements of the nominated external quality assurance body • conduct standardisation events and activities in accordance with GOC and external quality assurance (EQA) providers requirements • have and operate, an appeals process

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrange for apprenticeship certification
Independent Assessor	<p>Independent Assessor who as a minimum should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the occupational standard and end-point assessment plan • be a Dispensing optician • comply to the requirements of the EPAO (GOC Approved Awarding Body) • be independent of the apprentice, and the employing organisation who are involved in delivering the apprenticeship • not have been involved in the teaching or on-programme assessment of the apprentice

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance refers to the requirements that EPAO's must have in place to ensure consistent (reliable) and accurate (valid) assessment decisions. EPAO's for this EPA must:

- appoint independent assessors who:
 - are occupationally competent across the whole occupational standard i.e. a General Optical Council registrant with appropriate post registration experience and up-to-date continuing professional development
 - meet the EQA provider's recommendations for external examiners or external quality assurer scrutiny of claimed certificates for the Awarding Body

Re-sits and re-takes

In-line with the EPAOs (GOC Approved Awarding Body) procedures.

Professional body recognition

This apprenticeship is aligned to the GOC Requirements for Approved Qualifications in Optometry or Dispensing Optics March 2021. This means that those who successfully complete the apprenticeship will be eligible to apply for registration with the GOC.

Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO (GOC Approved Awarding Body) must have in place clear and fair arrangements for making reasonable adjustments for this apprenticeship standard. This should include how an apprentice qualifies for reasonable adjustments and what reasonable adjustments will be made. The adjustments must maintain the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment decisions outlined in this EPA plan.