

## Quality Assurance Policy

### Annual Professional Portfolio Requirements

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#### Introduction

The Quality Assurance (QA) Program is designed to ensure that registered opticians maintain a high standard of practice and professionalism and that they deliver safe and competent patient care.

Every year, all registered opticians must complete a Professional Portfolio.

#### Policy

1. All opticians who hold a certificate in the Registered Optician class for any part of the year must complete a Professional Portfolio annually, regardless of whether they engaged in active practice.
2. The Professional Portfolio is due on January 15<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year.
3. The “Portfolio Year” means the year that the Professional Portfolio relates to, and is defined as January 1 of that calendar year to January 15 of the following calendar year.
  - a. *For example, the 2026 Professional Portfolio relates to the 2026 calendar year, so its Portfolio Year runs from January 1, 2026, to January 15, 2027. The 2026 Professional Portfolio is due on January 15, 2027.*
4. The Professional Portfolio consists of the following components:
  - a. **Competency Self-Assessment:** an annual exercise in which the optician is asked to provide their own reflections on their practice and identify learning goals.
  - b. **Professional Development:**
    - i. Registered Opticians must complete 16 continuing education (CE) hours annually, \* broken down as follows:
      - 4 accredited contact lens (CL) hours
      - 4 accredited eyeglass (EG) hours
      - 4 accredited professional growth (PG) hours
      - 4 non-accredited, self-directed hours\*\*

\*16 is the number of CE hours that must be completed by opticians who hold an RO certificate for the *entire calendar year*. CE hours for newly registered ROs and those who are inactive for a portion of the calendar year are pro-rated. For details, please refer to **Appendix A**.

- ii. CE activities must be completed during the same calendar year that the Professional Portfolio relates to (i.e., the Portfolio Year), and hours cannot be carried over into the next calendar year.
    - o CE activities completed between January 1 and January 15 may be counted toward ONE OF the current year OR the previous year's portfolio, but not both.
  - iii. The date reported for each CE activity must correspond to the date the CE activity is actually completed.
  - iv. Registered Opticians must provide a valid completion certificate for all accredited CE activities.
  - v. Self-directed CE hours are self-led activities that support learning, reinforce current practice, and/or build new knowledge and skills relevant to opticianry practice. Dispensing hours may not be claimed as self-directed CE hours.
  - vi. Self-directed CE hours do not require accreditation, and are reported based on the actual amount of time spent engaged in the activity. For more details on the types of activities that may be counted toward the self-directed hour requirement, see **Appendix B**.
- c. **Jurisprudence:** *Jurisprudence Chapter 1: Professional Boundaries and Sexual Abuse Prevention* must be completed by all registrants within 12 months of initial registration, and then once every three (3) years.
- d. All required components of the annual professional portfolios must be completed and uploaded to the Quality Assurance section of the registrant portal by the due date.

#### 5. **Extension or Exemption Requests:**

The College recognizes that extenuating circumstances may occur. If an optician is unable to complete their annual Professional Portfolio requirements, they are encouraged to make a request for an extension or exemption.

- a. Requests for an extension or exemption from some or all Professional Portfolio requirements must be made via the Extension/Exemption Request Form
- b. All requests require approval by the College and are considered on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the following factors:
  - Illness or incapacity
  - Currently not practising (does not have "inactive" status)
  - Serious illness or death of a close family member
  - Loss or destruction of personal records

- Other personal crisis or extenuating circumstances that impact the ability to complete the professional portfolio requirements before the deadline
  - Whether there has been a deferral or exemption granted previously
  - The timing of the request.
- c. All requests must be accompanied by supporting documentation.
- d. An extension, if approved, will extend the deadline to submit the Professional Portfolio by a maximum of 30 days.
- e. An exemption, if approved, will mean that the Registered Optician is no longer required to complete the Professional Portfolio for that calendar year.

## Appendix A

### Continuing Education (CE) Hours – Newly registered opticians

The number of CE hours newly registered opticians are required to complete will depend on when in the year they are registered with the College. This applies to your first year of registration only, starting in your second year, you will be required to complete 16 CE hours.

Date Registered	Contact Lens (CL) Hours	Eyeglass (EG) Hours	Professional Growth (PG) Hours	Non-Accredited, Self-Directed Hours
Jan 1- Mar 31	100% (4)	100% (4)	100% (4)	100% (4)
Apr 1 -June 30	75% (3)	75% (3)	75% (3)	75% (3)
July 1 -Sept 30	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (2)
Oct 1 – Dec 31	25% (1)	25% (1)	25% (1)	25% (1)

### Continuing Education (CE) Requirements – Changing Class of Registration

#### Inactive → Registered Optician

If you move from Inactive to Registered Optician class during the calendar year, you are required to maintain a professional portfolio once you change class. Your CE requirements are prorated based on the date of change.

Date of Change	Contact Lens (CL) Hours	Eyeglass (EG) Hours	Professional Growth (PG) Hours	Non-Accredited, Self-Directed Hours
Jan 1 – Mar 31	100% (4)	100% (4)	100 % (4)	100 % (4)
Apr 1 -June 30	75% (3)	75% (3)	75% (3)	75% (3)
July 1 -Sept 30	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (2)
Oct 1 – Dec 31	25% (1)	25% (1)	25% (1)	25% (1)

## Registered Optician → Inactive

If you move from Registered Optician to inactive during the calendar year, you must maintain a professional portfolio during the time you are active. Your CE hours are pro-rated based on how much of the year you are registered.

Date Registered	Contact Lens (CL) Hours	Eyeglass (EG) Hours	Professional Growth (PG) Hours	Non-Accredited, Self-Directed Hours
Jan 1 – Mar 31	25% (1)	25% (1)	25% (1)	25% (1)
Apr 1 -June 30	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (2)
July 1 -Sept 30	75% (3)	75% (3)	75% (3)	75% (3)
Oct 1 – Dec 31	100% (4)	100% (4)	100% (4)	100% (4)

## Registered Optician ↔ Inactive

If you change class more than once during the calendar year, your CE hours are prorated based on how much of the year you spend in the Registered Optician class. We recommend that you contact the College directly to confirm the number of hours you should complete

Date Registered	Contact Lens (CL) Hours	Eyeglass (EG) Hours	Professional Growth (PG) Hours	Non-Accredited, Self-Directed Hours
1 day - 90 days	25% (1)	25% (1)	25% (1)	25% (1)
91 days – 182 days	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (2)
183 days – 274 days	75% (3)	75% (3)	75% (3)	75% (3)
275 days -365 days	100% (4)	100% (4)	100% (4)	100% (4)

## APPENDIX B

### Non-Accredited, Self-Directed Hours

Self-directed hours are self-led activities that support learning, reinforce current practice, and/or build new knowledge and skills relevant to opticianry practice. They can include any activities that help an optician in their practice. Opticians may not, however, claim regular dispensing hours toward their self-directed CE hour requirement.

Some examples of activities that can be applied toward an optician's self-directed hour requirement include (but are not limited to), provided they are relevant to opticianry practice:

- Supervising or mentoring student/intern opticians
- Participating as a Board or Appointed Member of the College
- Participating as a Professional Association Board Member
- Volunteer events such as unpaid missionary work
- Teaching hours
- Reviewing information (e.g., Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics) on the College website
- Completing consultation and feedback surveys for the College
- Serving as a Peer Assessor for the College
- Serving as an Examiner for NACOR
- Reading journal articles
- Visiting websites
- Attending non-accredited courses, seminars, or professional events
- Participating in non-accredited distance learning activities
- Scholastic (educational institution-based courses)
- Self-study or organized study groups
- Emergency medical course (e.g., First Aid, CPR)

When reporting non-accredited, self-directed hours, you must indicate:

1. Date
2. Time Spent
3. Resource
4. New knowledge/skill gained and the effect on your practice

***Each activity or resource must have a separate entry.***