

GUIDANCE NOTES

FOR OPHTHALMIC SCIENCE PRACTITIONERS ON SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION

Applications

All applications must be made on the recognised VRC form. Applications can be hand written or typed. All forms should be completed in black ink and must be legible.

Once you have completed your application form submit two copies with a cheque for the non-refundable registration fee of £45.00 by post.

Submissions by email will not be accepted.

It is recommended that you keep a copy of the form for your own records.

Content of the Application

The application and report is a record of training gained to demonstrate the attainment of personal competence across a range of activities which relate to the sections of the written report (see below). It does NOT refer to the activities of an individual section, department or organisation

Processing

The VRC meets monthly. The time it takes to process each application is dependent upon the number of applications received. It is not possible to acknowledge receipt of applications.

All general enquiries should be directed to the VRC Registrar (or EBS?).

Routes to Registration

The process of registration is designed to protect the public such that registered practitioners have relevant academic qualifications and have attained a recognised level of competence. There are currently three main routes of entry to the voluntary register:

- **Direct entry** - Completion of the Foundation Degree Ophthalmic Science & Technology or BSc Ophthalmic Science & Technology plus one year pre-registration experience.

- **Alternative Entry** – Entry route for those candidates who have different qualifications and experience but who have not completed the Foundation Degree in “Ophthalmic Science & Technology”, e.g. applicants with overseas qualifications and/or experience.
- **Grand-parenting** – A minimum of six years training and experience with evidence provided to support competent practice. A first Degree in a relevant subject area and two years training and experience with evidence provided to support competent practice. A HND in a relevant subject area and two years training and experience with evidence provided to support competent practice. ONC/D/BTEC and four years training and experience with evidence provided to support competent practice.

This may or may not include the attainment of academic qualifications and/or professional body exams.

As the process of voluntary registration evolves, it is necessary to modify the guidance notes, which must be read in order to ensure that your application fulfils the requirements. It is necessary to fill out the application form as fully as possible to prevent delays in processing.

Personal Details ⁽¹⁾

Insert the title by which you are normally addressed (i.e. Mr, Mrs., Miss, and Ms etc). Insert a previous surname if your professional qualification certificates are under a different name.

The **address for correspondence** ⁽²⁾ will be the one published in the Voluntary Register and should, where possible, be your work address as the information will be in the public domain. The Council must be informed of any change of address.

Modality applied for ⁽³⁾:

In which discipline are you employed e.g. Ophthalmic Science Practitioner

Relevant educational qualifications ⁽⁴⁾

Documentary proof in the form of photocopies of certificates must be provided. If these cannot be supplied evidence of why they are not available should be submitted e.g. written statement from an examination awarding body, professional body or employer.

Relevant educational qualifications includes HNC, HND, BSc etc If you have no such qualifications you will need to record qualifications obtained at school/sixth form college e.g. O levels, GCSE, A levels etc.

Relevant professional examinations ⁽⁵⁾, including management, teaching and other qualifications may also be included.

Membership of Professional Bodies ⁽⁶⁾

It is not a mandatory requirement to belong to a professional body however for the profession to be accepted by the Health Professions Council at least 25% of its

members must belong to a professional body i.e. AOSP. You may apply through the Association of Ophthalmic Science Practitioners www.aosp.org.uk .

(Membership of Professional Bodies⁽⁷⁾ is not mandatory and does not need to be completed. It will however, provide information on how many registrants are not members of a recognised professional body and may be useful for future communication strategies.)

Articles and Publications⁽⁷⁾

Complete this section on a separate sheet and include any articles written for professional body journal or other journals, as well as published abstracts, from poster or oral presentations at meetings from the last 5 years.

Other Information⁽⁸⁾

You may include any other information that you wish to draw to the attention of the Council. This may include involvement with your professional body, activities undertaken within a health region/area or within your hospital, for example training/teaching experience. Only include relevant information from the last 5 years.

Previous positions⁽⁹⁾

Please indicate any periods of employment and career breaks or other periods of absence greater than one (?) month in this section of your application. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

If you have been working for less than two years following a career break of greater than five years you will need to supply evidence of re-training and subsequent re-assessment. It is not necessary to send copies of in house documentation. Details should be included in your report in the section that describes your training and experience as a Ophthalmic Science Practitioner. Your referee(s) should confirm re-training and competence to practice after return to work from a break in service.

Details of Training Received⁽¹⁰⁾

Professional Meetings attended and CPD activity undertaken⁽¹¹⁾

The Written Report⁽¹²⁾

It should be written using the stated headings to establish your competence in each of the areas listed on the application form.

- a) **Technical:** Performing a range of duties to administer the technical process and/or manage such processes. This would include analytical and preparative experience, use and optimisation of equipment, maintaining health and safety, working to AOSP Standards and Professional Guidelines. Perform a range of technical procedures including information regarding specialist procedures. Also include implementation of new procedures, procedure testing, research and development.

- b) **Clinical:** Demonstrate a basic understanding of ophthalmology, ophthalmic science, and pathology affecting the eye and ocular adnexae and reasons for investigating; this may be practice specific.
- c) **Communication** with scientific and managerial staff and use of information technology, accurate transcription and data entry. This will include any form of communication related to your work such as meetings, seminars, conferences and day to day liaising with colleagues and co-workers. You may include a list of posters, articles and presentations. Accurate transcription and data entry would include booking in samples into computer databases and/or handwritten transcription.
- d) **Managing** and planning your work activity and/or the work activity of others.
- e) **Teaching** and training.
Teaching and training can be discipline specific or the teaching and training of other health care professionals or lay public.

Reference ⁽¹³⁾

Your Head of Department should provide a written reference. However, if you are applying via the Grand-parenting route, it is also required that at least one reference should be from a person who is already bound by statutory regulation of practice. Please be aware if your Head of Department is not a registered practitioner you should supply a second reference from someone who has a good knowledge of your training and experience and who is either already on another state register, *e.g. your lead clinician or clinical director*.

If you have recently changed posts you will be required to supply a reference from your previous employer.

References must be on official headed paper (i.e. NHS, local Authority, etc) and signed.

Declaration ⁽¹⁴⁾

Appendix 1

CRITERIA FOR ENTRY TO THE REGISTER

1. Evidence of satisfactory assessment of competence, which will normally be carried out by an appropriate professional body acceptable to the Council, to a level determined by the Council

And

2. Satisfactory completion of Ophthalmic Science Practitioners “Education Requirement” in a trainee post or equivalent appointment approved by the Council and relevant experience in an appropriate post which, added to the training period, amounts to not less than four years experience

Or

Six or more years experience relevant to the work of an Ophthalmic Science Practitioner

And

3. Assessment of suitability for registration

And

4. Provision of a written undertaking to observe a high standard of professional conduct

And

5. A declaration of support for the Registration Council which is responsible for the register of Ophthalmic Science Practitioners.

Those individuals that are practising as Ophthalmic Science Practitioners but who do not fully meet the entry conditions for registration can be considered by the Council under grand-parenting arrangements. These individuals may be required to provide further information/evidence and/or to attend for an interview.

Checklist (please tick)

- 2 copies (total) of the application form
- Reference(s)
- Report
- Cheque
- Copies of professional certificates

It is recommended that you keep copies for your own records.

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