

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

KEY FACTS

Programme name	Clinical Optometry
Award	MSc
School	School of Health & Psychological Sciences
Department or equivalent	Optometry and Visual Sciences
Programme code	PSCOPM
Type of study	Full-time/Part Time
Total UK credits	180
Total ECTS	90

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The key purpose of the MSc in Clinical Optometry programme is to provide optometrists with up-to-date research-based and theoretical knowledge of a wide range of fields, particularly in primary care optometry. Emphasis is placed on 'shared-care' or 'co-management' of patients with other medical disciplines and the expansion of the optometrist's role in ocular therapeutics. The programme integrates clinical and theoretical knowledge, making extensive use of expert practitioners. The programme enables optometrists to continue development and accumulation of knowledge and expertise relating to ocular health care and vision science during their professional careers.

The programme will provide you with an opportunity to enhance your career prospects in this field through gaining both an academic qualification and a professional qualification with either the General Optical Council or the College of Optometrists (where appropriate).

The programme provides a range of modules which include between 15 and 60 credit modules at MSc level. The programme provides you with a choice of exit routes but modules can also be taken as stand-alone courses.

By completing the MSc in Clinical Optometry you will have demonstrated original application of knowledge to the field of Optometry and clinical decision making in relation to practice. You will have been engaged in research that contributes new views to this area.

Those of you who exit the programme with a Postgraduate Diploma will have explored knowledge related to the field of Clinical Optometry from different perspectives to broaden your expertise and skills. You will also have critically evaluated current evidence in the field and provided appropriate critiques of knowledge and techniques in relation to this.

If you exit the programme at Postgraduate Certificate level you will have been enabled to examine theories related to Clinical Optometry and be able to synthesise and apply these to practice. You will have gained critical insight into problems that may arise in this area and be able to consider problem solving mechanisms. You will also be able to use a range of techniques to undertake your scholarly work.

Aims

The overall educational aim of the MSc is to provide postgraduate education which:

- Is underpinned by clinical practice and research
- Integrates the development of scientific/theoretical knowledge and clinical skills
- Enables you to contribute to the development of your profession
- Uses a variety of teaching and clinically appropriate assessment methods
- Is enjoyable and intellectually challenging
- Provides a supportive environment and uses appropriate learning resources
- Further develops your analytical, critical and problem-solving faculties and your ability to produce original work
- Fosters your personal development
- Develops reflective practitioners
- Enables you to practice safely by affirming:
 - an appropriate level of competence
 - a level of self-awareness that encourages recognition of your own limits
 - the knowledge to meet likely future developments in optometric practice

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of this programme, you will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Provide enhanced clinical care to your patients
- Demonstrate in-depth and systematic understanding of ocular and systemic disease affecting the eye
- Evaluate and critically appraise new and up-dated research-based knowledge in the relevant optometric field
- Enlarge your knowledge and experience of new diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and equipment
- Manage patients effectively with an awareness of ethical dilemmas

Skills:

- Justify appropriate clinical decision making and evaluate and assess the undertaking of appropriate clinical examinations
- Synthesise information from a number of complex, incomplete or contradictory sources in order to gain knowledge and understanding

- Apply the independent skills required for academic study and enquiry
- Interpret and critically review research and methodologies and argue alternative approaches
- Act appropriately given certain clinical data, implementing guidelines and deciding on the most appropriate patient management strategy
- Demonstrate the independent learning ability required for continuing professional study
- Self evaluate in order to improve practice
- Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of optometric topics and be critically aware of research and theoretical issues surrounding clinical practice
- Analyse with critical professional awareness in order to solve clinical issues
- Exercise initiative and personal responsibility in professional practice, making use of other professional disciplines where necessary
- Competently undertake research tasks with minimum guidance
- Communicate effectively with individuals, academics and other healthcare professionals
- Develop new clinical skills and procedures

Values and attitudes:

- Use appropriate interpersonal and communication skills
- Show an appropriate professional attitude towards patients and colleagues
- Show an awareness of ethical practice

Registration Period

The normal period of registration for a Master's degree is one year's taught programme for full-time students (plus up to one year for dissertation) or two years' taught programme for part-time students (plus up to one year for dissertation). The maximum period of registration for the MSc is 3 years full-time and 5 years part-time.

HOW WILL I LEARN?

Time commitments

Full-time: one year for taught modules, plus up to one year for dissertation

Part-time: up to two years for taught modules, plus up to one year for dissertation.

Postgraduate taught and distance learning modules offered by the Department are designed to satisfy the rapidly changing academic, clinical and professional development needs of hospital and community optometrists working in specialist practice. Teaching and assessment methods are tailored to the learning objectives of each module component.

A blended approach to learning and teaching is adopted including university-based

taught modules; e-learning and work-based learning. Modules are delivered by experienced practitioners and leading researchers, using a variety of direct and interactive teaching methods. You will learn in large and small multi-disciplinary groups and will be supported and encouraged to participate in independent learning.

The range of teaching methods is wide and includes lectures (face-to-face and on-line), tutorials, advanced clinical training, clinical demonstrations, videos and discussion of clinical scenarios and action learning sets. Discussion forums, interactive seminars, peer reviewing work-based examples and clinically focussed critical reflections via a case review process are also included. Lectures are used to communicate core material and as a foundation for further reading. Practical classes and clinical skills laboratories provide opportunities to develop practical skills and to give demonstrations of techniques covered in lectures. Many lectures are delivered by external specialists, giving access to current issues, research and methods in the field. Module notes are accessible via Moodle, however, you are expected to take notes and undertake thorough background reading. Reading lists are provided for this purpose. The module 'Principles of Therapeutics' uses Moodle with academic support via email. There is a significant amount of independent study within each module (e.g. 120 hours/15 PG credit module) and this time is for you to read literature related to the modules you are studying and to reflect on your clinical practice.

There will be extensive use of City's Virtual Learning Platform – Moodle for a more interactive learning experience.

At Masters level these strategies are aimed at developing your ability to challenge current limits of theory and research and creatively use solutions to solve problems. You will engage in full professional and academic communication critically debating and evaluating personal performance and that of others.

City provides a rich a varied learning environment, and as a Masters student you are expected to fully avail yourself of all the opportunities, and to work in a manner conducive to your own learning style and professional ambitions.

All optometry modules are eligible for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points approved by the General Optical Council.

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

A three-hour examination is normally held some 8-10 weeks after the module. Methods of assessment vary between modules, to reflect their differences in structure and content. The modular examinations may include any combination of the following:-

- A multiple choice question (MCQ) paper (which will normally include questions from each lecturer on the module)
- Visual recognition and interpretation of clinical signs tests (VRICS) (involving analysis of a series of slides/photographs)
- Patient management case scenarios (a photograph and/or case history documenting observations following the presentation of a patient)

- An objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) examination
- A professional practice portfolio that incorporates inclusion of self-reflection, peer review evidence and additional data that informs the evaluation of your role in a contemporary health care context
- Minilabs
- Peer reviewed publication

Some modules have more than one assessment component and the weighting for each assessment component is outlined clearly within the module specification.

A range of City support services will be available to you, such as Students Union, Counselling Services etc. and the Postgraduate Programme Director and the Personal Tutor may guide you to these services.

Assessment and Assessment Criteria

Assessments are varied to meet the practice and academic challenges of a Masters level course, while recognising the need for motivating, realistic and relevant activity. The means of assessment will be influenced by the focus and learning outcomes of the modules and includes coursework, examinations, portfolios, minilabs, case studies, reports, seminar presentations and skills schedules. You may also be expected to take part in formative assessment activities during the modules in addition to the summative assessments.

Assessment Criteria are descriptions, based on the intended learning outcomes, of the skills, knowledge or attitudes that you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully, providing a mechanism by which the quality of work can be measured. Grade-Related Criteria are descriptions of the level of skills, knowledge or attributes that you need to demonstrate in order to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment, providing a mechanism by which the quality of an assessment can be measured and placed within the overall set of marks. Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria will be made available to you to support you in completing assessments. These will be provided on the virtual learning environment or attached to a specific assessment task.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in line with our Assessment and Feedback Policy. For end of module examinations or an equivalent significant task, feedback will normally be provided within four weeks of the submission deadline or assessment date. In the case of smaller pieces of work you will normally be provided with feedback within three weeks. This would normally include a provisional grade or mark. The timescale for feedback on final year projects or dissertations may be longer. The full policy can be found at: https://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/452565/Assessment-and-Feedback-Policy...pdf

Assessment Regulations

In order to pass your Programme, you should complete successfully or be exempted from the relevant modules and assessments and will therefore acquire the required

number of credits. You also need to pass each Programme Stage of your Programme in order to progress to the following Programme Stage.

The pass mark for each module is 50%. Where the module requires more than one assessment, the contribution of each to the final mark is stated in the module specification.

In the event of a fail mark being awarded, the following will apply:

Resit: You will normally be offered one resit attempt.

If you are successful in the resit, you will be awarded the credit for that module. The mark for each assessment component that is subject to a resit will be capped at the pass mark for the module. The capped mark will be used in the calculation of the final module mark together with the original marks for the component(s) that you passed at first attempt.

If you do not meet the pass requirements for a module and do not complete your resit by the date specified you will not progress and the Assessment Board will require that you be withdrawn from the Programme.

If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme, the Assessment Board will consider whether you are eligible for an Exit Award as per the table below.

If you would like to know more about the way in which assessment works at City, please see the full version of the Assessment Regulations at:

https://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/453652/s19.pdf

WHAT AWARD CAN I GET?

Master's Degree:

Programme Stage	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
Taught	7	120	66.5	With Distinction	70
Dissertation	7	60	33.5	With Merit	60
				Without classification	50

Postgraduate Diploma:

Programme Stage	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
Taught	7	120	100	With Distinction	70
				With Merit	60
				Without classification	50

Postgraduate Certificate:

To exit with a Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Optometry, you will be required to complete any of the modules included in the programme, up to a value of 60 credits.

Your choice of modules should be undertaken in consultation with your programme director.

Programme Stage	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
Taught	7	60	100	With Distinction	70
				With Merit	60
				Without classification	50

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will study two core modules, and you can choose a further six modules from a choice of 10 discipline-specific modules. If you are part-time, you should aim to take two modules per term over two years. If you are full-time, you take four modules per term over one year.

This list is not binding, as new modules become available from time to time and will be offered if they are appropriate. Similarly, some modules may become obsolete, and will be withdrawn. Some modules are only run every second year so it is important to make your module choice in advance and in close consultation with your programme director. If an elective module has less than a certain number of registered students (typically around 10) it may not run, or may only be offered every second year so please check with your programme director. You will find your core, discipline specific and some elective modules listed in the table below. You can see a full list of possible elective modules from the range of MSc programmes offered in the School of Health & Psychological Sciences at www.city.ac.uk/health/courses. If you wish to take an elective module that is not listed below, please do so in consultation with your programme director.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Discipline specific elective/Elective	Can be compensated?	Level
Research Methods and Applied Data Analysis (on-line)	HRM001	30	Core	No	7
Professional Certificate in Glaucoma	OVM006	15	Discipline specific elective –	No	7
Professional Certificate in Medical Retina	OVM056	15	Discipline specific elective –	No	7
Professional Certificate in Low Vision	OVM013	15	Discipline specific elective –	No	7
Principles of Therapeutics (via Moodle)	OVM050	15	Discipline specific elective –	No	7
Principles of Prescribing (on-line)	OVM058	15	Discipline specific elective –	No	7

Independent Prescribing	OVM053	15	Discipline specific elective –	No	7
Clinical Management Guidelines	OVM061	15	Discipline specific elective –	No	7

You may begin carrying out your dissertation during the year but you are only able to submit it once you have completed all the taught modules successfully.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Can be Compensated?	Level
Dissertation	APM002	60	Core	No	7

TO WHAT KIND OF CAREER MIGHT I GO ON?

This programme is aimed at optometrists who work in community or hospital optometric practice. The programme will provide you with an opportunity to enhance your career prospects in the field of clinical optometry through gaining both an academic qualification and a professional qualification with either the General Optical Council or the College of Optometrists (where appropriate).

If you would like more information on the Careers support available at City, please go to: <http://www.city.ac.uk/careers/for-students-and-recent-graduates>.

WHAT STUDY ABROAD OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

- N/A

WHAT PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE?

- N/A

WILL I GET ANY PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION?

- 1) The General Optical Council accredits the following modules:
- Principles of Therapeutics
 - Principles of Prescribing (exit for Additional Supply)
 - Independent Prescribing

Students completing the final examination must be qualified for at least two years. Following successful completion of the theoretical component of the prescribing programme, trainees are eligible to undertake a 5 day (Additional Supply) or a 12 day (Independent Prescribing) clinical placement. The Learning in Practice Component of the

training is examined by the College of Optometrists during the Common Final Assessment (CFA) for specialist qualifications in therapeutics (Additional Supply/Independent Prescribing).

Completing all parts of the prescribing programme including the College of Optometrists' Final Assessment (following RPEL) enables you to use the credits towards a Diploma or MSc. The Learning in Practice component coupled with success at the College of Optometrists Common Final Assessment is the equivalent of 15 PG credits via RPEL. Further information can be found at: <http://www.college-optometrists.org/>

2) The College of Optometrists

The College of Optometrists accredit the following modules in providing 'The Professional Certificate in'.

- Glaucoma
- Low Vision
- Medical Retina

The College of Optometrists' Independent Prescribing Common Final Assessment is a means by which candidates demonstrate that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to be eligible for specialist registration with the GOC.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.college-optometrists.org/>

HOW DO I ENTER THE PROGRAMME?

The MSc is a flexible, taught postgraduate modular programme based on an intensive three-day modular programme design, thus allowing maximum flexibility in terms of entry and exit to the programme. Candidates are usually UK-registered optometrists who must satisfy all legal requirements to be eligible to practise as optometrists in the UK, and should be registered with the General Optical Council.

Overseas students:

An Honours degree in Optometry or professional optometric qualification of home country will be required – clinical experience and responsibilities must be current and similar to a UK optometrist. **Non-UK optometrists will be expected to attend interview in person or via Skype to ensure practitioners have the relevant clinical skills to complete the programme.**

All entrants to the Programme must be in possession of a relevant first degree.

The normal entry requirements are:

- A first degree (2:1 class or above) or equivalent, in a relevant subject from an approved institution of higher education.
- A satisfactory academic reference and a satisfactory clinical reference.

Applicants will be able to bring to the programme recent studies (up to 45 credits) taken elsewhere, and thereby be exempted from two or more modules.

For students whose first language is not English, the following qualifications will meet the English language requirement for entry to a post graduate course of study:

- A first degree from a UK university
- A first degree from an overseas institution recognised by City as providing adequate evidence of proficiency in the English language, for example, from institutions in Australia, Canada or the USA
- International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) a score of 7.0 is required with no subtest scoring below 6.5.
- Pearson Test of English (Academic) score 72 required
- TOEFL 100 overall with 24 in Writing, 20 in Listening, 19 Reading and 20 Speaking
- Other evidence of proficiency in the English language, which satisfies the board of studies concerned.

RPL/RPEL Requirements

In line with Senate Regulation 19, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) will be considered for any student who has pursued appropriate studies in this or another institution or who possesses appropriate qualifications.

RPL will be permitted where the Programme Committee has assessed the claim in terms of acceptability, sufficiency, authenticity, currency and level and can demonstrate that the student's previously assessed or experiential learning meets all the learning outcomes stated in the Module Specification for the module for which they are to be awarded credit.

The limit to the volume of credit that can be permitted through RPL is outlined in Senate Regulation 19.

<https://www.city.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/city-university-of-london-senate-regulations>

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