

**HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA
THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR OPTOMETRY AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

SUBJECT	PROCEDURE FOR THE FACILITATION OF REGISTRATION OF FOREIGN QUALIFIED OPTOMETRISTS AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS	DOC NO:	SOP001
COMPILED BY:	EDUCATION, TRAINING AND REGISTRATION COMMITTEE	REVISION NO:	01
APPROVED BY:	PROFESSIONAL BOARD OPTOMETRY AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS	Page 1 of 11	
APPROVAL SIGNATURE:		EFFECTIVE DATE	03 Oct 2018



**PROFESSIONAL BOARD
FOR
OPTOMETRY AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

**GUIDELINE FOR THE REGISTRATION OF
FOREIGN QUALIFIED OPTOMETRISTS AND
DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

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1. DEFINITIONS

Unless the context otherwise indicates

- 1.1 **“Act”** means the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974);
- 1.2 **“Board”** means the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians;
- 1.3 **“Deputy Company Secretary”** means the Manager for the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians;
- 1.4 **“Foreign qualifications”** means Qualifications obtained in countries other than South Africa.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 This guideline is intended to assist an applicant who wishes to register as an Optometrist or a Dispensing Optician with the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians of the Health Professions Council of South Africa.
- 2.2 To outline the process to be followed by both the applicant and the Board for consideration of applications.
- 2.3 To identify and guide the relevant parties on the required tasks in the application process.

3. SCOPE

This guideline applies to foreign qualified Optometrists and or Dispensing Opticians who wish to register with the HPCSA in terms of the Act.

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4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- In order to avoid delays in the processing of applications, **correctly certified** documents as per the requirements of the Board should be submitted **in one batch** (refer to item 7 below, SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS TO THE HPCSA)
- Applications submitted by **facsimile (fax)** will not be accepted.
- All documentation required by the Board should be submitted in English. Where applicable, only original translations of the required documents done by a sworn translator and duly sealed and notarised will be accepted. In addition to such English translations, legible copies of the original documents, certified and duly sealed by a Notary Public should be submitted.
- Should there be any further documentation that may be required, the applicant will be notified within one month upon receipt of the application prior to processing of the application.

5. PREREQUISITES/ PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- An applicant must hold a qualification equivalent to the recognised South African qualification under the ambit of the Board, i.e. B.Optomety. or Dip. Optical Dispensing. *See the attached qualifications outline of outcomes competencies.*
- To comply with the requirements above, applicants are required to have all the relevant academic qualifications evaluated by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), in order to determine their status in relation to the recognised qualifications. A request for an evaluation should be submitted to SAQA. For more details on the submission process, applicants are advised to visit SAQA's website - www.saqa.org.za or contact SAQA directly.

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6.2. DIPLOMA IN OPTICAL DISPENSING

Three years qualification: **Y** or **N**

Describe the qualification period/ structure if you ticked No above:

Course Required	Course content and minimum requirements

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7. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS TO THE HPCSA.

The following documentation shall be submitted to the HPCSA:

1. The application Form 176 ODO duly completed.
2. The documents stated below to be certified by an attorney in his/ her capacity as Notary Public and bearing the official stamp. NB: Copies certified by a Commissioner of Oaths **will not be accepted.**
 - a) Copies of all degree/diploma certificates or similar academic qualifications, including the relevant practical training requirements.
 - b) Original transcripts of academic record issued by your educational institution indicating course content of each qualification referred to above.
 - c) A Certificate of Evaluation of academic qualifications issued by SAQA.
 - d) A clear copy of a valid Passport or Identity Document as proof of current citizenship.
 - e) A recent original Certificate of Status (Certificate of Good Standing) issued by the foreign registration authority where the applicant is currently registered, indicating that the applicant is in good standing. The certificate must have **been issued within the preceding three months.**
 - f) A letter of endorsement issued by the national Department of Health for a registration in terms of regulation 2(1), (2), (3) or (4), confirming the employability or placement of the applicant, or a letter of endorsement issued by the prospective employer for a registration in terms of regulation 2(5), (7) or (8), or confirmation of enrolment for postgraduate studies issued by the educational institution concerned for registration in terms of regulation 2(6).
 - g) A certificate from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) demonstrating the applicant's proficiency in English if the

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qualification was obtained in any other language except in English. An overall Band score of 6 must be obtained, with the exception of the 'Speaking' section, where a score of a minimum of 7 must be obtained.

- h) An up to date Curriculum Vitae (CV) clearly detailing the applicant's work experience or employment history.
- i) A letter from the previous employer/s confirming employment as per CV. In a case where the applicant had his or her own practice, an affidavit/ certified letter on a letterhead with confirmation by one (1) witness is required to provide evidence that the applicant has been practicing;
- j) Applicants may be required to submit any other document in addition to the above minimum requirements, which may assist the Board to review the application objectively.

Submission of applications/Enquiries:

Duly completed application forms and supporting documentation or written enquiries may be sent to:

The Registrar
HPCSA
P O Box 205
PRETORIA
0001

8. PROCEDURE FOR THE EVALUATION/ ASSESSMENT OF DOCUMENTS SUPPLIED BY APPLICANTS.

- All applications will be forwarded for the attention of the Deputy Company Secretary.
- The Education and Training Division will review the application for completeness and accuracy in accordance with the requirements stipulated in item 7 of this document.

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- The Education and Training Division will, in line with the status of the application, recommend in writing one of the following actions: That:-
 - a) Applicants who meet the requirements be duly informed of the outcome and that they are permitted to sit for the board examination (theory and clinical).
 - b) Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements be duly informed that their application is declined.
 - c) Applicants who have provided incomplete applications or documents, or where clarity is sought; their application be referred back to them for correction and/or clarification, or be requested to send additional information for their application to be re-evaluated.

9. BOARD EXAMINATION

For detailed information, reference may be made to the Board Examination Guideline.

- The Examiner(s) will be allocated (as appointed by the Board) upon receipt of the recommendation from the Deputy Company Secretary, that the applicant be granted admission to sit for board examination.
- The Board Examination logistical arrangements (dates, venue, etc.) will be communicated with the candidate (applicant) through the Education and Training Division. The applicant will be provided with the details of the appointed examiner as well as the examination guide.
- An examination fee is payable prior to participating in the Board examination. Reference may be made to the latest fees payable as published.
- The main Examiner will arrange for the appointment of a Moderator and conduct the Board Examination in line with the **BOARD EXAMINATION GUIDELINES**.

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- The main Examiner together with the Moderator will complete the **EXAMINATION REPORT** detailing the outcome of the examination and then forward the report to the Education and Training Division for further processing.
- Upon receipt of the Examination Report, the Education and Training Division will inform the applicant in writing about the outcome of the examination;
- A successful candidate will be recommended for registration in the relevant category as per Examination Report.

10. REGISTRATION

- Successful applicants will be required to submit to the Registrations department of the HPCSA:-
 - a) a copy of the letter issued to them by the Board with the recommended registration category;
 - b) a formal offer of employment (where necessary);
 - c) the prescribed registration fee;
 - d) the required documentation as would be outlined in the letter.
- In addition to the registration fee, applicants are required to pay a **pro-rata annual fee (Refer to the latest published fees of the HPCSA)**.
- The registration certificate will be issued by the CPD, Registrations and Records Department after the submission of all requested documentation and the amount payable.

11. FEES

- All fees payable to the HPCSA for the administration of applications are non-refundable irrespective of the outcome of the application and examination process.

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12. RECORDS

- All records generated during the execution of duties prescribed by this guideline shall be submitted to the Deputy Company Secretary for safe keeping, in line with the policies of the HPCSA.

13. SUBMISSION OF REGISTRATION RECORDS TO THE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND REGISTRATION COMMITTEE (ETRC) OF THE BOARD

- The Education and Training Division shall submit all records of processed applications by foreign qualified practitioners for the period preceding the ETRC and Board meetings, for noting.