

# Advisory Panel Member Appointments: Candidate Information pack

**Education Committee** (Three vacancies: one dispensing optician and two optometrists)

**Registration Committee** (Three vacancies: two dispensing opticians and one optometrist)

**Standards Committee** (Three vacancies: one dispensing optician and two optometrists)

**Ref: GOC04/24**

**August 2024**

This information pack is available in alternative formats (for example large print). Please submit your request to the Governance team ([appointment@optical.org](mailto:appointment@optical.org))

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## Welcome letter



Thank you for expressing your interest in becoming a Committee member and a member of our Advisory Panel at the GOC.

It is essential for public protection and confidence in the professions that our Council has access to a wide range of expertise on our committees. Each committee plays a vital role in enhancing our work and informing the decisions made by our Council.

This is a great opportunity for personal development. The work is challenging, varied and you will be able to learn from the experiences of your committee colleagues as well as sharing your own.

We are looking for individuals who bring a fresh perspective and we particularly welcome applications from candidates who can reflect the mix of our registrants and patients. You will need to be able to demonstrate effective communication skills and be able to develop constructive and supportive working relationships.

We would welcome applications from individuals who are disabled and from diverse ethnic backgrounds as these are currently under-represented on our committees.

Being a committee member gives you the opportunity to share your particular skills and experience while learning from others too. We are committed to supporting personal and professional development in the role.

If you welcome the challenge of helping to shape optical regulation at this time, we will be delighted to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Dr Anne Wright CBE, Council Chair**  
**July 2024**

## Timeline

Key dates for this appointment are as follows:

### Application Deadline

Sunday 8 September 2024

### Interviews

Week commencing 11 and/ or 18 November 2024

### Appointment Start Date

1 January 2025 (with the exception of the dispensing optician member of Education Committee who will start 1 July 2025)

### Induction\*

Week Commencing 6 January 2025

**Key contact:** Please email [appointment@optical.org](mailto:appointment@optical.org) for further information and we will aim respond to your query within 48 hours. Please quote reference **GOC04/24** on all correspondence.

# About the GOC

## Background

We are the regulator for the optical professions in the UK. We currently register around 33,000 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student opticians and optical businesses.

We are a registered charity and have an annual income of approximately £11 million. We employ approximately 100 staff, supported by about 130 members. Our twelve strong Council fulfils the trustee role for the organisation and ensure that we deliver our core functions, use our resources effectively and fulfil our statutory responsibilities as a regulator and charity. The Council's decision-making is informed by advice from its committees, which include its Education, Registration, Standards and Companies committees. You can read more about us in [our annual report for 2022/23](#).

## We have four core functions:

**Setting standards for the performance and conduct of our registrants**

**Approving qualifications leading to registration**

**Maintaining a register of those who are qualified and fit to practise, to train or carry on business as optometrists and dispensing opticians**

**Investigating and acting where registrants' fitness to practise, to train or carry on business may be impaired**

## Legislation

Our primary legislation is the Opticians Act 1989 (as amended) and we also have a series of related rules that describe how we carry out our statutory functions. This information can be found on our [website](#).

## Our values

The interests of patients and the general public are at the heart of all we do, and we aspire to the timeless seven (Nolan) public sector principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership).

Our values underpin the way we work with each other, and with the public, our registrants and partner organisations:

- We act with **integrity**
- We pursue **excellence**
- We **respect** other people and ideas
- We are **agile** and responsive to change
- We show **empathy**
- We behave **fairly**

# The Committees and the Advisory Panel

The Council's committees (Companies, Education, Registration and Standards) are established by statute for the purpose of giving advice and assistance to Council (whether or not in response to a request from them) on:

- matters relating to business registrants other than matters required by the Opticians Act to be referred to the Investigation Committee, the Registration Appeals Committee or the Fitness to Practise Committee;
- matters relating to optical training, education and assessment;
- matters relating to registration, other than matters required by the Opticians Act to be considered by the Registration Appeals Committee; and
- matters relating to the standards of conduct and performance expected of registrants or those seeking admission to the register.

The Advisory Panel is a meeting of the four Council's committees in plenary session. The committees and the Advisory Panel meet about twice a year. You can read the current terms of reference for the [Advisory Panel](#).

We are seeking:

- **one dispensing optician and two optometrists** to join our Education Committee;
- **two dispensing opticians and one optometrist** to join our Registration Committee; and
- **one dispensing optician and two optometrists** to join our Standards Committee.

We've provided a description of each of the committees below, with a link to its terms of reference.

***Please note that applicants cannot be appointed to more than one committee.***

## Education Committee

The purpose of the Education Committee ("the Committee") is to advise and give assistance to the Council (whether or not in response to a request from them) on matters relating to optical training, education and assessment including the requirements (outcomes and standards) for the approval of qualifications leading to the entry to the register or a register category and their quality assurance and enhancement. The Committee may also be required to provide advice to the Chief Executive and Registrar.

[See the Terms of reference.](#)

**For this committee we are seeking one dispensing optician and two optometrists.**

## **Registration Committee**

The purpose of the Registration Committee (“the Committee”) is to advise and give assistance to the Council (whether or not in response to a request from them) on matters relating to registration, other than matters required by the Opticians Act 1989 (as amended) to be considered by the Registration Appeals Committee. The Committee may also be required to provide advice to the Chief Executive and Registrar.

[See the Terms of reference.](#)

**For this committee we are seeking two dispensing opticians and one optometrist.**

## **Standards Committee**

The purpose of the Standards Committee (“the Committee”) is to advise and give assistance to the Council (whether or not in response to a request from them) on matters relating to the standards of behaviour and performance expected of registrants or those seeking admission to a register. The Committee may also be required to provide advice to the Chief Executive and Registrar.

[See the Terms of reference.](#)

**For this committee we are seeking one dispensing optician and two optometrists.**

## **Companies Committee**

The purpose of the Companies Committee (“the Committee”) is to advise and give assistance to the Council (whether or not in response to a request from them) on matters relating to business registrants, other than matters required by the Opticians Act 1989 (as amended) to be considered by the Investigation Committee, the Registration Appeals Committee or the Fitness to Practise Committee. The Committee may also be required to provide advice to the Chief Executive and Registrar.

[See the Terms of reference.](#)

**We will be recruiting for this committee later in 2024.**





# Appointment information and expectation

## Remuneration and Time Commitment

A daily fee of £319 will be paid. This is in line with our [member fees policy](#) and [member fee schedule](#). This is taxable and subject to Class 1 National Insurance (NI) contributions. It is not pensionable.

Members can claim expenses for travel and subsistence costs incurred on Council business as set out in our [expenses policy](#).

This role is part time with a commitment of approximately 2-3 days per year, including time spent preparing for meetings. Meetings will usually take place via Microsoft Teams but may on occasion be held at the GOC Offices at 10 Old Bailey, London EC4M 7NG or other suitable venues.

## Appointment and Tenure of Office

The initial appointment will be for a maximum of four years, and committee members may be reappointed for a further four years. Reappointment is undertaken annually.

This role is a public appointment / statutory office, rather than a job, and is therefore not subject to the provisions of employment law.

## Member Reviews

All Advisory Panel members are required to take part in our [member review process](#), which involves self-assessment and one to one meetings with the relevant Chair. A satisfactory review will normally be required for Advisory Panel members to continue to hold office.

## Learning and Development

Appropriate learning and induction will be provided and tailored to the appointed candidates. Induction will take place prior to appointment where possible. All members are expected to undertake routine refresher training on key areas, such as information governance and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), as a condition of appointment.

## Standards in Public Life

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct including impartiality, integrity and objectivity in the execution of the role and its responsibilities.

To ensure that these values are maintained by those in public service, the successful candidate will be required to subscribe to our code of conduct on appointment.

You must also confirm that you understand the standards of probity required by public appointees outlined in the “Seven Principles of Public Life”. These principles are included within our [Code of Conduct](#).

## Disqualification

Appointments to healthcare professional regulatory bodies are governed by regulations which include details of the circumstances in which an individual may be disqualified from holding office.

The criteria for disqualification from appointment as a member are set out in Part 2 of [The General Optical Council \(Constitution\) Order 2009](#).

Please read this carefully before you submit an application.

## Management of Interests

You should note your requirement to declare any interests you hold which relate to the advertised role. These are:

- Business or personal interests that might be relevant to our work, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest were you to be appointed, should be declared at the application stage.
- Any close personal relationships with any GOC employees, workers or Council, committee or Hearings Panel members. Any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest will be fully explored by the selection panel at shortlisting and interview stage. Candidates will be given an opportunity to propose how they would manage or eliminate the conflict.

It is possible that certain interests will not be manageable or might be dealt with as a condition of appointment (for example, a candidate needing to terminate their conflicting activity to take up the role).

**We strongly recommend that you read our [Management of Interests policy](#) and consider any interests that may conflict with the role before deciding to apply.**

Examples of interests that will require the candidate to give up their interest prior to taking up appointment as a committee member include:

- member of the GOC Hearings Panel or Investigation Committee;
- GOC Case Examiner;
- GOC employee;
- GOC Education Visitor Panel member; and
- Independent members of the GOC non-statutory committees including Audit, Risk and Finance Committee; Nominations Committee or Remuneration Committee.

On appointment you will be required to declare any interests you hold which could conflict or be perceived to conflict with your role as a member. To be transparent, these interests will be published on our website.

If you wish to discuss an interest before submitting your application, please email [appointment@optical.org](mailto:appointment@optical.org) or call the Governance team on 0207 307 3934.

# Person specification

Candidates will be required to provide in their application examples of how their experience matches the essential criteria outlined below.

Essential Criteria
1. A GOC registrant (either a dispensing optician/ contact lens optician or an optometrist) with an active interest in the area of responsibility for the committee to which you are applying.
2. Demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion; able to evidence how individual and collective actions make a difference to progressing the equality agenda and decision making.
3. Ability to listen, communicate and participate constructively in active debate and decision-making within a multi-disciplinary group or committee.
4. Ability to evaluate, assess and distil substantial volumes of documentation
5. Ability to, as part of a committee, exercise sound judgement in formulating advice, making recommendations or reaching decisions.
6. Ability to act strategically and understand the broader context of decisions, and consider long-term and big-picture perspectives when preparing advice in respect to the GOC's overall strategic direction and regulatory activities.

We are committed to working in a fair and transparent manner, free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to promoting equality, valuing diversity, being inclusive, and meeting our equality duties.

We will not discriminate on age; disability; gender reassignment; race/ethnicity; religion or belief; gender; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy; maternity; or geographical location.

# How to apply

## Your application

Please apply with the following:

- your CV outlining your employment history, any relevant voluntary work, public service or other experience; together with any relevant professional, academic or vocational qualifications;
- the application form, stating how your experience matches the essential criteria for the vacancy you are applying for; and
- complete the [EDI monitoring form](#).

**Please indicate in your application form the committee you are applying for. Please note that applicants cannot be appointed to more than one committee.**

## Equality monitoring

We would particularly welcome applications from individuals who are disabled and from diverse ethnic backgrounds as these are currently under-represented on our Council and committees.

When submitting your application, you will also be asked to complete equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) monitoring information. This is to ensure all candidates are treated fairly through our process.

Please note the information you submit will be treated in the strictest confidence and used for monitoring purposes only. This will be separated from your application and will not be seen by anyone directly involved in the selection process.

## Deadline

Please complete your application by **midnight Sunday 8th September 2024**. Please **email your completed application to [appointment@optical.org](mailto:appointment@optical.org)**.

If you have any questions, please email them to [appointment@optical.org](mailto:appointment@optical.org) and we will aim to respond to you within 48 hours. You may also contact us by telephone 0207 307 3934.

# Appointments process

We will process your application as quickly as possible and keep you informed at key stages. **Please read the information below carefully, which outlines important information and our process once we receive your application:**

- We will acknowledge receipt of your CV, application and EDI form (by email) and check it for completeness and eligibility.
- There will be a shortlisting stage and if candidates are successful they will be invited to interview with an appointments panel. The appointments panel for these appointments will be comprised of one lay member, one registrant member and one independent member.
- The appointment panel membership can be subject to change at short notice. We will confirm the final membership of the panel when inviting you to interview.
- The appointment panel will rely on the information you provide in your application form and CV to determine whether you have demonstrated that you meet selection criteria as set out in the person specification. All applications are anonymised at the shortlisting stage.
- Where 30 or more applications are received for a role, applications will be “pre-assessed” by two members of the appointment panel before being forwarded to the full appointments panel for consideration.
- Candidates shortlisted for interview will be notified in the week commencing **28 October 2024**.
- If you have **not** heard from us by this date, please assume you have not been invited to interview. This will be confirmed to you via email at a later date. Please note that individual feedback will only be available to candidates who attend interview (but are not appointed).
- Interviews will take place remotely via Microsoft Teams on week commencing **11 and/ or 18 November 2024**.
- Where a candidate is unable to attend an interview on the published dates, the selection panel *may* consider a new date, but at their discretion and in light of those interviewed first time.
- If invited to interview, the selection panel will question you about your experience and expertise and ask specific questions to find whether you meet the selection criteria.

- Written references from two referees, including one from a professional colleague who has worked with you closely in the last three years, and other due diligence checks (including Google/LinkedIn/Facebook/X (formerly Twitter) searches, director/trustee checks) will be undertaken for shortlisted candidates **before interview**. Please ensure that your referees are aware and will be able to respond when contacted.
- These checks are undertaken to appropriately identify any potential conflicts of interest, and that there is nothing in the candidate's past which would render them ineligible or unable to perform the role. If any information comes to light that might affect a candidate's suitability for appointment, an opportunity will be provided to discuss the information before a course of action is decided upon.
- All candidates who have been interviewed will be notified of the outcome once the final decision has been made which we expect to be the week commencing **25 November 2024**.
- On appointment, you will receive further information about training and induction.



# Equal opportunities and accessibility

## Equality Diversity and Inclusion

We strive to be as diverse as the public we protect and welcome applications from everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity and geographical locations outside of London. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all, and appointments will be made solely on merit. We believe that for any organisation to be successful, it needs to work with the most talented and diverse people available. We positively encourage applications from people from all of the community, from all backgrounds and with a broad range of experience.

Monitoring information gathered from application processes is published annually in our [EDI annual report](#). Our approach to monitoring can be viewed on our [website](#).

## Access Requirements

We have a duty to promote equality of opportunity for people who have disabilities. One of the ways we are doing this is through identifying barriers to opportunity facing people with disabilities and making reasonable adjustments to remove them.

If you would like to discuss your requirements for reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process in more detail, please contact the Governance team on 0207 307 3934. If you would like more information on reasonable adjustments please read this link: <https://www.gov.uk/reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-workers>

# Your data

## Data Protection

Our data protection policy is published on our [website](#). We are required to retain information about the people who apply for public appointments, and make this available for audit purposes, if requested to do so. Our retention policy in relation to the information we collect in respect of public appointments is that we keep the following information for one year for unsuccessful candidates and six years for successful candidates and then it is destroyed:

- initial contact details, including your name and address;
- application form and any supporting documentation; and
- monitoring information.

Some of the information requested on the application form will be made public if you are appointed (e.g. your name, brief career/background history, other public appointments held, any other information that it is in the public interest to disclose). Moreover, we may be required to release information, including personal data, on request under the UK Data Protection Act 2018. However, we will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality, and where possible will look to gain consent from the individual. Nor will we act in contravention of our obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

## Questions and Concerns

We aim to process all applications as quickly as possible. However, if you have a complaint about the process used in this recruitment campaign, please refer to our [Corporate Complaints and feedback Procedure](#) which provides guidance on what can and cannot be considered and how to raise concerns. In the first instance, you should raise your concern/complaint informally within 72 hours of the action you are complaining about. If you are unhappy following the conclusion of the complaint procedure, you have the right to complain to the Privy Council, the contact details of which are available here: <https://privycouncil.independent.gov.uk/contact-us/>

You can raise your concern by email ([appointment@optical.org](mailto:appointment@optical.org)) or telephone (0207 307 3934).

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The GOC is a charity registered in England and Wales (1150137)