**Application for qualification approval**

Form 1A: version 1

Introduction

Prospective providers of unapproved qualifications in optometry and dispensing optics should use this form and guidance notes to apply for qualification approval in accordance with the new **Requirements for Approved Qualifications in Optometry or Dispensing Optics (1 March 2021).**

Prospective providers should contact the GOC Education Team before completing this form for informal feedback and discussion. Please contact the GOC’s Education team at education@optical.org for more information.

How to complete this form

This form should be completed with reference to the **Requirements for Approved Qualifications in Optometry or Dispensing Optics (1 March 2021)** (‘requirements’), accompanying **Evidence Framework** and **Submission Templates**.

* Please complete all questions in **section one** of this form. If information is not yet available, please indicate in *italics* when such information will be ready to be submitted.
* Please complete the relevant templates for your stage of application as listed in **section two**. If information or evidence is not yet available, please indicate in *italics* when such information or evidence will be ready to be submitted.
* Please complete the boxes highlighted in grey and sign the **declaration** at the end of this form.
* Before submitting a final version of this form an early draft may be submitted for informal feedback. Please contact the GOC’s Education team at education@optical.org for more information.
* This form must be submitted for each stage of the application and approval process, as described in our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Method including the relevant templates as listed in **section two**.
* Should your plans change, a revised form must be submitted and may result in any stage being repeated.

Please send your completed form or refer any questions to education@optical.org

**Please note – you may be required to submit further information at any stage of the application process, including a full set of submission templates or any other information required for us to assess your application for qualification approval.**

Section one:questionnaire

This section asks you about the GOC qualification you are seeking approval for:

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| **Q1. Proposed qualification title:**  |  |
| **Q2. Name and address of qualification provider / awarding organisation (AO):** |
|  |
| **Q3. Date of submission:**  |  |

First point of contact for GOC (we will contact this person if we have any queries or need to request additional information):

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| --- |
| **Q4. Name of first point of contact:** |
|  |
| **Q5. Job title:** |
|  |
| **Q6. Email:** |  |
| **Q7. Telephone/mobile:** |  |
| **Q8. Address:** (if different from above): |  |

Please indicate the relevant stage of the application and approval process, as described in our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Method *(for more information please see page 37-39 of the ‘Requirements’)*

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| **Q9. Stage:** *(please indicate)*  |
| **Stage one** | **Stage two** | **Stage three** | **Stage four** | **Stage five** |
|[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

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| **Q10. Proposed qualification Level:[[1]](#footnote-2)** | **Q11. Profession:** *(please select)* |
| **Level 7/11**  | **Level 6/10**  | **Optometry** | **Dispensing optics** |
|[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

To help us understand your timescales, please list your key milestones/dates here:

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date** | **Notes** |
| **Q12. Relevant date(s) of internal (provider) validation / approval to proceed:** (if applicable) |  |  |
| **Q13. Proposed date from which the qualification will be listed with UCAS:** (if applicable) |  |  |
| **Q14. If you intend to transfer existing students onto the new qualification, date by which you will confirm transfer to affected students/cohorts?** (if applicable) |  |  |
| **Q15. Proposed date from which you intend to make offers to prospective students:**  |  |  |
| **Q16. Proposed date from which you will confirm student admissions:**  |  |  |
| **Q17. Proposed date / academic year the first cohort will commence:**  |  |  |
| **Q18. Please list any other relevant dates/dependencies which may impact upon your ability to meet the timetable outlined above:** |  |  |

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| **Q19. Location/campus/centres from which the qualification will be taught:** (if different from details set out in Q1-8) |  |

Please tell us about your plans for number of cohorts, cohort size and date of entry for both your current qualification (if applicable) and your proposed qualification plans:

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Current**  | **Planned** |
| **Q20. Number of cohorts per academic year** (if applicable) |  |  |
| **Q21. Maximum total number of students per cohort** (if applicable) |  |  |
| **Q22. Date of entry per cohort** (if applicable) |  |  |
| **Q23. Total max. duration of the course** (in months, if applicable) |  |  |

Please tell us about the key risks you’ve identified specific to developing the proposed qualification and your plans for mitigation and/or control:

*Please either complete the table below or add your programme risk register or other relevant documentation as an appendix.*

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| **Q24. Key risks:**  |
| **Risk description**  | **Impact** | **Controls** | **Mitigation** |
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Please tell us about your contingency plans should the application fail:

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| **Q25. Proposed contingency plans:**  |
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Section two:information required for each stage of your application

Our risk-based staged approach for considering applications for new qualification approval is outlined in our **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Method** (pages 37-39 of the ‘requirements’).At each stage providers working towards GOC qualification approval should use the relevant submission templates as set out in this section (relevant templates can be found in the **Templates Library**), to record and submit evidence to demonstrate how a qualification meets, or intends to meet, the relevant parts of the **Standards for Approved Qualifications** and **Outcomes for Registration** for your **stage** of application.

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| **Stage one:** Initial proposal for the proposed qualification  |
| This stage will explore the strategic intent for the proposed qualification, the rationale for its design, its proposed approach to integration and resourcing, the provider’s corporate form and management, and how the views of stakeholders, including patients, service-users, employers, commissioners and the public will inform the development, teaching and assessment of the proposed qualification, the draft business case and an outline of the investment necessary to ensure its success, and identification of key risks. The evidence to support stage one will normally be a written submission using the templates listed below, based on the evidence framework, and supported by a meeting with the GOC Education Team (at our offices or virtually) if necessary. Stage one may be repeated, particularly for applications stratified as medium or higher risk, until there is confidence the outcomes and standards are on course to be met and the provider is ready to move on to stage two. **Information required at stage one will include:** |
| **Template 1** | **Introduction** (Standards for Approved Qualifications):which should include the strategic intent, rationale for design and business case  |
| **Template 2** | **Provider’s narrative for criteria** (Standards for Approved Qualifications):**S3.14, S3.15, S3.16** (proposed approach to integration) **S4.1, S4.2, S4.4, S4.5** (provider’s proposed corporate form and management)**S3.4, S3.17** (how the views of stakeholders will inform the development of the proposed qualification) **S4.13** (identification of key risks)**S5.1, S5.2** (proposed resourcing) |
| **Template 7** | **List of Supplementary Documentation / Appendices** |

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| Stage two: Qualification design & resourcing |
| Stage two will examine the proposed qualification design and its resourcing in more depth (including, for applications stratified as medium or higher risk, investment in key appointments and infrastructure made between stage one and stage two). This stage will consider the business case, investment and proposed pedagogic approach, the development of learning, teaching and assessment strategies, the involvement of patients, service-users, employers, commissioners and the public in qualification design, delivery and assessment, and preparedness for delivery for the first cohort of students. By the end of stage two all arrangements with partners (if required) will be in place, as will the investment necessary to ensure the qualification’s successful implementation. Stage two may be repeated, particularly for applications stratified as medium or higher risk, until there is confidence the outcomes and standards are on course to be met and the provider is ready to move on to stage three. **Information required at stage two will include:** |
| **Template 1** | **Introduction** (Standards for Approved Qualifications)**:** which should include a report on progress since stage oneand preparedness for recruitment of the first cohort of students |
| **Template 2** | **Provider’s narrative for criteria** (Standards for Approved Qualifications):**S3.4, S3.17, S3.19** (proposed qualification design) **S3.1 to S3.8, S3.13, S3.14, S16** (proposed pedagogic approach, learning, teaching, and assessment strategies) **S3.4, S17, S4.11** (how the views of stakeholders, will inform teaching and assessment)**S4.13** (identification of key risks)**S5.1, S5.2, S5.4** (proposed resourcing, including investment in key appointments and infrastructure) |
| **Template 3** | **Qualification diagram** (Outcomes for Registration) |
| **Template 4** | **Assessment strategy** (Outcomes for Registration)*(this can be a first draft)* |
| **Template 5** | [Module/outcome map](#_Toc83296245) (Outcomes for Registration) *(this can be a first draft)*  |
| **Template 7** | **List of Supplementary Documentation / Appendices** |

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| Stage three: Readiness to recruit as an “approved training establishment” |
| The purpose of stage three will be to assess the readiness of the provider to begin recruiting students as an ‘approved training establishment’ under section 8A(2) of the Act. The focus will be on detailed curriculum and assessment design, approach to recruitment and selection of students and preparedness to commence delivery of the approved qualification. Stage three will confirm that the resourcing of the qualification, as described in stages one and two, is in place (including, for applications stratified as medium or higher risk, investment in key appointments and infrastructure made between stages two and three). By stage three the provider will also be expected to evidence good progress in implementing plans approved at stage two. As stage three represents a higher risk to GOC in terms of its decision-making, the evidence to support stage three will normally be a written submission, based on the evidence framework and an on-site (or virtual) visit based on the format of a periodic review. The specification of the periodic review required will be informed by the qualification’s risk profile. Stage three may be repeated, particularly for applications stratified as medium or higher risk, until there is confidence the outcomes and standards are likely to be met and the provider is ready to move onto stage four. The output of stage three will be permission to commence recruiting students to the new qualification as an ‘approved training establishment’ under section 8A(2) of the Act.**Information required at stage three will include:** |
| **Template 1** | **Introduction** (Standards for Approved Qualifications)in full, which should include a report on progress since stage twoand preparedness for recruitment of the first cohort of students. |
| **Template 2** | **Provider’s narrative for criteria**; full narrative for all criteria (Standards for Approved Qualifications) |
| **Template 3** | **Qualification diagram** (Outcomes for Registration) |
| **Template 4** | **Assessment strategy** (Outcomes for Registration) |
| **Template 5** | **Module/outcome map** (Outcomes for Registration)Confirmed for first year; draft for all further years |
| **Template 7** | **List of Supplementary Documentation / Appendices** |
| **Template 8** | **Mapping to Indicative Guidance Document** |

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| Stage four (a, b, c, etc.): To be repeated each year until first cohort graduates |
| Stage four is repeated each year until the first cohort of students, or students migrated across into the programme, reach the final year’s study. The focus of stage four is on the delivery and assessment of the qualification, including its staffing, resourcing and infrastructure, risk mitigation and progress in implementing plans approved at stage three, alongside preparedness for the delivery for the next, and most importantly, final, academic year. At stage four patient, service-user, employer, commissioner and public engagement in qualification delivery, assessment and review is expected, along with evidence of an increasing volume of inter-professional learning and patient-facing learning and experience as students progress through the qualification. At each stage four (a, b, c, etc.) the provider’s preparedness for, and implementation of, its plan for the integration of patient-facing learning and experience will be examined, as well as its reflections on implementing plans approved at stages two and three, and any changes it proposes to make to the qualification as a result of student and stakeholder feedback. **Information required at stage four will include:** |
| **Template 1** | **Introduction** (Standards for Approved Qualifications)in full, which should include a report on progress since the previous stage and preparedness for next academic year / cohort.  |
| **Template 2** | **Provider’s narrative for criteria**; full narrative for all criteria (Standards for Approved Qualifications) |
| **Template 3** | **Qualification diagram** (Outcomes for Registration) |
| **Template 4** | **Assessment strategy** (Outcomes for Registration) |
| **Template 5** | **Module/outcome map** (Outcomes for Registration)Confirmed for forthcoming year; draft for all further years  |
| **Template 7** | **List of Supplementary Documentation / Appendices** |
| **Template 8** | **Mapping to Indicative Guidance Document** |

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| Stage five: First graduating cohort  |
| Stage five considers a qualification’s ability to evidence their meeting of the outcomes and standards at the point of the final graduating cohort. It is the final stage of the process and takes place in the academic year in which the first cohort of students, or students migrated across into the programme, reach their final year of study. The evidence to support stage five will normally be a written submission based on the evidence framework, alongside a periodic review and our attendance at the provider’s final examination board (or equivalent).The specification for the periodic review will be based on the evidence framework and the risk stratification of the qualification, which includes factors such as, but not limited to: the results of stages one to four, discharge of previously applied conditions and/or any serious concerns reviews and will include a sample-based review of the outcomes. The prime purpose of a stage five periodic review is assurance, i.e., whether the outcomes and standards are met. Depending on whether the application is stratified as lower, medium or higher risk, the periodic review may be desk-based, involve an on-site visit or visits, and/or physical or virtual meetings.**Information required at Stage five will include:** |
| **Template 1** | **Introduction** (Standards for Approved Qualifications)in full  |
| **Template 2** | **Provider’s narrative for criteria**; full narrative for all criteria (Standards for Approved Qualifications) |
| **Template 3** | **Qualification diagram** (Outcomes for Registration) |
| **Template 4** | **Assessment strategy** (Outcomes for Registration) |
| **Template 5** | **Module/outcome map** (Outcomes for Registration)in full for all years |
| **Template 6** | **Outcomes narrative** (Outcomes for Registration) in full for all outcomes |
| **Template 7** | **List of Supplementary Documentation / Appendices** |
| **Template 8** | **Mapping to Indicative Guidance Document**  |

**Please note – this list is non-exhaustive. You may be required to submit further information at any stage of the notification process, including the submission template in full.**

Section three:declaration

Please tell us about the person with overall responsibility for the qualification who has authority to authorise the submission of this form:

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| **Name of responsible person:**  |
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| **Job title:** |
|  |
| **Email:** |  |
| **Telephone / mobile:** |  |
| **Address:** |  |
| **By signing this form you declare that the GOC’s Requirements for Approved Qualifications will be met based on the plans outlined in this form, and commit to engage with the GOC’s quality assurance processes.** |
| *Sign here* |

**Section to be completed by GOC**

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| --- | --- |
| Date form received by GOC  |   |
| GOC reference number  |   |
| Allocated GOC QA Officer |   |
| Date outcome(s) sent to provider:  |  |
| Supporting notes |
|  |

1. Standard S3.12 states; ‘The approved qualification must be listed on one of the national frameworks for higher education qualifications for UK degree awarding bodies (The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS)), or be a qualification regulated by Ofqual, SQA or Qualifications Wales. Approved qualifications in optometry must be at a minimum RQF, FHEQ or Credit and Qualifications Framework Wales (CQFW) level 7 or Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) / FQHEIS level 11. Approved qualifications in dispensing optics must be at a minimum RQF, FHEQ or CQFW level 6 or SCQF/FQHEIS level 10.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)