

# Fair Registration Practices Report

## Optometrists (2011)

The answers that you submitted to OFC can be seen below.

This Fair Registration Practices Report was produced as required by:

- the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act (FARPA) s. 20 and 23(1), for regulated professions named in Schedule 1 of FARPA
- the Health Professions Procedural Code set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) s. 22.7 (1) and 22.9(1), for health colleges.

### Provision of Information About Registration Practices (1 / 13)

**Describe how you make information about registration practices available to individuals applying or intending to apply for registration. Specify the tools used to provide information, and the manner in which you make that information available, current, accurate and user friendly in each of these subcategories:**

#### a) steps to initiate the registration process

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Applicants can obtain information about how to initiate the registration process by:

- clicking on 'Registration' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site. This page provides general information about the registration process, including timelines
- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site. This page provides more detailed information about the registration process and including information for labour mobility applicants and links to application forms, the Canadian Examiners in Optometry (administrator of the national entry to practice exam) and additional information for international graduates
- clicking on 'Registration/International Graduates' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site. This page provides registration information specific to optometrists educated outside North America, including links to the International Optometric Bridging Program at the University of Waterloo
- clicking on 'Registration/FAQs' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site. This page provides answers to frequently asked questions related to the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam, the CPIC Report (criminal record check), getting documents notarized, etc.
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms

#### b) requirements for registration

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

General and detailed information regarding the requirements for registration is available in the Registration section of the College web site and in all application packages.

Every application package includes a copy of the registration requirements as they appear in the Registration Regulation with a recommendation regarding the sequence for completing the requirements and with notes in plain language to help explain the requirements and timelines for meeting them. An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College website (application form links are at the top of the page) or
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

A copy of the full Registration Regulation is available on the college web site. The web site also provides information specific to international applicants and a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program.

Clicking on 'Registration/FAQs' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site provides answers to frequently asked questions related to the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam, the CPIC Report (criminal record check), getting documents notarized, etc.

**c) explanation of how the requirements for registration are to be met, such as the number of years of schooling required for a degree to be deemed equivalent to an Ontario undergraduate degree, length and type of work experience, credit hours or program content**

**\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\***

General and detailed information regarding how the requirements for registration are to be met is available in the Registration section of the College web site and in all application packages.

All application packages include a copy of the registration requirements as they appear in the Registration Regulation with a recommendation regarding the sequence for completing the requirements and with notes in plain language to help explain the requirements and timelines for meeting them. An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site (application form links are at the top of the page)
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

Clicking on 'Registration/FAQs' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site. provides answers to frequently asked questions related to the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam, the CPIC Report (criminal record check), getting documents notarized, etc.

The College has collaborated with the University of Waterloo School of Optometry to develop the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) to assist internationally educated optometrists with the academic equivalency requirement. Information regarding criteria for equivalency can be obtained directly from the IOBP. The College web site provides general information for international applicants (Registration/International Graduates) and a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP). Any internationally educated optometrist who contacts the College by phone, fax, email or in person is given contact information for the IOBP.

**d) any education or practical experience required for registration that must be completed in Ontario or practice that must be supervised by a member of the profession who is registered in Ontario**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) includes a practical externship that must be completed as part of that program. The externship may be in Ontario or another Canadian province/territory. The College web site provides a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program and any internationally educated optometrist who contacts the College by phone, fax, email or in person is given contact information for the IOBP.

#### e) requirements that may be satisfied through acceptable alternatives

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The requirements for having fluency in English or French, no criminal convictions and the letter of good standing are exemptible. Information regarding exemptible requirements is included in the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Resource Binder that is mailed to applicants 4-6 weeks before they are scheduled to write the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence exam and also available on the College web site under 'Resources/College Publications'. Information regarding exemptible requirements is also given during the Jurisprudence Seminar conducted by the College twice annually. Applicants may attend the seminar one or more times prior to writing the exam.

Internationally educated optometrists who did not graduate from an optometry program accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometry Education (ACOE) must participate in the International Optometric Bridging Program in order to assess/obtain academic equivalence. The College web site provides general information for internationally educated optometrists and a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) (click on Registration/International Applicants). Any internationally educated optometrist who contacts the College by phone, fax, email or in person is given contact information for the IOBP.

#### f) the steps in the assessment process

Information regarding the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Examination is available on the College web site and in all application packages, including timelines for completing the exam. A comprehensive Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Resource Binder is available on the College web site and a hard copy is mailed to all applicants 4-6 weeks prior to the date they are scheduled to write the exam, along with a study guide. The Binder includes general information about the College's role and structure, as well as a plain language summary of key points in each piece of legislation applicable to the profession. The Binder is updated regularly.

Information regarding the Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry (CSAO)/Canadian Assessment of Competence in Optometry (CACO) exam (the national entry-to-practice exam) and links to the Canadian Examiners in Optometry (the third party administrator of the exam) are available in the Registration section of the College web site and in every application package. An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site (application form links are at the top of the page)
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

The College web site provides general information for internationally educated optometrists and a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) (click on Registration/International Applicants). Detailed information regarding assessment of international education and experience may be obtained directly from the IOBP. Any internationally educated optometrist who contacts the College by phone, fax, email or in person is given contact information for the IOBP.

**g) the documentation of qualifications that must accompany each application; indicate which documents, if any, are required only from internationally trained applicants**

A list of documents required of all applicants is available in all application packages. An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site (application form links are at the top of the page)
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

Internationally educated optometrists are required to have a Certificate of Completion sent to the College directly from the International Optometric Bridging Program indicating the applicant's successful completion of the program. Information regarding this requirement is available in the 'Registration/International Graduate' section of the College web site.

If an applicant is not a Canadian citizen, he or she is required to provide a notarized copy of a permanent residency document or authorization under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* to engage in the practice of optometry. Information regarding this requirement is available in the 'Registration/How to Apply' section of the College web site and in every application package.

**h) acceptable alternatives to the documentation if applicants cannot obtain the required documentation for reasons beyond their control**

Applicants who inform the College that they cannot provide a Certificate of Standing or a letter of good standing from an optometry regulator in a country where they previously practised are informed of the College policy that a letter may be sent by the highest authority available, as follows:

1. a Certificate of Standing/letter of good standing from the regulator; or
2. a Certificate of Standing/letter of good standing from the authority that could remove the applicant's right to practice (e.g., Ministry of Health or relevant state or government agency); or
3. a Certificate of Standing/letter of good standing from the employer (e.g., state hospital, university).

Where none of the above are possible, the applicant is asked to sign an affidavit. The College provides the applicant with the necessary language for the affidavit and information on who can prepare the affidavit for them.

If an applicant cannot obtain a Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) report (criminal record check) because he or she is not yet resident in Canada but has completed all of the other requirements for registration, the applicant is informed that he or she may complete the registration process but will not be authorized to begin practice until the CPIC report has been submitted. The applicant is asked to sign an Agreement with the College that a CPIC report will be provided immediately once the he or she is in Canada.

When an applicant informs the College that he or she is unable to obtain immigration documents authorizing him/her to practise optometry in Ontario but has otherwise met all of the requirements for registration, the College assists the applicant by providing a letter that can be presented to immigration officials.

**i) how applicants can contact your organization**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Information regarding how applicants can contact the College by letter, e-mail, telephone (including toll free number), fax or in person is available on every page of the College web site under 'Contact Us' and is available on every application form.

The College's telephone contact information (including toll free number and web site address) is included in the yellow pages phone book for every community in Ontario.

There are links to the College web site on the sites of a number of external organizations including (this list is not exhaustive):

- International Optometric Bridging Program
- Canadian Examiners in Optometry
- Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario
- Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium
- Canadian Optometric Regulatory Authorities
- Canadian Association of Optometrists
- HealthForceOntario
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- Office of the Fairness Commissioner

**j) how, why and how often your organization initiates communication with applicants about their applications**

The College formally initiates communication with applicants through a minimum of four letters:

- An initial letter confirms receipt of the application for registration and lists any outstanding documents needed in order to complete the application. The letter is accompanied by a payment receipt.
- A second letter accompanies a copy of the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Resource Binder. This binder includes information regarding the structure and role of the College as well as relevant legislation, policies and guidelines with which members must be familiar. This information is the basis of the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam and is reviewed in a seminar offered to all applicants twice annually. The binder is sent out 4-6 weeks before the exam along with a study guide and details of the seminar/exam schedules and location(s).
- A third letter is sent with the results of the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam. If the applicant's file is now complete, he or she is assigned a registration number, sent an invoice for their (prorated) membership fee and is asked to complete a Report Upon Entering Practice form, Information from New Registrants form, and Confirmation of Malpractice Insurance form. If the applicant's file is incomplete, the third letter provides the results of the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam and serves as a reminder of the documents (and related timelines) required to complete the file.
- A fourth letter is sent when the applicant becomes registered confirming that their registration number has been activated by the Registrar. Enclosed with the letter are the applicant's Certificate of Registration and a receipt for their membership fee.

If an applicant fails to complete their application (e.g., documents are outstanding), a letter is sent 21 months after the application was received by the College informing the applicant that he or she has three months to complete the application or the file will be closed. This letter also informs applicants if any of their submitted documents would need to be re-submitted (e.g., a CPIC report or letter of standing that is more than 6 months old). If there is no response, a final effort is made to contact the applicant 24 months after the application was received. If there is no response, the file is closed and all documents are returned to the applicant.

In addition to the above, the College communicates with applicants via e-mail as necessary to follow up on

inquiries from the applicant and/or to initiate follow-up on outstanding issues.

**k) the process for dealing with documents provided in languages other than English or French**

**\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\***

Applicants wishing to submit a document that is not in English or French are told that the document(s) must be translated at the expense of the applicant. Generally, these documents are related to the applicant's education and are submitted to the International Optometric Bridging Program. The College web site provides general information for internationally educated optometrists and a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) (click on Registration/International Applicants). Detailed information may be obtained directly from the IOBP. Any internationally educated optometrist who contacts the College by phone, fax, email or in person is given contact information for the IOBP.

**l) the role of third-party organizations, such as qualification assessment agencies, organizations that conduct examinations or institutions that provide bridging programs, that applicants may come into contact with during the registration process**

General information regarding the Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry (CSAO) /Canadian Assessment of Competence in Optometry (CACO) (the national entry to practice exam) and links to the Canadian Examiners in Optometry (the third party administrator of the exam) are available in the Registration section of the College web site and in every application package. An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site (application form links are at the top of the page)
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

The College web site provides general information for internationally educated optometrists and a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) (click on Registration/International Applicants). Detailed information regarding assessment of international education and experience may be obtained directly from the IOBP. Any internationally educated optometrist who contacts the College by phone, fax, email or in person is given contact information for the IOBP.

**m) any timelines, deadlines or time limits that applicants will be subject to during the registration process**

Timelines related to registration are as follows:

An application for registration may remain open at the College for 24 months if the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Examination was successfully completed within 12 months of the application date. An applicant may submit a new application if the registration process is not completed in 24 months. No applicant may have more than one valid application for registration open with the College at any one time. Applicants who re-apply are not required to re-submit documents already submitted to the College unless they are subject to the timelines/deadlines listed below:

- Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam: This exam must be successfully completed within one year of

applying for registration. (If an applicant does not successfully complete the jurisprudence exam within one year of applying, there is nothing preventing them from submitting a new application form and application fee).

- Criminal Record Check: A Canadian Police Information Centre report must be submitted and must be dated no more than six months prior to the Certificate of Registration being issued and activated.
- A Certificate of Standing or a letter of good standing (if required): A letter of good standing must be sent to the College directly from the issuing body and must be dated no more than six months prior to the Certificate of Registration being issued and activated.
- Permanent residency or authorization under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* to engage in the practice of optometry (if required): If the applicant is not a Canadian citizen, he or she must submit a notarized copy of their immigration/authorization document. In order for a Certificate of Registration to be issued and activated, this document must be valid.

The above information is available in the Registration section on the College web site and in all application packages (on page one and in Appendix A). An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site (application form links are at the top of the page)
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

In addition, applicants are reminded about timelines when they are sent letters from the College during the application process [see 1. j), above].

#### **n) the amount of time that the registration process usually takes**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Applications are open for two years from the date they are received by the College and most applicants complete the process in less than one year. This information is available in three places in the Registration section of the College web site (Registration main page, How to Apply and Registration FAQs) and in all application packages. An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site (application form links are at the top of the page)
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

#### **o) information about all fees associated with registration, such as fees for initial application, exams and exam rewrites, course enrolment or issuance of licence**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Information about fees is available in all application packages. An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site (application form links are at the top of the page)
- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

Applicants are referred to the Canadian Examiners in Optometry for information, including fees, related to taking the Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry exam. Links to the Canadian Examiners in Optometry

(the third party administrator of the exam) are available in the 'Registration' section of the College web site and in every application package.

The College web site provides general information for internationally educated optometrists and a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) (click on Registration/International Applicants). Detailed information, including program fees, may be obtained directly from the IOBP. Any internationally educated optometrist who contacts the College by phone, fax, email or in person is given contact information for the IOBP.

**p) accommodation of applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Special needs are considered on an individual basis. The College building is wheelchair accessible.

**Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.**

Certificate of Standing or a letter of good standing from an optometry regulator in a country where they previously practised The Council has decided that an applicant who does not have a degree in optometry will still be eligible for registration in Ontario upon successful completion of the IOBP Bridging One or IOBP Bridging Two as long as their application was completed, submitted and accepted by the IOBP prior to June 15, 2011. An internationally educated applicant who does have a degree in optometry will still be eligible for registration in Ontario upon successful completion of the IOBP Bridging One or IOBP Bridging Two as long as their application was completed, submitted and accepted by the IOBP prior to September 1, 2011.

The optometry regulator in the country where applicants previously practised may submit either a completed Certificate of Standing or a letter of good standing.

All applicants must submit all the photocopies of their degrees, certificates and fellowships notarized. Additionally, they have to arrange to have their educational institution send the College an official transcript.

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**Amount of Fees (2 / 13)**

**Are any of the fees different for internationally trained applicants? If yes, please explain.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*



\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

No.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

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### **Provision of Timely Decisions, Responses and Reasons (3 / 13)**

#### **a) What are your timelines for making registration decisions?**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The decision to register an applicant once all registration requirements have been met and documentation submitted to the College is made within 15 business days.

The Registrar's decision to refuse registration and refer matter to the Registration Committee is made within five business days of the Registrar being apprised of the applicant not meeting a requirement for registration.

If an applicant fails to meet one of the requirements for registration, they will receive a letter indicating which requirement they have failed to meet and informing them that the Registrar proposes to refuse their application for registration and the matter is being referred to the Registration Committee. The letter is typically sent out within five business days of the application being completed. The applicant is told that he/she has 30 days to make a written submission to the Registration Committee. The Registration Committee will consider the matter at their immediate next meeting. The Committee meets at least quarterly but often meets more frequently due to the workload. Meeting dates are judiciously set to allow prompt consideration of referrals and reviews.

If waiting for the next scheduled Registration Committee meeting means that an applicant is not going to receive an appropriately timely response, the Committee may deal with a member's review electronically prior to their next face-to-face meeting.

#### **b) What are your timelines for responding to applicants in writing?**

Confirming receipt of application: within 10 business days of receiving the application.

Sending results of the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam: within 4 weeks of the administration of the exam.

Registrar's decision to refuse registration and refer matter to the Registration Committee: within five business days of the Registrar being apprised of the applicant not meeting a requirement for registration.

Decision from the Registration Committee regarding an applicant not meeting a requirement for registration: within two weeks of the Committee's decision.

Sending Certificate of Registration number and invoice for fee: within 10 business days of confirming that the applicant has met all of the other requirements for registration.

Sending a notice that an application will be terminated in 30 days for non-activation (requirements met but fees not paid): 30 days after original fee notice is sent out.

Sending notice that an application has been terminated for non-activation: 60 days after the original fee notice is sent out.

Sending notice that an application will expire in three months: 21 months after the application is received by the College.

Sending notice that an application has expired: 24 months after the application is received by the College.

**c) What are your timelines for providing written reasons to applicants about all registration decisions, internal reviews and appeal decisions?**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

A letter is sent to applicants who fail the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam within four weeks of the exam date and includes information regarding areas of weakness shown by their results.

If an applicant fails to meet one of the requirements for registration, they will receive a letter indicating which requirement they have failed to meet and informing them that the Registrar proposes to refuse their application for registration and the matter is being referred to the Registration Committee. The letter is typically sent out within five business days of the Registrar being apprised of the failure to meet a registration requirement. The applicant is told that he/she has 30 days to make a written submission to the Registration Committee. The Registration Committee will consider the matter at their immediate next meeting; the Committee meets on a quarterly basis or more frequently depending on the workload. Meeting dates are judiciously set to allow prompt consideration of referrals and reviews.

If waiting for the next scheduled Registration Committee meeting means that an applicant is not going to receive an appropriately timely response, the Committee may deal with a member's review electronically prior to their next face-to-face meeting.

Once the minutes of the meeting dealing with the matter have been confirmed by the Chair, College staff will write to any applicant(s) who have had their application considered, informing them of the Committee's decision. This is typically done within two weeks following the meeting. This letter includes information regarding the applicant's right to appeal the Registration Committee's decision to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB) and contact information for HPARB.

**d) Explain how your organization ensures that it adheres to these timelines.**

We adhere to these timelines using several methods:

- retaining applicants' registration information in a table and adhering to the timelines by using the "sorting" feature
- using a form at the front of each applicant file tracking the applicant's registration progress (dates when documents submitted, exams completed, etc.)
- scheduling Registration Committee meetings around when decisions are most likely going to be required
- having a policy that minutes must be completed within two weeks of the meeting date and staff provides follow up on action items, prioritizing the communication of registration decisions to applicants
- reporting back on action items, including communication to applicants, at each Registration Committee meeting
- implementing a policy for the Registration Committee to review timelines of its decisions, responses and reasons annually

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

Increased efficiency (reduction from 15 to 10 business days to send applicants their Certificate of Registration number and invoice for fee once it is confirmed that the applicants have met all the other requirements for registration).

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## **Access to Records (4 / 13)**

a) Describe how you give applicants access to their own records related to their applications for registration.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Usually, the College does not receive requests from applicants requesting access to their records. Should an applicant request a copy of his or her record, for instance to prepare for an appeal to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB), the College makes a copy of the documents provided to HPARB available to the applicant.

b) Explain why access to applicants' own records would be limited or refused.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College would only limit or refuse access to an applicants' own record in order to protect a third party.

**c) State how and when you give applicants estimates of the fees for making records available.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College currently does not charge a fee for making records available.

**d) List the fees for making records available.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College currently does not charge a fee for making records available.

**e) Describe the circumstances under which payment of the fees for making records available would be waived or would have been waived.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College currently does not charge a fee for making records available.

**Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

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**a) List and describe any resources that are available to applicants, such as application guides, exam blueprints or programs for orientation to the profession.**

Comprehensive application packages and information are available on the College web site or by contacting the College offices. These include:

- information regarding how to complete the application form
- a description of what it means to get a document notarized
- contact information for the Canadian Examiners in Optometry (CEO), the third party organization that administers the Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry (CSAO)/Canadian Assessment of Competency in Optometry (CACO), the entry to practice exam for the profession
- information regarding how to obtain a Canadian Police Information Centre report (criminal record check)
- a copy of the registration requirements as they appear in the Registration Regulation with a recommendation regarding the sequence for completing the requirements and with notes in plain language to help explain the requirements.
- a checklist to help ensure the application is complete.
- a list of Acceptable Variations in Documents required for registration
- flow charts prepared to illustrate the registration process for applicants

Applicants registered for the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam are sent a copy of the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Resource Binder 4-6 weeks before the exam. The Resource Binder is also available on the College web site. A study guide that includes where to find the relevant information in the Resource Binder is provided to applicants with their binder. Twice annually, the College offers a one-day seminar to help prepare applicants for the exam. Sample exam questions are reviewed at the end of the seminar. Applicants may attend the seminar one or more times prior to writing the exam.

The College web site provides general information for international applicants and a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) (click on Registration/International Applicants). Detailed information about the program may be obtained directly from the IOBP. Any international graduate who contacts the College by phone, fax, email or in person is given contact information for the IOBP.

The College web site and application packages provide information specifically for applicants registered in another Canadian jurisdiction who wish to apply for registration in Ontario under the labour mobility provisions.

Applicants are referred to the Canadian Examiners in Optometry (CEO) for information related to taking the Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry (CSAO)/Canadian Assessment of Competency in Optometry (CACO) exam. Links to the Canadian Examiners in Optometry (the third party administrator of the exam) are available in the Registration section of the College web site and in every application package. The CEO web site includes an extensive guide for the CSAO/CACO exam and sample exam questions.

College staff respond to registration inquiries on a daily basis by phone and email.

**b) Describe how your organization provides information to applicants about these resources.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Information about these resources is available on the College web site and is included in all application packages. An application package may be obtained by:

- clicking on 'Registration/How to Apply' on the left-hand menu of every page on the College web site (application form links are at the top of the page); or

- contacting the College by phone, email, letter mail or fax for information and/or application forms.

The College provides information to applicants for registration about the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam and seminar by letter and/or e-mail.

College staff respond to registration inquiries and provide information regarding relevant resources on a daily basis by phone and email.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

The Council has decided that an applicant who does not have a degree in optometry will still be eligible for registration in Ontario upon successful completion of the IOBP Bridging One or IOBP Bridging Two as long as their application was completed, submitted and accepted by the IOBP prior to June 15, 2011. An internationally educated applicant who does have a degree in optometry will still be eligible for registration in Ontario upon successful completion of the IOBP Bridging One or IOBP Bridging Two as long as their application was completed, submitted and accepted by the IOBP prior to September 1, 2011.

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### Internal Review or Appeal Processes (6 / 13)

In this section, describe your internal review or appeal process. Some regulatory bodies use these two terms (*internal review* and *appeal*) for two different processes, some use only one of these terms, and some use them interchangeably. Please use the term that applies to your profession. If you use both terms (for two different processes), please address both.

a) List your timelines for completing internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

If an applicant fails to meet one of the requirements for registration, they receive a letter indicating which requirement they have failed to meet and informing them that the Registrar proposes to refuse their application for registration and the matter is being referred to the Registration Committee. The applicant is told that he/she has 30 days to make a written submission to the Registration Committee. The Registration Committee considers the matter at their immediate next meeting. The Committee meets on a quarterly basis or more frequently depending on the workload. If waiting for the next scheduled Registration Committee meeting means that an applicant is not going to receive an appropriately timely response, the Committee may deal with a member's appeal electronically prior to their next face-to-face meeting.

i. State the number of internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions that exceeded your timelines.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

There were no internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions that exceeded our timelines in 2010.

ii. Among internal reviews or appeals that exceeded your timelines, state the number that were from internationally trained applicants.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

There were no internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions associated with internationally trained applicants that exceeded our timelines in 2010.

b) Specify the opportunities you provide for applicants to make submissions regarding internal reviews or appeals.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

When a letter is sent to the applicant informing him/her of the Registrar's proposal to refuse registration, a clause is included about the applicant's rights to make a written submission to the Registration Committee. Similarly, the applicant is notified of his/her rights during any telephone or e-mail communications.

c) Explain how you inform applicants about the form in which they must make their submissions (i.e., orally, in writing or by electronic means) for internal reviews or appeals.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Applicants who fail to meet a registration requirement are sent a letter with the following information quoting the relevant legislation:

"You have failed to successfully complete ..... Accordingly, the Registrar proposes to refuse your application because you have not met a requirement of the Registration Regulation (1). Your application will be referred to the Registration Committee (2).

You have the right to make a written submission to the Committee within 30 days of the receipt of this letter if you wish to do so. (3)

After considering your application and your written submission, if any, the Registration Committee will make a decision respecting your application.(4)

(1) O. REG. 837/93, Registration, s. -2. (1). 7.

- (2) Regulated Health Professions (Code), Section 15. - (2) (c)
- (3) Ibid., Section 15. - (3)
- (4) Ibid., Section 18. - (2)"

d) State how you ensure that no one who acted as a decision-maker in a registration decision acts as a decision-maker in an internal review or appeal of the same registration decision.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The Registrar makes the initial registration decision. The Registration Committee considers all referrals and reviews and the Registrar is not involved.

e) Describe your internal review or appeal process.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

When an applicant sends a written submission to the College, the College staff person supporting the Registration Committee notifies the Committee Chair. The referral/review is added to the agenda of the Committee's immediate next meeting. Anonymized copies of the applicant's submission are distributed to the Committee members in advance of the meeting. Once the minutes of the meeting have been written and confirmed with the Chair, the applicant is informed of the Committee's decision.

f ) State the composition of the committee that makes decisions about registration, which may be called a Registration Committee or Appeals Committee: how many members does the committee have; how many committee members are members of the profession in Ontario; and how many committee members are internationally trained members of the profession in Ontario.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The Registration Committee is a statutory committee comprised of four practising optometrists in Ontario and a public member appointed by the Government of Ontario. One Committee member is an internationally educated optometry graduate.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

The appointment of an internationally educated optometry graduate to the Registration Committee.

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### Information on Appeal Rights (7 / 13)

This section refers to reviews or appeals that are available after an internal review or appeal. Describe how you inform applicants of any rights they have to request a further review of or appeal from a decision.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Directly following a meeting of the Registration Committee to consider the applicant's referral/review, a letter is written to the applicant incorporating the following clause:

"You have the right to appeal the decision of the Registration Committee. If you choose to appeal this decision, your appeal should be addressed to:

Health Professions Appeal and Review Board  
151 Bloor Street West, 9th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T5

Tel: 416.327.8512

Toll Free: 1.866.282.2179

Fax: 416.327.8524"

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

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### Assessment of Qualifications (8 / 13)

This category covers your processes for assessing all qualifications, such as academic credentials, competencies, language ability or practical experience.

a) List the criteria that must be met in order for an applicant's qualifications to satisfy the entry-to-practice requirements for your profession.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The requirements for registration are outlined in detail in the Registration Regulation under the Optometry Act. The College issues General Certificates of Registration and Academic Certificates of Registration.

The academic requirement for a General Certificate is:

- successful completion of the course in optometry at the School of Optometry of the University of Waterloo and the award of the degree of doctor of optometry by the university, or
- successful completion of a course of study outside Ontario which the Registration Committee of the College deems to be the equivalent of the course at the School of Optometry of the University of Waterloo and the award of a degree that the Registration Committee determines is comparable to the degree of Doctor of Optometry of the University of Waterloo.

In order to be eligible for an Academic Certificate of Registration, the applicant must hold a full-time appointment as a faculty member of a university or other optometric educational facility in Ontario approved by the College. Holders of an Academic Certificate of Registration may engage in the practice of optometry only at the School of Optometry of the University of Waterloo or at another university or optometric educational facility in Ontario approved by Council. The academic requirement for an Academic Certificate is:

- successful completion of a course in optometry at a school accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education, together with the award of a degree of doctor of optometry from that university, or
- successful completion of a course in optometry at a university in the United Kingdom, together with the award of a degree from that university, and current or past membership in the British College of Optometrists, or
- successful completion of a course outside of Ontario that the Registration Committee, having considered the rest of the applicant's qualifications, determines is acceptable.

**b) Describe the methodology used to determine whether a program completed outside of Canada satisfies the requirements for registration.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College has collaborated with the University of Waterloo School of Optometry to develop the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) to assist internationally educated optometrists meet the academic requirement for registration. International optometrists undergo an assessment of their academic qualifications, an assessment of their English language skills (if the language of their instruction was not English) and an assessment of their prior learning. Based on the results, they may be eligible to participate in a bridging program or they may be told that the gaps in their education and learning are too large to be addressed by the programs available. Upon successful completion of bridging (including successful completion of the exit exam), the College deems the internationally educated optometrist to have met the academic requirement for registration in Ontario.

**c) Explain how work experience in the profession is assessed.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Work experience is not a requirement for registration.

When applicants apply for the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP), work experience may be considered in lieu of undergraduate education prior to the four-year professional optometric degree [see 8.b) above]. Optometric work experience is defined as working as an optometrist in a country outside Canada. Applicants are required to submit reference letters from their employers to the IOBP.

If an applicant has ever been licensed or registered to practise optometry or any other regulated health

profession, the applicant is to arrange for the licensing body where he/she practised to send the College a Certificate of Standing outlining their current status in that jurisdiction and whether there have ever been any proceedings against the applicant involving allegations of professional misconduct, incapacity or like finding. This Certificate must be dated no more than six months before their Certificate of Registration was issued and activated.

**d) Describe how your organization ensures that information used in the assessment about educational systems and credentials of applicants from outside Canada is current and accurate.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Assessment of internationally educated optometrists is conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program. They verify accuracy and currency of documents by direct communication with the overseas universities.

If an applicant has ever been licensed or registered to practise optometry or any other regulated health profession, the applicant is to arrange for the licensing body where he/she practised to send the College a Certificate of Standing outlining their current status in that jurisdiction and whether there have ever been any proceedings against the applicant involving allegations of professional misconduct, incapacity or like finding. This Certificate must be dated no more than six months before their Certificate of Registration was issued and activated.

The applicant is to complete their application form, sign it and have it notarized. Upon successful completion of the application process, the applicant is asked to confirm the accuracy of the information provided in their application form. If the applicant provides the College with false or misleading information on their application, the applicant will be deemed not to have satisfied the requirements for registration.

**e) Describe how previous assessment decisions are used to assist in maintaining consistency when assessing credentials of applicants from the same jurisdictions or institutions.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The International Optometric Bridging Program has developed a database that compares the academic programs from many universities. This has been done by requesting syllabi from the universities and comparing categories of specific courses. The database includes information from all previously assessed academic institutions along with the year the program was assessed. New applicants are checked against the database to determine if their specific program and year have previously been assessed. The database continues to be added to on a regular basis.

**f) Explain how the status of an institution in its home country affects recognition of the credentials of applicants by your organization.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

An optometry degree from an overseas university must be recognized for licensure as an optometrist in that country and/or must be from a university recognized by the World Council of Optometry.

**g) Describe how your organization accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College accommodates special needs on a case-by-case basis. If an individual has the physical ability to perform the clinical procedures necessary to practise optometry, special needs will be accommodated. The College building is wheelchair accessible.

**h) State the average length of time required to complete the entire registration process, from when the process is initiated to when a registration decision is issued.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Not all those who apply to the College to practise optometry in Ontario follow through with their application. The length of time required to complete the entire registration process varies depending on the individual's circumstances. The average length of time for applicants to complete the entire registration process is approximately 9-10 months. Applications may be submitted at any time and many applicants submit their application well in advance of completing the requirements for registration, e.g., many students submit an application several months before graduating from their optometry program.

**i. State whether the average time differs for internationally trained individuals.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The average time differs for the majority of internationally educated optometrists.

**ii. If the average time differs for internationally trained individuals, state whether it is greater or less than the average for all applicants, and the reasons for the difference.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Generally, it takes longer for internationally educated optometrists to complete the entire registration process. It often takes an internationally educated optometrist more than one attempt to pass the entry-to-practice exams. Some internationally educated optometrists have difficulty obtaining the necessary immigration authority to practise optometry in Ontario.

i) If your organization conducts credential assessments:

i. Explain how you determine the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct credential assessments. Credential assessments are conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct credential assessments. Credential assessments are conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct credential assessments. Credential assessments are conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

j) If your organization conducts competency assessment:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct competency assessments. Competency assessments are conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct competency assessments. Competency assessments are conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

**iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct competency assessments. Competency assessments are conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

**k) If your organization conducts prior learning assessment:**

**i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct prior learning assessments. Prior learning assessments are conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

**ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct prior learning assessments. Prior learning assessments are conducted by the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

**iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The College does not conduct prior learning assessments. Prior learning assessments are conducted by the

**I) If your organization administers examinations:**

**i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.**

The College administers the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam six times annually. It is an open book exam that consists of 60 multiple choice questions which cover all aspects of legislation governing the practice of optometry in Ontario. Applicants must obtain a minimum grade of 70% to pass. Results are reported on a pass/fail basis. Applicants must successfully complete the exam within 12 months of submitting their application to the College. There is no limit to the number of times an applicant may write the exam. If an applicant fails to successfully complete the exam within 12 months of applying for registration, they may submit a new application for registration.

changes section: Applicants must obtain a minimum grade of 70% to pass the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam.

**ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The exam is reviewed before and after each administration to ensure that the exam maintains its validity and reliability. If results indicate that a question is not valid, it is not included in the grading of the exam and is subsequently rewritten or removed from the bank of questions.

**iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The exam questions are reviewed and updated annually by College staff and/or an external consultant.

**Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.**

Due to the College's increased scope of practice, applicants must now obtain a minimum grade of 70% to pass the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam.

### Third-Party Organizations (9 / 13)

a) List any third-party organizations (such as language testers, credential assessors or examiners) relied upon by your organization to make assessment decisions.

The College relies on the International Optometric Bridging program for the assessment and bridging of international optometric graduates. The College also relies on the Canadian Examiners in Optometry to develop and administer the Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry (CSAO)/Canadian Assessment of Competency in Optometry (CACO) exam, the national entry to practice exam.

b) Explain what measures your organization takes to ensure that any third-party organization that it relies upon to make an assessment:

i. provides information about assessment practices to applicants

The College web site provides a link to the International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) (click on Registration/International Applicants). Detailed information about the program, including comprehensive information about the assessment process, may be obtained directly from the IOBP. Any internationally educated optometry graduate who contacts the college by phone, fax, email or in person, is given contact information for the IOBP.

Links to the Canadian Examiners in Optometry are available in the Registration section of the College web site and in every application package. The CEO web site includes administrative policies and an extensive guide for the CSAO/CACO exam. This information is reviewed by the College's Registration Committee annually.

ii. utilizes current and accurate information about qualifications from outside Canada

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The International Optometric Bridging Program has developed a database that compares the academic programs from many universities. This has been done by requesting syllabi from the universities and comparing categories of specific courses. The database includes information from all previously assessed academic institutions along with the year the program was assessed. New applicants are checked against the database to determine if their specific program and year have previously been assessed. The database continues to be added to on a regular basis.

iii. provides timely decisions, responses and reasons to applicants

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*



In February 2011, the College contacted the IOBP regarding decisions and reasons. PLA results are available within six weeks, bridging program exit exam results are available within 1-2 weeks.

**iv. provides training to individuals assessing qualifications**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

In February 2011, the College contacted the IOBP regarding training for individuals assessing qualifications. Assessors of academic qualifications must be licensed to practise optometry in Ontario and are trained by an experienced assessor. All completed assessments are reviewed by the IOBP Director.

**v. provides access to records related to the assessment to applicants**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Applicants to the IOBP are given their detailed assessment results (scores) as well as feedback on their areas of weakness. Bridging program participants receive individual feedback on their clinical evaluation results. Applicants whose assessment results show that they are not eligible to continue forward with one of the bridging programs may request a review/feedback related to their clinical assessment results.

**vi. accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Special needs would be looked at on an individual basis. Providing an individual had the physical ability to perform the clinical procedures necessary for the provision of optometric care, special needs would be accommodated.

**c) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct credential assessments:**

**i. Explain how the third party determines the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) determines that the applicant has successfully completed a four-year optometry degree.

**ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Equivalency is not determined by the name of the degree. The IOBP assessment verifies the following:

- that the applicant completed a primary and secondary education that allows for entrance to university – level education
- that the applicant's higher secondary education (including the professional optometry education) is at a university degree level
- that the applicant graduated from an accredited/recognized/approved optometry program
- that the applicant completed a minimum of a four-year optometric degree program with required courses in identified categories
- that the applicant, through their education, is eligible for licensure to practise as an optometrist where their education was completed
- that the applicant is proficient in either English or French.

A "successful" result on the academic credentialing assessment confirms that the applicant has met the minimal credentialing standard and can move forward to the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA). An "unsuccessful" result indicates that no mechanism exists through the IOBP for the applicant to move forward. The PLA is an important component for determining equivalency.

### iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

In order for a candidate to be eligible for the IOBP, he or she must be currently licensed or registered (or eligible to be licensed or registered) to practice optometry outside Canada, and have successfully completed either:

1. two complete academic years of full-time undergraduate university study prior to entering an optometry school and a 4 year optometry degree, or
2. a 4-year optometry degree followed by 2 years of optometric work experience outside Canada

For candidates applying to the IOBP in 2012 and beyond, candidates must be currently licensed or registered (or eligible to be licensed or registered) to practice optometry outside Canada, and have successfully completed either:

1. three complete academic years of full-time undergraduate university study prior to entering an optometry school and a 4-year optometry degree, or
2. a 4-year optometry degree followed by 3 years of optometric work experience outside Canada

For the purposes of this policy, 'full-time' means 5 courses per four-month term or semester with two terms per year; ophthalmologists who have completed a minimum 3-year residency may apply for the credentialing process; and a three-year optometry degree followed by a pre-registration year/period and successful completion of the final assessment will be accepted as equivalent to a four-year optometry degree as long as the pre-registration year/period is endorsed by the country where the degree is obtained.

The PLA is used to assess the work experience of international graduates.

d) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct competency assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

All applicants are required to pass the Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry (CSAO)/Canadian Assessment of Competency in Optometry (CACO), the national entry to practice, competency-based exam administered by the Canadian Examiners in Optometry (CEO), except those who apply under the labour mobility provisions.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

With regard to the CSAO/CACO, competency-based performance standards (CBPS) were developed by the CEO Competence Committee and the CBPS Working Group, a group of practising optometrists from across Canada. The Competency-Based Performance Standards have been sent for review to all provincial regulatory authorities in optometry, and national and international stakeholders. Initial versions were reviewed in detail by CEO committees and focus groups.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Work experience may be beneficial but is not required or specifically accounted for.

e) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct prior learning assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

In the International Optometric Bridging Program, the prior learning assessment is conducted in two parts:

- Written test of optometric knowledge and clinical judgment that consists of 265 (soon to be increased to 300) multiple-choice questions. 40% of these questions are exchanged on a yearly basis.
- An evaluation of clinical technical skills consisting of four forty-five minute sessions

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The written assessment is administered and validated on a regular basis by the Canadian Examiners in Optometry (CEO). CEO administers the entry to practice examination for optometry in Canada and the PLA is validated by the same methods used for validating this examination. The clinical assessment is administered by the IOBP following the CEO format.

**iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.**

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

Work experience may be beneficial but is not required or specifically accounted for.

**f ) If your organization relies on a third party to administer examinations:**

**i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.**

The Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry (CSAO)/Canadian Assessment of Competency in Optometry (CACO), is the national entry to practice examination. It is comprised of seven components, each of which represents an essential collection of competencies and attributes required of an optometrist. Each component is administered using either written examinations or skills (performance) examinations.

Individual scores for the written components are determined by summing the number of correct responses on the questions. Each question receives one point if correct, zero if blank or incorrect. The total is then compared to the Minimum Performance Level (MPL) for the component. If the total meets or exceeds the MPL, the component is deemed to have been passed. If the total number of correct responses is less than the MPL, the component is deemed to have been failed.

The question items in the skills components are not equally weighted. The weighting of each question is established in advance of the assessment by professional consensus. Each question is weighted based on the relative importance of the behaviour or the data to be obtained. A candidate's score on the skills components is the numerical sum of the weighted correct items. This score is then compared to the MPL for the component. If the score meets or exceeds the MPL, the component is deemed to have been passed. If the total number of correct responses is less than the MPL, the component is deemed to have been failed.

Candidates must pass all components of the exam within three (3) consecutive administrations before being issued a report and certificate indicating that they are competent (i.e., if a candidate fails one component on the first administration, they have two more tries at passing that one component). If an applicant fails to successfully complete every component within three administrations, he or she is required to complete some remediation before being eligible to attempt the entire exam again.

**ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.**

CEO has a psychometrician on staff. A rigorous process of question analysis is undertaken by CEO's Assessment Committee following an administration of the CSAO/CACO in order to ensure that the questions included in the examination are unambiguous and discriminating. Questions that fail standard measures of their integrity are removed from scoring for all candidates.

Candidate's individual assessment experiences are also considered. If a question was not administered

appropriately to an individual applicant, the item may be deleted from the scoring of that applicant alone. For example, if an event within the administration of a skills component prevented a candidate from obtaining particular results, then the affected questions are deleted from that candidate's scoring. Assessor's responses to questions are reviewed to ensure accuracy by comparing the expected clinical results to a candidate's results. Inaccuracies in assessor's responses are corrected prior to scoring.

Before publishing results, the Assessment Committee considers the overall reliability of scores generated. Particular attention is paid to ensure that item analysis determinations, generally and individually, have been applied to each candidate's assessment.

When a candidate appears to have failed a component, a further analysis is undertaken prior to publishing the results to ensure that the score resulted from that candidate's performance and not from administrative factors.

**iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.**

A rigorous process of question analysis is undertaken by CEO's Assessment Committee following an administration of the CSAO/CACO in order to ensure that the questions included in the examination are unambiguous and discriminating. Questions that fail standard measures of their integrity are removed from scoring for all candidates.

The CEO Assessment Committee is responsible for specifying the structure of the CSAO/CACO, setting minimum performance levels for the CSAO/CACO, selecting questions from the assessment questions database for its written components, administering the CSAO/CACO, and reporting.

**Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.**

The Canadian Assessment of Competence in Optometry (CACO) replaces the Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry (CSAO).

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**Training (10 / 13)**

**a) Describe the training that your organization provides to:**

**i. individuals who assess qualifications**

CEO has training for its own clinical assessors and test question writers for the CSAO/CACO.

The IOBP has assessors who assess qualifications, conduct academic credentialing, administer prior learning assessments and deliver the Bridging Program:

- Individuals assessing academic credentials have attended workshops offered by WES on this topic.
- Clinical skills assessments are administered by optometric practitioners. These practitioners undergo an orientation session to familiarize them with expectations from candidates as well as cultural differences that might arise during the assessment process.
- The Bridging Programs are delivered by optometric faculty at the University of Waterloo. Faculty members undergo performance evaluations with regard to their teaching on an annual basis.

## ii. individuals who make registration decisions

College Registration Committee members are provided with an orientation session at the beginning of each fiscal year. Applicant requests for an internal review are infrequent so Registration Committee members are given additional information about their role and responsibilities prior to each review.

Both Registration Committee members and College staff attend relevant educational seminars. College staff receive registration-related newsletters. The College is a member of the Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium (ORAC) that registration staff regularly attend. College staff members also attend working group meetings of the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario where registration issues are discussed.

Registration Committee members and staff also register for Managing Cultural Differences workshops and attend anti-discrimination and human rights training sessions.

## iii. individuals who make internal review or appeal decisions

College Registration Committee members are provided with an orientation at the beginning of each fiscal year. Both Registration Committee members and College staff attend relevant educational seminars. College staff receive registration-related newsletters. The College is a member of the Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium (ORAC) that registration staff regularly attend. College staff members also attend working group meetings of the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario where registration issues are discussed.

Registration Committee members and staff also register for Managing Cultural Differences workshops and attend anti-discrimination and human rights training sessions.

**Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.**

The College is a member of the Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium (ORAC) that registration staff regularly attend. Registration Committee members and staff also register for Managing Cultural Differences workshops and attend anti-discrimination and human rights training sessions.

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Examples of agreements on the recognition of professional qualifications include mutual recognition, reciprocity and labour mobility agreements. Such agreements may be national or international, between regulatory bodies, associations or jurisdictions.

a) List any agreements on the recognition of qualifications that were in place during the reporting period.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

The Ontario Labour Mobility Act (OLMA) received Royal Assent on December 15, 2009. If there is a conflict between the provisions of the Registration Regulation and the OLMA, OLMA prevails.

b) Explain the impact of these agreements on the registration process or on applicants for registration.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

OLMA requires the College to register optometrists registered in another Canadian jurisdiction with very limited exceptions.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

\*\*\* SAME AS LAST YEAR \*\*\*

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## Data Collection (12 / 13)

### Languages in which application information materials are available

a) Indicate the languages in which application information materials were available in the reporting year.

Language	Yes/No
English	Yes
French	No
Other (please specify)	

### Paid staff employed by your organization

b) In the table below, enter the number of paid staff employed by your organization in the categories shown, on December 31 of the reporting year.

When providing information for each of the categories in this section, you may want to use decimals if you count your staff using half units. For example, 1 full-time employee and 1 part-time employee might be equivalent to 1.5 employees.

You can enter decimals to the tenths position only. For example, you can enter 1.5 or 7.5 but not 1.55 or 7.52.

Category	Staff
Total staff employed by the regulatory body	8.4
Staff involved in appeals process	1
Staff involved in registration process	3

#### Countries where internationally educated applicants were initially trained

c) In the following table, enter the top source countries where your applicants<sup>1</sup> were originally trained in the profession (**excluding** Canada), along with the number of applicants from each of these source countries.

Enter the country names in descending order. (That is, enter the source country for the greatest number of your applicants in the top row, the source country for the second greatest number in the second row, etc.)

Use the dropdown menu provided in each row to select the country.

Note that only one country can be reported in each row. If two or more countries are tied, enter the information for these tied countries in separate rows.

Country of training (Canada excluded)	Number of applicants in the reporting year
U.S.	54
U.K.	12
India	6
Egypt	5
Iran	4
Venezuela	2
Colombia	1
Nigeria	1



Philippines	1
Russia	1

<sup>1</sup>Persons who have applied to start the process for entry to the profession.  
Select "n/a" from the drop-down list if you do not track this information. Enter "0" in a "Number of applicants" field if you track the information, but the correct value is zero.

### Jurisdiction where members were initially trained

d) Indicate where your members<sup>2</sup> were initially trained in the profession (use only whole numbers; do not enter commas or decimals).

The numbers to be reported in the **Members** row are the numbers on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the reporting year. For example, if you are reporting registration practices for the calendar year 2009, you should report the numbers of members in the different categories on December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2009.

	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
<b>Members on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the reporting year</b>	1368	54	398	143	0	<b>1963</b>

<sup>2</sup> Persons who are currently able to use the protected title or professional designation of the profession.

Enter "n/a" if you do not track this information. Enter "0" if you track the information, but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

### Applications your organization processed in the past year

e) State the number of applications your organization processed in the reporting year (use only whole numbers; do not enter commas or decimals).

	Jurisdiction where applicants were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)
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<b>from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> of the reporting year</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Other Canadian Provinces</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>Other International</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>New applications received</b>	51	5	54	34	0	<b>144</b>
<b>Applicants actively pursuing licensing (applicants who had some contact with your organization in the reporting year)</b>	78	5	72	55	0	<b>210</b>
<b>Inactive applicants (applicants who had no contact with your organization in the reporting year)</b>	4	0	2	0	0	<b>6</b>
<b>Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members</b>	1	1	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Applicants who became FULLY registered members</b>	61	2	50	30	0	<b>143</b>
<b>Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence<sup>3</sup> but were not issued a licence</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence<sup>3</sup></b>	0	0	1	1	0	<b>2</b>

<sup>3</sup> An alternative class of licence enables its holder to practise with limitations, but additional registration requirements must be met in order for the member to be fully licenced. Please list and describe below the alternative classes of licence that your organization grants, such as student, intern, associate, provisional or temporary.

*Enter "n/a" if you do not track this information. Enter "0" if you track the information, but the correct value is zero.*

Additional comments:

	Class of licence	Description
a)	Academic	<p>In order to be eligible for an Academic Certificate of Registration, the applicant must hold a full-time appointment as a faculty member of a university or other optometric educational facility in Ontario approved by the College, and may engage in the practice of optometry only at that university or optometric facility. An applicant for an Academic Certificate of Registration is not required to successfully complete the entry-to-practice exam (CSAO/CACO).</p>
b)		
c)		
d)		
e)		
f)		

g)		
h)		
i)		
j)		

**Reviews and appeals your organization processed in the past year**

f) State the number of reviews and appeals your organization processed in the reporting year (use only whole numbers; do not enter commas or decimals).

from January 1 <sup>st</sup> to December 31 <sup>st</sup> of the reporting year	Jurisdiction where applicants were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Applications that were subject to an internal review or that were referred to a statutory committee of your governing council, such as a Registration Committee	0	0	1	0	0	1
Applicants who initiated an appeal of a registration decision	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appeals heard	0	0	0	0	0	0
Registration decisions changed following an appeal	0	0	0	0	0	0

Enter "n/a" if you do not track this information. Enter "0" if you track the information, but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

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### **Certification (13 / 13)**

I hereby certify that:

- i. I have reviewed the information submitted in this Fair Registration Practices Report (the "Report").
- ii. To the best of my knowledge:
  - all information required to be provided in the Report is included; and
  - the information contained in the Report is accurate.

Name of individual with authority to sign on behalf of the organization: Dr. Paula L. Garshowitz

Title: Registrar

Date: March 23, 2012

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