

REGISTRATION POLICY

Examination and Upgrading

Examination Requirement

It is a non-exemptible requirement under Section 5 (1) 2. of Ontario Regulation 869/93, that any applicant for a certificate of registration as a Registered Optician must have,

“achieved a passing mark in each section of the College’s examinations, or must have successfully completed examinations which are deemed equivalent to the College’s examinations by the Registration Committee.”

The College of Opticians of Ontario (COO) recognizes the National Alliance of Canadian Optician Regulators’ (NACOR) National Examinations as the entry-to-practice examinations. Individuals must complete both the contact lens and eyeglass examinations in order to qualify for a certificate of registration as a registered optician in Ontario. The COO assists in the facilitation of the examinations.

Exam Eligibility

The COO determines the eligibility of examination candidates in Ontario. Applicants are deemed to be eligible for the examination in the following circumstances:

1. **Accredited Education Candidates:** Upon completion of opticianry training in both contact lenses and eyeglasses from an accredited educational institution. These candidates must also hold an active certificate of registration as a registered intern optician with COO.
2. **Unaccredited Education Candidates:** If exam eligibility is conferred by the Registration Committee after successful completion of a competency assessment and/or a specified bridging program. These candidates may obtain certificates of registration as an intern optician with COO prior to attempting the exam.
3. **Candidates Seeking Registration in Other Provinces:** Upon confirmation of eligibility by the applicant’s home province. Examination results will be provided by NACOR to the home province.

Limits on Eligibility

Examination candidates are permitted to attempt the National Examinations a maximum of three times within the three-year period from the time they gain eligibility. After three years, or three attempts, whichever comes first, a candidate’s certificate of registration as a registered intern optician will be revoked-

The following steps must be taken in order for a candidate to once again become eligible to attempt the National Examinations after three years or three unsuccessful attempts:

1. **Eligibility following one or more unsuccessful attempts:** Candidates who attempted the National Examinations one or more times, and were unsuccessful, must take the following steps to be eligible for further attempts:
 - a. Submit a **written request** to the College to be reissued a certificate of registration as an intern optician for the purpose of reattempting the National Examinations. This request should be submitted to registration@collegeofopticians.ca;
 - b. Submit an **upgrading proposal** (together with the required review fee) that outlines the steps that will be taken by the candidate to address any gaps in knowledge. The upgrading proposal will be reviewed by the Registration Committee and must be approved before the candidate can move on to the next step.
 - c. Complete the upgrading requirements and submit **proof** of completion to the College. The upgrading requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the Registration Committee.
2. **Eligibility following a three-year period (no attempts):** Candidates who did not attempt the National Examinations in the three-year period following the time they first became eligible may apply to be reissued a certificate of registration by taking the following steps:
 - a. Submit a **written request** to the College to be reissued a certificate of registration as an intern optician for the purpose of attempting the National Examinations. This request should be submitted to registration@collegeofopticians.ca. The candidate should include details of any additional training or education relating to opticianry that they received during the period since they first became eligible to write the National Examinations.
 - b. The request will be reviewed by the Registration Committee, who may require the candidate to complete a Competency Gap Analysis and/or a refresher program. These requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the Registration Committee.

Upgrading Proposal Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to candidates who are required to submit an upgrading proposal in order to reattempt the National Examinations.

1. **Upgrading Proposal:** An upgrading proposal is a proposal that outlines the steps a candidate will undertake to improve their knowledge. The proposal should focus on areas of the examinations where the candidate was unsuccessful or performed poorly. Upgrading steps may include mentoring, tutoring and/or upgrading courses offered by an accredited educational institution. Candidates should identify the steps they propose to take in their proposal and explain how these steps will address gaps in their knowledge.
2. **Upgrading Mentors/Tutors:** If an applicant wishes to pursue a tutoring or mentoring arrangement, the upgrading proposal should be developed by a mentor/tutor selected by the

applicant. An acceptable mentor would be a registered optician or an optometrist in good standing, with appropriate knowledge, skill, and judgement in the subject matter.

3. **Upgrading Hours:** Regardless of the type of proposal submitted, the Registration Committee usually expects the applicant to complete a minimum of 100 upgrading hours for each examination for which the applicant is seeking a supplemental attempt.
4. **Contents of Proposal:** A suitable upgrading proposal must demonstrate how the proposed mentoring/tutoring or upgrading courses relate to the examination areas where the candidate was previously unsuccessful or where they performed poorly. The proposal should be sufficiently detailed so that the Registration Committee can determine whether the upgrading will satisfactorily address the individual's areas of weakness.
5. **Student Registration:** If the upgrading proposal is acceptable to the Committee, the applicant may be provided with the option of registering with COO for a certificate of registration as a student optician. The Committee will require the applicant to complete the approved upgrading plan within a specified timeframe.

Completion of Upgrading

The applicant is responsible for submitting acceptable evidence of completion of the upgrading plan for the Registration Committee's consideration.

Satisfactory completion of the approved upgrading plan will result in eligibility for one supplemental examination attempt only. For the purposes of writing the examination, the Registration Committee may issue the applicant a certificate of registration as an intern for a period specified by the Registration Committee. If the applicant opts to register as a student optician while completing the upgrading proposal, their registration status will automatically be transferred to a registered intern optician status upon successful completion of the upgrading proposal.