

University of the Highland and Islands

GOC PROVISIONAL APPROVAL QUALITY ASSURANCE VISIT

BSc (Hons) Optometry

28 and 29 September 2022

Report confirmed by GOC

14 April 2023

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PART 1 – VISIT DETAILS

1.1 Provider details	
Address	University of the Highlands and Islands Inverness College 1 Inverness Campus Inverness IV2 5NA

1.2 Programme details	
Programme title	BSc (Hons) Optometry
Programme description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time. • 4 years (40 hours per week). • Online study, face to face lectures, and practical skills sessions/problem-based learning. • Placement in community optometry in years one, two and three, and hospital optometry in year four of the programme.
Current approval status	Provisionally approved (PA)
Approved student numbers	<p>Approved student numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 students per cohort <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A maximum of 40 students at the Inverness campus and ○ A maximum of 20 students at the Moray campus <p>Current student numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 students in total across three cohorts of the programme.

1.3 GOC Education Visitor Panel (EVP)	
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vincent McKay – Lay Chair
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Chatham – Dispensing Optician and Contact Lens Optician. • Rebekah Stevens – Optometrist. • David Hill – Optometrist/Independent Prescriber. • Andy Husband – Lay Member.
GOC representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaun de Riggs – Approval and Quality Assurance Officer
Observers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

1.4 Purpose of the visit	
Visit type	PROVISIONAL APPROVAL QUALITY ASSURANCE VISIT
<p>The purpose of this provisional approval quality assurance visit (virtual) was to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. review UHI's Optometry programme to ensure it meets the requirements as listed in the GOC's <i>Optometry Handbook 2015</i> and the <i>GOC Education A&QA-Supplementary Documents-List of Requirements (Optometry)</i>. 2. consider whether the programme sufficiently meets the GOC's requirements for it to be granted continued provisional approval. 3. review whether the evidence submitted in support of conditions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 set at the last visit on 21 and 22 April 2022, is sufficient for these actions to be deemed met. 4. review UHI's preparedness for Year 3 of the programme. 	

1.5 Programme history		
Date	Event type	Overview
08/10/2019	Event	The Education Visitor Panel (EVP) recommended that UHI's Optometry programme should be granted provisional approval at the approval visit on 9 October 2019.
13/11/2019	Visit	Approval granted by the GOC at its Council meeting of 13 November 2019.
19/08/2020	Visit	The EVP recommended that the provisional approval of UHI's Optometry programme should continue.
22/04/2021	Visit	The EVP recommended that the provisional approval of UHI's Optometry programme should continue.
22/04/2022	Visit	The EVP recommended that the provisional approval of UHI's Optometry programme should continue.

PART 2 – VISIT SUMMARY

2.1 Visit outcomes	
The EVP recommended that provisional approval for UHI's BSc (Hons) Optometry programme should continue, setting three new conditions and one ongoing condition, providing two recommendations, and offering three commendations.	
Summary of recommendations to the GOC	
Previous conditions – met/unmet	<p>The EVP deemed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The previous conditions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 as MET. • The previous conditions 1, 2 and 3 that were deemed as met have now been superseded by three new conditions set at this visit. • The previous condition 4 is ongoing with UHI required to inform the GOC of a feasible deadline to provide an update regarding any relevant changes or developments to the proposed Moray campus. <p>Details regarding the previous conditions are set out in section 2.2.</p>
New conditions	<p>The EVP recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two requirements are deemed UNMET. • Three new conditions are set. • One condition is ongoing. <p>Details regarding the conditions are set out in Part 3.</p>
New recommendations	<p>The EVP recommends that two recommendations are offered.</p> <p>Details regarding the recommendations are set out in Part 3.</p>
Commendations	<p>The EVP offers three commendations.</p> <p>Details regarding the commendation(s) are set out in Part 3.</p>
Actual student numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 – 10 students. • Year 2 – 7 students. • Year 3 – 7 students.
Approval/next visit	<p>The next visit should be in-person and take place by October 2023</p>
Factors to consider when scheduling next visit e.g., when students are in, hospital, audit etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EVP met with a senior member of university staff and were reassured regarding the ongoing commitment to the programme for the foreseeable future. However, the GOC should continue to monitor student numbers on the programme and any potential impact this could have on the sustainability of the programme. • The next visit to the programme should be in person. This is to include physical viewing of the clinical facilities, and the observation of teaching.

2.2 Previous conditions		
The conditions listed below are extracted from the report of 21 and 22 April 2021.		
Requirement number	Condition number and description	Status
OP1.2	Condition 1 UHI to submit contextualised course materials for the Optometry programme - Year 2 Semester 1.	Based on the documentation that was provided to the GOC and subsequently reviewed by the EVP, the EVP deemed that this action set for the Year 2 Semester 1 contextualised materials had been MET .
OP1.2	Condition 2 UHI to submit contextualised course materials for the Optometry programme - Year 2 Semester 1.	Based on the documentation that was provided to the GOC and subsequently reviewed by the EVP, the EVP deemed that this action set for the Year 2 Semester 1 contextualised materials had been MET .
OP1.2	Condition 3 UHI to submit contextualised course materials for the Optometry programme - Year 2 Semester 2.	Based on the documentation that was provided to the GOC and subsequently reviewed by the EVP, the EVP deemed that this action set for the Year 2 Semester 2 contextualised materials had been MET .
OP2.1	Condition 4 UHI must provide appropriate and fit for purpose accommodation, clinic facilities and clinic equipment in academic and practice settings for the Moray campus.	UHI confirmed that the development and completion of the Moray campus had been postponed due to the impact and disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on this update provided by UHI to the GOC in March 2021 and the further discussions with UHI at the visit, the EVP deemed this action to be ongoing and requested that UHI inform the GOC of any changes and developments at the earliest opportunity.
OP2.12	Condition 5 UHI must evidence that it has established its own patient base for	Based on the documentation that was provided to the GOC and

	the Optometry programme and that is sufficient and appropriate to enable 9 students on the programme to gain the required level of exposure to achieve the GOC Core Competencies and patient experience requirements	subsequently reviewed by the EVP, and discussions during the Facilities and Resources meeting at the visit, the EVP deemed that this action had been MET .
OP2.17	Condition 6 There must be a suitably qualified and experienced technician in post to support the needs of the Optometry programme at both the Inverness and Moray campuses.	Based on the documentation that was provided to the GOC and subsequently reviewed by the EVP, and discussions during the Introduction and Facilities and Resources meetings at the visit, the EVP deemed that this action had been MET .
OP3.6	Condition 7 UHI must confirm the number of Supervisors who have completed the training in time for placement provision for 2021/2022.	Based on the documentation that was provided to the GOC and subsequently reviewed by the EVP, and discussions during the Introduction and Experiential and Practical Learning meetings at the visit, the EVP deemed that this action had been MET .
OP3.6	Condition 8 UHI must confirmation and evidence to the GOC that the Supervisor training for the Optometry programme is operational, and that the training and guidance is underway.	Based on the documentation that was provided to the GOC and subsequently reviewed by the EVP, and discussions during the Introduction and Experiential and Practical Learning meetings at the visit, the EVP deemed that this action had been MET .

2.3 Previous recommendations

The recommendations listed below are extracted from the report of 21 and 22 April 2021.

Description	Comments
UHI reviews the consistency and application, at all levels, of the moderation of assessment papers, anonymous marking, and the identification of plagiarism, to ensure these processes are fully aligned with UHI regulations.	The EVP did not identify any issues of concern regarding this recommendation at this visit.
All relevant and/or critical documentation for the Optometry programme has institutional oversight at UHI before being submitted to the GOC.	The EVP did not identify any issues of concern regarding this recommendation at this visit.

2.4 Non-applicable requirements

The EVP recommends that some requirements be deemed fully non-applicable to the programme at this stage due to its structure and level and the differing, but overlapping, roles and responsibilities of UHI and the College of Optometrists (CoO) for example:

- The programme is currently in Year 3 of the four-year BSc (Hons) Optometry course.
- The CoO is responsible for the clinical placement and ensuring all the elements of portfolio are completed under supervision.

OP6.7	Students must demonstrate that they have achieved a Certificate of Clinical Competence at Stage 1 in order to begin their external supervised pre-registration placement.
OP6.8	Students must have been taught and assessed as competent against each of the Stage 1 GOC Core Competencies.
OP6.9	Students must acquire the minimum amount of real patient experience with each patient group as per the competencies and patient experience requirements.
OP6.10	Students must hold certified portfolios containing a record of both their patient experience and achievement of all core competency elements.
OP6.11	The portfolio must include evidence of how and when each individual element of competence was achieved by the individual student.
OP6.12	The portfolio must contain a case record for each individual patient episode contributing to the minimum requirements.
OP6.13	The portfolio must include evidence of the development of the student's professional judgement through critical thinking and reflection.
OP6.7	Students must demonstrate that they have achieved a Certificate of Clinical Competence at Stage 1 in order to begin their external supervised pre-registration placement.
OP6.8	Students must have been taught and assessed as competent against each of the Stage 1 GOC Core Competencies.
OP6.9	Students must acquire the minimum amount of real patient experience with each patient group as per the competencies and patient experience requirements.
OP6.10	Students must hold certified portfolios containing a record of both their patient experience and achievement of all core competency elements.
OP6.11	The portfolio must include evidence of how and when each individual element of competence was achieved by the individual student.
OP6.12	The portfolio must contain a case record for each individual patient episode contributing to the minimum requirements.
OP6.13	The portfolio must include evidence of the development of the student's professional judgement through critical thinking and reflection.
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 (attached in 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.

OP1.2	The route to registration structure, content and learning outcomes must be designed to teach and assess the understanding, knowledge and skills contained within the GOC core competency and patient experience requirements.
Condition 1	UHI to submit contextualised course materials for the Optometry programme - Year 3 Semester 2.
Date due	25 November 2022 (submission received at the GOC by the deadline set and will be assessed by EVP in due course.)
OP1.2	The route to registration structure, content and learning outcomes must be designed to teach and assess the understanding, knowledge and skills contained within the GOC core competency and patient experience requirements.
Condition 2	UHI to submit contextualised course materials for the Optometry programme - Year 4 Semester 1.
Date due	1 June 2023
OP1.2	The route to registration structure, content and learning outcomes must be designed to teach and assess the understanding, knowledge and skills contained within the GOC core competency and patient experience requirements.
Condition 3	UHI to submit contextualised course materials for the Optometry programme - Year 4 Semester 2.
Date Due	1 October 2023
Rationale	<p>During the Programme Design and Construction meeting at the visit, the EVP were informed by UHI teaching staff that the process of contextualising course materials for the current academic year was underway. During the meeting with External Examiners at the visit, the EVP heard that there were examples in the assessment material that contained references from an Australian context.</p> <p>In order to ensure that the programme is ready to deliver the teaching materials to Year 3 students for the current and forthcoming academic years, UHI is required to submit Year 3 Semester 2, Year 4 Semester 1, and Year 4 Semester 2 (completed and contextualised to reflect pathologies and context specific to current UK Optometry practice) course materials to the GOC as evidence by 25 November 2022, 1 June 2023, and 1 October 2023, respectively.</p> <p>Conditions 1, 2 and 3 have been put in place to allow the GOC to maintain oversight of the preparedness of the course.</p>

OP2.1	Appropriate and fit for purpose accommodation, clinic facilities and clinic equipment in academic and practice settings must be provided.
Condition 4	UHI must provide appropriate and fit for purpose accommodation, clinic facilities and clinic equipment in academic and practice settings for the Moray campus.
Date Due	31 May 2023
Rationale	<p>During the Introduction meeting and at the Facilities and Resources meeting at the visit, the EVP were informed by the Programme Lead that the development of the Moray campus had been postponed due to the impact and disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (an update pertaining to this was provided by UHI to the GOC in March 2021).</p> <p>In order to maintain oversight of this condition, the EVP deemed this condition to be ongoing and request that UHI inform the GOC of a feasible deadline to provide an update about any relevant changes or developments to the proposed Moray campus.</p>

3.2 Recommendations offered at this visit	
The EVP offers the following recommendations to the provider.	
OP3.6	The provider must ensure that supervisors receive comprehensive guidance and training to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities and obligations.
Recommendation 1	Implement the full training plan (including online sessions and an annual refresh) for supervisors as previously outlined to the GOC, to ensure that the approval and revalidation of supervisors is a robust system.
Rationale	In the experiential/practical learning meeting at the visit, the EVP heard that the communication with supervisors was currently undertaken on an informal process. The EVP deemed that this process would benefit from becoming a formal mechanism. The EVP look forward to reviewing this at the next visit.

OP5.4	The external examiners' remit must include all the professional requirements of the programme including any clinical portfolios.
Recommendation 2	Provide ongoing engagement and briefings to the programme's external examiners, including communicating that they will be able to access competency sign offs within the Brightspace learning environment.
Rationale	The EVP heard in the meeting with external examiners that to date, they could not recall having sight of the logbooks used on the programme. In the professional requirements, patient experience, core competencies, and assessment and progression meeting, the EVP discussed this with the Programme Lead. The Programme Lead confirmed to the EVP that she would be sending an updated version of the programme handbook to the External Examiners for their review and information.

3.3 Commendations made at this visit

The EVP wishes to commend the following areas:

- The Programme team's perseverance and ongoing commitment in the launch of the programme during unprecedented times.
- The Programme team's commitment to student support and feedback, in particular the use of the PAT system as highlighted by students.
- The Optometry student body on how well they have built a community, as evidenced by their forming of an Optometry Students Society and linking with a similar society within another Optometry programme provider.