

Exam 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 Association of Canadian Optician Regulators (NACOR)’s National Examinations as the entry-to-practice examinations. Individuals must complete both the contact lens and eyeglass examinations in order to qualify for registration 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 with COO.
- 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. These candidates should reapply for intern status. After three years, or three attempts, all candidates must submit a request and upgrading proposal to the Registration Committee, which must be approved and completed to the satisfaction of the Registration Committee, before any further attempt of the examination will be permitted. The Registration Committee may require a candidate to complete upgrading and remediation.

Upgrading Proposal Guidelines

An applicant requesting consideration of an upgrading proposal will be subject to the Registration Committee review fee.

The requirements for upgrading are at the discretion of the Registration Committee; however, the general upgrading guidelines are as follows:

1. **Upgrading Proposal:** An applicant may elect to submit an upgrading proposal to the Registration Committee which consists of mentoring, tutoring and/or upgrading courses offered by an accredited educational institution.
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 an 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 correlate 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. 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 opted to register as a student while completing the upgrading proposal, their registration status will automatically be transferred to intern status by COO.