

General Optical Council

# Declaration guidance for registration

For all student, fully qualified and body corporate applicants and registrants applying to join the register or to restore or retain their registration

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# Who is this document for?

This document is intended to provide guidance for the following groups:

- Those applying to the General Optical Council (GOC) for registration or restoration (but not restoration following erasure). This includes student optometrists or student dispensing opticians, fully qualified optometrists or dispensing opticians or bodies corporate making an application for registration or restoration ('an applicant'); and
- Those who are currently registered with the GOC as student optometrists or student dispensing opticians, fully qualified optometrists or dispensing opticians or bodies corporate, who are making an application for retention of registration ('a registrant').

The document will also be used by the Registrar, staff in the GOC's Registration team, members of GOC Council and Committees (including the Registration Appeals Committee), and any other person who wishes to understand the principles and processes by which applications with declarations are considered.

# Section 1: Introduction

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.

The GOC has four primary functions:

- Setting standards for the performance and conduct of our registrants.
- Approving qualifications leading to registration.
- Maintaining a register of individuals who are fit to practise or train as optometrists or dispensing opticians, and bodies corporate who are fit to carry on business as optometrists or dispensing opticians.
- Investigating and acting where a registrant's fitness to practise, train or carry on business is impaired.

The GOC has a responsibility to ensure that only those on our register can use a 'protected title', such as optometrist or dispensing optician. Anyone using a protected title and who is not registered with us is breaking the law and could be prosecuted.

## The GOC Register

The GOC register is available on our website at [www.optical.org](http://www.optical.org). Anyone can search it to check that their optical professional is registered. The register contains various pieces of information about individuals and businesses registered with us, including:

- Their GOC registration number;
- Their type of registration (whether they are an optometrist, dispensing optician, student or body corporate);
- The qualifications they have listed with the GOC (including their primary qualification that allows them entry onto the register, where applicable); and;
- If they are subject to any fitness to practise outcomes such as suspension or conditional registration.

# Section 2: Who this applies to

## Student applicants and registrants

Anyone who wishes to undertake training as an optometrist or dispensing optician at a UK training institution must be registered with the GOC for the duration of the course of study.

In order for the GOC to register, restore or retain as a student, you must complete the relevant application form. As part of the registration or restoration application, you will be required to provide us with information including:

- The name of the educational establishment at which you will be studying, and the name of the course or training that you will be undertaking;
- A photograph of you, certified by someone that has known you for at least two years (and who is not a relative); and
- A declaration from you that you are a fit person to undertake training, and information about any health conditions, and any criminal convictions, cautions and regulatory determinations and any current criminal, regulatory or disciplinary or investigations, which we will need to consider before allowing your registration.

We will seek confirmation directly from your educational establishment that you are (or will be) undertaking training at that institution.

Full details are on our website [Register as a student | GeneralOpticalCouncil](#)

All the information that we request from you is to help us ensure that:

- You are who you say you are;
- You are training on a course and at an institution approved by the GOC;
- You meet our standards for fitness to undertake training; and
- We have your contact details.

## Fully qualified applicants and registrants

Anyone who wishes to practise as an optometrist or dispensing optician in the UK must be registered with the GOC.

In order for the GOC to register, restore or retain, you must complete the relevant application form. You must do this even if you are currently registered with the GOC as a student. As part of the registration or restoration application, you will be required to provide us with information including:

- The names and addresses of where you practise, as well as a contact address;
- A photograph of you, certified by someone that has known you for at least two years (and who is not a relative);
- Information about your policy of insurance; and
- A declaration from you that you are a fit person to practise, and information about any health conditions, and any criminal convictions, cautions and regulatory determinations and any current criminal or regulatory investigations, which we will need to consider before allowing your registration.

We will seek confirmation directly from your examining body that you have satisfied their requirements and are competent to practise.

Full details are on our website [Register as a fully qualified individual | GeneralOpticalCouncil](#).

All the information that we request from you is to help us ensure that:

- You are who you say you are;
- You have a qualification from a GOC approved examining body;
- You meet our standards for fitness to practise; and
- We have your contact details.

### Body corporate applicants and registrants

A body corporate that wishes to carry on business as an optometrist or dispensing optician in the UK and use a protected title in their business or trading name, must be registered with the GOC. In order for the GOC to register, restore or retain, you must complete the relevant application form.

Visit our website for more information [Register as a business | GeneralOpticalCouncil](#)

As part of this application, you will be required to provide us with information including:

- The names and addresses of where you practise, as well as a contact address and the registered address of your business (where appropriate).
- Details relating to how your business meets one of the requirements for registration as body corporate: for example, the names of all the directors of your company, and their GOC registration numbers where appropriate; and
- A declaration from you that the company is fit to carry on business, and information about any criminal and regulatory outcomes and investigations relating to the company or any of its directors, which we will need to consider before allowing your registration.

Body corporate applicants will **not** be required to provide us with a health declaration in relation to its directors, but any director who is a registered optometrist or dispensing optician will have been required to provide such a declaration at the time of registration.

All the information that we ask from you is to help us ensure that:

- You are who you say you are;
- You meet the requirements for registration with the GOC as a body corporate;
- You meet our standards for fitness to carry on business; and
- We have your contact details.

# Section 3: What you should declare

## Declaration of fitness to practise or fitness to train

Section 8 of the Opticians Act 1989 states that “a person shall be entitled to have his name in the appropriate register if he satisfies the Council that he ... is a fit person to practise as an optometrist or a dispensing optician”.

You can make a declaration on our website at [Make a declaration | GeneralOpticalCouncil](#)

Part 2 of the GOC (Registration) Rules 2005 states that applicants for registration shall make a declaration regarding regulatory and /or criminal investigations or outcomes, and in relation to their physical or mental health.

It is your responsibility, as the applicant or registrant, to provide us with any information in relation to these areas. If you do not do so, and it later comes to our attention, this may mean that we will take action in relation to your registration.

What should you declare:

- Types of declarations
  - Health
  - Criminal
  - Investigation

## Health Declaration

All student and fully qualified applicants are required to declare details of any physical or mental health which a reasonable person would think may impair their fitness to practise.

The GOC does not make judgments about whether individuals are ‘healthy’ or in ‘good health’, nor do we make judgements regarding an individual’s disability status. Disabilities and health conditions affect different people in different ways, and we do not maintain a list of conditions or disabilities that we believe would be necessary for someone to declare.

The GOC also has a responsibility to ensure that it complies with the relevant sections of the Equality Act 2010 in England, Wales and Scotland and with the corresponding anti-discriminatory legislation in Northern Ireland. The GOC must comply with the requirements of this legislation, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in England, Wales and Scotland and section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (NIA 1998). The PSED covers all the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The intention of PSED is to ensure that organisations must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to three main aims:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The intention of section 75 of NIA 1998 is to ensure that organisations have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- Between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, or sexual orientation.
- Between men and women generally.
- Between persons with a disability and persons without.
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

Having 'due regard' means consciously thinking about the aims of the above Acts as part of the process of decision-making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by organisations – such as in how they act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policy; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and how they commission and procure from others.

In relation to the consideration of a declaration made relating to health as part of an application there is, therefore, no assumption that a person with a disability or someone with a long-term physical or mental health condition would pose a risk to the public while working as an optometrist or dispensing optician.

The GOC requires you to make a declaration about your health only if it may currently affect your fitness to practise. Declarations in relation to health can be made in relation to any type of physical or mental health condition, whether it is short-term or long-term, whether it is considered a disability or not, and whatever its cause.

Our concern is not with the condition itself but with the impact it may have on your ability to undertake optical training or practise, for example if you are not able to practise safely even with adaptations to equipment or changes to your working patterns. If you declare a health condition to us, we will seek to assess the extent to which you have insight and understanding into your health and how your condition could affect your ability to practise safely. Insight and understanding for our purposes means that you have considered how your health condition may limit your ability to undertake certain aspects of practice, and you have taken appropriate steps to ensure that you do not put patients, the public, or yourself at risk.

When making a declaration about your health to us you should provide information that is relevant to the declaration that you are making. You are encouraged to provide as much information as you feel is necessary, so we can assess whether your health condition could affect your ability to practise. We request that you provide as a minimum the following information:

- The nature of the condition.
- The date of diagnosis.
- Details of any treatment required including:
  - Medications
  - Treatment plans



- Adaptions in the workplace or education establishment
- Confirmation whether you are off sick (if so, how long for)
- When are you due to return
- What, if any, return plan has been discussed or implemented.

If we require more information from you, we will contact you and ask you to provide this. If we do this, the GOC will be guided by the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and other applicable data legislation, that any data requested, held and processed by us is relevant and proportionate to the reasons we have requested it.

Further guidance on additional information that we might require can be found below.

Providing this information as early as possible could avoid us having to ask you for more information, which would slow down the progress of your application.

If you do not inform us of these matters, and they come to our attention later, we may decide to refer you to the GOC's Fitness to Practise team. They will then consider whether we need to further investigate and take action that might affect your continuing registration. If, after reading this guidance, you are still unsure about whether you should make a declaration in relation to your health, you should make the declaration. You may also wish to speak to your employer or professional body, or take your own legal advice, before deciding whether to make a declaration.

#### Further information about health declarations

When making a declaration to us that relates to mental and/or physical health, we may ask you to provide the following:

1. Further information about the nature of your health condition.
2. A letter from your general practitioner or treating clinician, or your consent for us to contact them, so that they can provide us with further information about your health. In most circumstances, they will be asked to provide answers to the following questions:
  - Does the condition or treatment affect the individual's ability to [practise safely as an optometrist/ dispensing optician] (or undertake training as a GOC registered student)
  - If so, in what way?
  - What are the individual's symptoms and treatment?
  - Is it a recurring/relapsing condition?
  - What is the prognosis?
3. In addition to any information that we have requested from you or your doctor, we will ask you for any comments or representations you wish to make in relation to your health condition and whether you believe it affects your fitness to practise.
4. Depending on the nature of the health condition that you declare to us, we may also ask you to look at the relevant GOC clinical competencies and consider whether you believe that your health condition would prevent you from meeting all the competencies.
5. We may also request information from any other person or organisation, including your employer, if we believe that it is relevant to the declaration that you have made.

## Criminal, Regulatory and Disciplinary Declarations

Applicants are also required to declare the following:

A. Any convictions (including conviction by court martial) or cautions received in the British Islands for a criminal offence, or a conviction elsewhere which, if committed in England or Wales, would constitute a criminal offence.

B. If they have accepted a conditional offer under section 302 of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 (fixed penalty: conditional offer by procurator fiscal).

C. If they have agreed to pay a penalty under section 115A of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 (penalty as alternative to prosecution).

D. If they have been the subject of an order under section 246(2) or (3) of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 discharging them absolutely.

E. If they were the subject of any determination by a body in the UK responsible under any enactment for the regulation of a health or social care profession to the effect that their fitness to practise as a member of that profession is impaired, or a determination by a regulatory body outside the UK to the same effect; and

F. If they are currently the subject of any investigation or proceedings which might lead to any of the results described at A-E above. There is no need to make a declaration if the investigation or proceedings were against someone other than the applicant, or if these have been concluded by means of no further action against the applicant, or if these cannot lead to one of the above outcomes.

Body corporate applicants should provide the required declarations in relation to the applicant company and all of its directors.

Taking each of the above areas in turn, further explanation is provided below.

### A - D: Convictions, Cautions, Other Penalties and Orders

You must declare on your application if you have ever received a conviction or a caution and, additionally, any of the outcomes relating to the Scottish courts as described above, unless it is a protected caution or conviction. This includes any conviction by court martial.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to people on or wishing to join the GOC register. This means that you must tell us about any conviction or caution that you have received, even if it is 'spent,' unless it is a 'protected' caution or conviction as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975).

In Scotland this is covered by the Rehabilitation of Offender Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2013.

In Northern Ireland this is covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (Northern Ireland) 1979.

Under the current legislation:

## Caution

A caution in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is a protected caution if:

- The person was under 18 years of age when the caution was given.
- The offender was 18 years or over when the caution was given, and six years or more have passed since the date on which it was given, unless it was given for a listed offence (see below)

Cautions in Scotland are not protected.

## Conviction

A conviction in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is a protected conviction if:

- The convicted person was under 18 years of age at the time of the conviction, and five and a half years or more have passed from the date of conviction, provided the other conditions below are satisfied.
- The convicted person was 18 years or over at the time of the conviction, and 11 years or more have passed since the date of conviction, provided the other conditions below are satisfied.
- In both cases, the additional conditions are that the offence of which the person was convicted was not a listed offence (see below) and the sentence imposed in respect of the conviction was not a custodial sentence, or a sentence of service detention.

A conviction in Scotland is a protected conviction if:

- It is spent, and
- Appears in the list of offences subject to the rules and
  - The sentence was an admonition or an absolute discharge and/or
  - The person was under 18 at the time of the conviction and at least seven years and six months have passed since the conviction or
  - The person was aged 18 or over at the date of conviction and at least 15 years has passed since the conviction.

Further guidance on protected convictions in Scotland are available from Disclosure Scotland: Disclosure and criminal record checks [mygov.scot](https://mygov.scot)

For further guidance on protected convictions/cautions in Northern Ireland see [Information disclosed in a criminal record check | nidirect](#)

## Listed offences

If you received a conviction or caution for a listed offence, it will not be protected.

Listed offences in the UK include, but are not limited to, serious violent and sexual offences which are of specific relevance to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. These will never be filtered from a criminal record and links apply to the following:

- In England and Wales, the listed offences can be found on [Disclosure and Barring Services \(DBS\) website](#)
- In Scotland the listed offences can be found on the [Disclosure and criminal record check](#)
- In Northern Ireland the listed offences can be found on the [Access NI criminal record checks](#)

A caution for a 'listed offence' must always be disclosed to the GOC, unless the person was under 18 years of age when a caution in England and Wales was given.

A conviction for a 'listed offence' must always be disclosed to the GOC, whatever the age of the person at the date of conviction.

When declaring a conviction or caution, please provide as much detail as possible. This will minimise the likelihood of us needing to request additional information, which could delay the progress of your application.

You should continue to re-declare an investigation or outcome unless the GOC informs you in writing that you should not re-declare the matter.

If, after reading this guidance, you are uncertain about whether to declare a conviction or caution, you may want to seek independent legal advice before making your decision.

If you inform us of a conviction, caution or other outcome, the Registrar will take all the circumstances into consideration before deciding whether to grant your application.

#### E. A determination by a health or social care regulatory body

You must also tell us if you have had a determination made against you by a health or social care regulatory body in the UK to the effect that your fitness to practise as a member of that profession is impaired. The relevant bodies are as follows:

- General Chiropractic Council
- General Dental Council
- General Medical Council
- General Optical Council
- General Osteopathic Council
- General Pharmaceutical Council
- Health and Care Professions Council
- Northern Ireland Social Care Council
- Nursing and Midwifery Council
- Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland
- Scottish Social Services Council.
- Social Care Wales
- Social Work England

Additionally, you should tell us if you have had a determination made against you by one of the predecessor bodies to those above (for example, the General Social Care Council or Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain). Also, if you have received a determination relating to your fitness to practise from a regulatory body outside the UK, you must tell us about this.

When making a declaration in relation to a determination by a regulatory body, please provide as much information as possible, including the nature and date of the outcome or sanction imposed and the circumstances leading to the determination. Providing us with as much information as early as possible will help to prevent us having to ask you for more information, which would slow down the progress of your application. If you do not inform us of these matters, and they come to our attention later, we may decide to refer you to the GOC's Fitness to Practise team. They will then consider whether we need to further investigate and take action that might affect your continuing registration.

If, after reading this guidance, you are still unsure about whether you should make a declaration in relation to a determination, you should make the declaration. You may also wish to speak to your employer or professional body, or take your own legal advice, before deciding whether to make a declaration.

## F. Current investigations by the police or employer

You must declare on your application if you are currently:

- Subject to an investigation by the police or armed forces in the UK for an offence that may lead to conviction or caution.
- Subject to an investigation by a police force outside the UK, for an offence that may lead to conviction for a matter that is an offence in England or Wales.
- Subject to an investigation by a primary care organisation in the UK or outside the UK.
- Subject to a sanction by an NHS primary care organisation (for example, a Local Health Board), either as an employee or service provider, you must inform us of this.
- Subject to employment investigations or disciplinary actions if and only if they pertain to issues that require disclosure under this Guidance, such as potential criminal investigations, or health matters.

When making a declaration in relation to current investigations, please provide as much information as possible, including information about the dates and circumstances leading to the investigation.

Providing us with as much information as early as possible will help to prevent us having to ask you for more information, which would slow down the progress of your application.

If we decide to register you after taking into account relevant circumstances, including the nature and seriousness of the allegations, we will require you to inform us of the outcome of the investigation. This is so that we can consider whether to refer you to the GOC's fitness to practise process. They will then consider whether to further investigate and take action that might affect your registration.

If, after reading this guidance, you are still unsure about whether you should make a declaration in relation to a determination or investigation, you should make the declaration. You may also wish to speak to your employer or professional body, or take your own legal advice, before deciding whether to make a declaration.

You should continue to re-declare an investigation or outcome unless the GOC informs you in writing that you should not re-declare the matter.

As with all the information we request and hold about you, the GOC will be guided by the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and other applicable data legislation, that any data requested, held, and processed by us is relevant and proportionate to the reasons we have requested it.

### Further information about criminal matters

If you make a declaration to us that relates to criminal matters, we will usually ask you to provide further information about the nature of these investigations or outcomes. We may also ask you to provide us with any certificates of conviction or caution, up to date Disclosure and Barring Service checks (or their equivalent), or copies of court transcripts. We may also ask for your consent to request information about you from investigating bodies or ask you to provide us with this information.

We may also request information from any other person or organisation if we believe that it is relevant to the declaration that you have made. In addition to any information that we have requested from you, or an investigating body, we will ask you for any comments or representations you wish to make in relation to your declaration and whether you believe it affects your fitness to practise.

# Section 4: Process for decision making

A member of the Registration team will ensure that all the information that has been supplied to us in relation to the declaration is put before the Registrar, who will consider it within five working days.

The information provided to the Registrar will include:

- Applicant or registrant details (Name, reference number)
- Type of application (registration, restoration, or retention)
- Date of receipt
- Summary of all information provided by the applicant or registrant
- List of all documentation provided by applicant or registrant and any third parties
- The section of the Opticians Act 1989 that provides the Registrar with the authority to make a decision on the application
- Where applicable, details of any similar declarations received in the past and the decision made in these cases
- A recommendation based on the information provided; and
- Copies of all received correspondence and documentation from the registrant/applicant and third parties.

The Registrar will consider each individual application carefully and will take into account all relevant information. The Registrar will then decide whether to grant or refuse the application. The Registrar will provide clear reasons to the applicant for the decision that has been taken.

When making a decision the Registrar will consider:

- The circumstances of the declaration as set out by the applicant.
- Any further information that has been provided by the applicant, or sought by the GOC; and
- Decisions taken in cases with similar circumstances (where relevant).

If the declaration includes information about convictions, the Registrar will follow the GOC's Protocol on the Handling of Criminal Convictions Disclosed by Registrants. Please refer to [Protocol on the handling of criminal convictions disclosed by registrants](#).

In the event that the Registrar does not follow the recommendation set out by the Registration team, they will provide clear reasons for doing so, in addition to their decision in relation to the application. The Registrar will take all reasonable steps to ensure that there is a consistent approach to decision-making.

The Registrar will not generally refuse an application simply on the basis that an investigation is ongoing but reserves the right to do so depending on the circumstances of an individual declaration. This is because the GOC's overriding duty is the protection of members of the public.

All decisions that the Registrar takes will be recorded and you will be given the reasons for the decision when we tell you the outcome of the Registrar's consideration.

In the event that the Registrar grants an application, and it later comes to our attention that a different decision should have been reached (for example, an investigation has concluded with an outcome that might affect your fitness to practise), the Registrar will refer the matter to the GOC's Fitness to Practise team. The applicant or registrant will be informed of this in writing. For further information on

the Fitness to Practise team's procedure, please see the [Raising concerns about an optician page](#) on our website.

When we notify you of the outcome of the Registrar's consideration, we may tell you that you do not need to declare the matter to us again. We may also advise you on any future steps you need to take in relation to this declaration and your registration. If you fail to follow this advice, this may affect your fitness to practise in the future. If you have declared that you are currently under investigation, we will ask you to notify us of the outcome of the investigation as soon as you know it.

The decision of the Registrar is made in private and reasons for the decision are not published. However, there will be occasions where the consideration of an application by the Registrar becomes public knowledge. If this happens, the GOC will release information in accordance with our disclosure policy and in compliance with the law, in order to maintain public confidence in our regulatory activities.

# Section 5: Failure to make a declaration

If you do not inform us of a matter that comes to our attention at a later date, the GOC will take into consideration your non-declaration as well as the matter that you failed to declare, in deciding what action to take against you. You may be referred to the GOC's Fitness to Practise team; they will then consider whether we need to further investigate and take action that might affect your continuing registration.

Issues that we do not need to be informed about include:

- Road traffic offences where you have accepted a fixed penalty notice but have not been convicted of an offence (You must however declare any conviction for a road traffic offence).
- Adult Community Resolution Orders or bind-overs.
- Being declared bankrupt. This should only be declared to us if the circumstances of the bankruptcy may affect your fitness to practise; and
- If you are subject to a clinical negligence claim. We recognise that a patient may have made a claim against you in relation to clinical negligence. You **do not** need to tell us about this unless the circumstances of the claim may affect your fitness to practise.

If, after reading this guidance, you are still unsure about whether you should make a declaration in relation to a determination, you should make the declaration. You may also wish to speak to your employer or professional body, or take your own legal advice, before deciding whether to make a declaration.



# Section 6: Declarations made outside retention period

If you are currently registered as a student, fully qualified or as a body corporate, and you feel you meet the criteria for making a declaration, which has occurred outside of the retention period, please make that declaration as soon as possible and do not wait until the retention period to declare. You should submit the declaration in the same way as mentioned above.

[Make a declaration | GeneralOpticalCouncil](#)

# Section 7: Practising whilst unregistered

If you declare to us that you have practised whilst unregistered, we will usually ask you to provide further information, including the name and GOC number of anyone who supervised your clinical practice. We may then request further relevant information from your supervisor and/or any other person or organisation if we believe that it is relevant to the declaration that you have made.

In addition to any information that we have requested from you, or any other body, we will ask you for any comments or representations you wish to make in relation to your declaration, and whether you believe it affects your fitness to practise.

We will obtain legal advice if it appears that you might have practised in breach of the restrictions at Part 4 of the Opticians Act.

# Section 8: How to appeal against a decision

As described above, the decision of the Registrar will be given to you in writing with reasons. Also in the letter will be information about how to appeal against the decision of the Registrar.

Under the terms of Paragraph 2 of Schedule 1A to the Opticians Act 1989, a decision by us not to register you is an appealable registration decision. It is, therefore, open for you to appeal to the Registration Appeals Committee against this decision not to admit your name or retain your name on the register. Should you wish to bring such an appeal, you must give notice of appeal in accordance with Paragraph 4 of schedule 1A.

Under the terms of Paragraph 4(3) of that schedule you have 28 days from the date of the letter advising you of the Registrar's decision to tell us, in writing, should you wish to pursue an appeal. If you do not tell us that you wish to appeal within 28 days, you will not be able to appeal at a later time.

Once we have received notice that you wish to appeal, we will contact you to confirm that we have received your correspondence and what the next steps will be.

Whether or not you appeal, you can make another application for registration/retention/restoration in the future. However, if you do this, you should consider the reasons why the Registrar refused your application and what, if anything, you can do to satisfy the Registrar that you are a fit person to be on the GOC register

# Section 9: Standards for students, fully qualified registrants, and businesses

In addition to the declarations described above that you are required to make, any successful applicant must comply with:

- [Standards of practice for optometrists and dispensing opticians](#)
- [Standards for optical students](#)
- [Standards for optical businesses](#)

The Standards describe how the GOC expects that those on our register should behave, to ensure the safety and welfare of patients and the public. You should make your application with reference to the Standards and declare any matters to the GOC on your application that may affect your fitness to practise. These may include a current or previous barring decision made by the Disclosure and Barring Service, Access NI or Disclosure Scotland. Providing us with as much information as early as possible will help to prevent us having to ask you for more information, which will slow down the progress of your application.

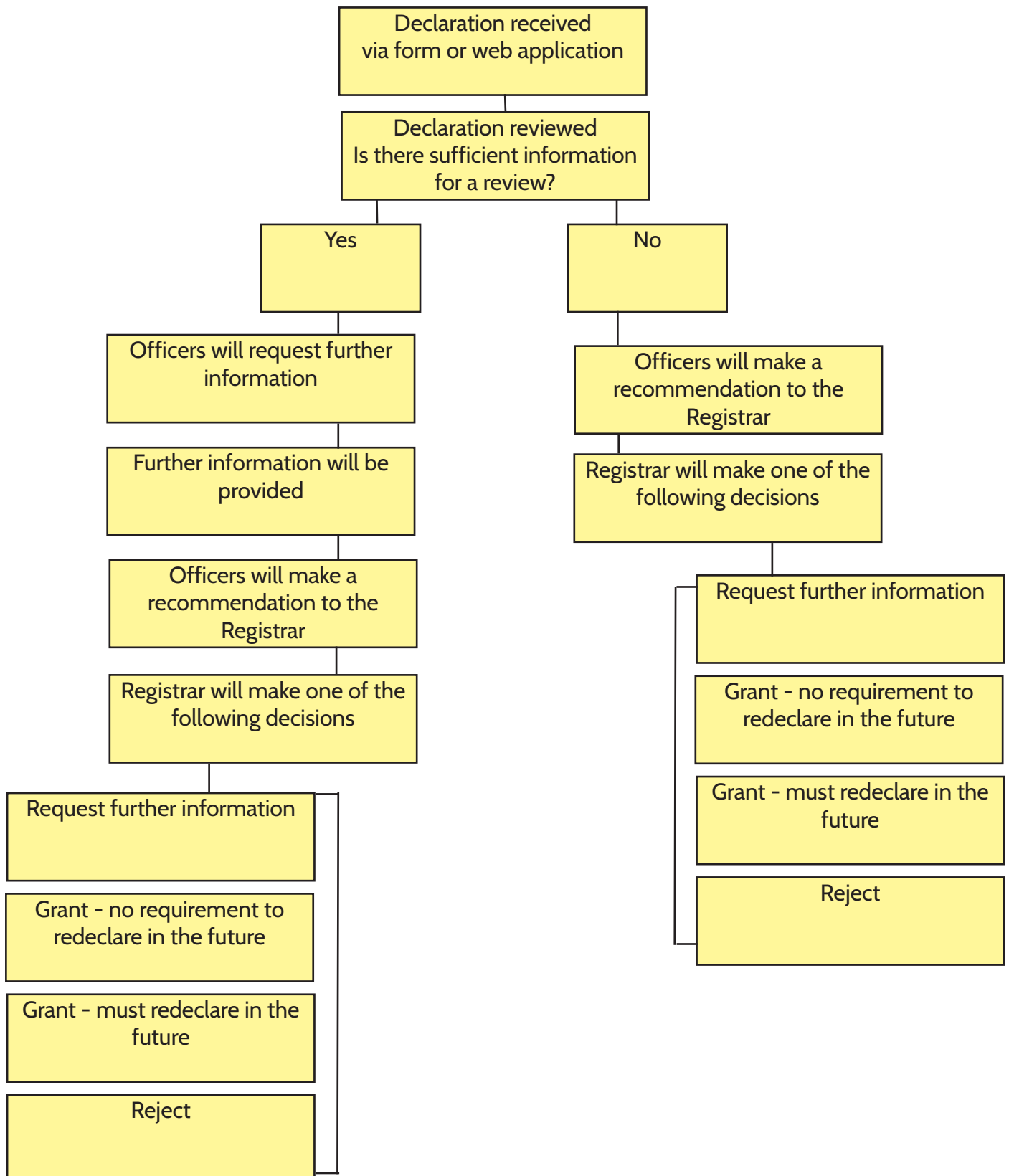
# Section 10: Further information

The following documents may be helpful to you when you are making an application that includes a declaration:

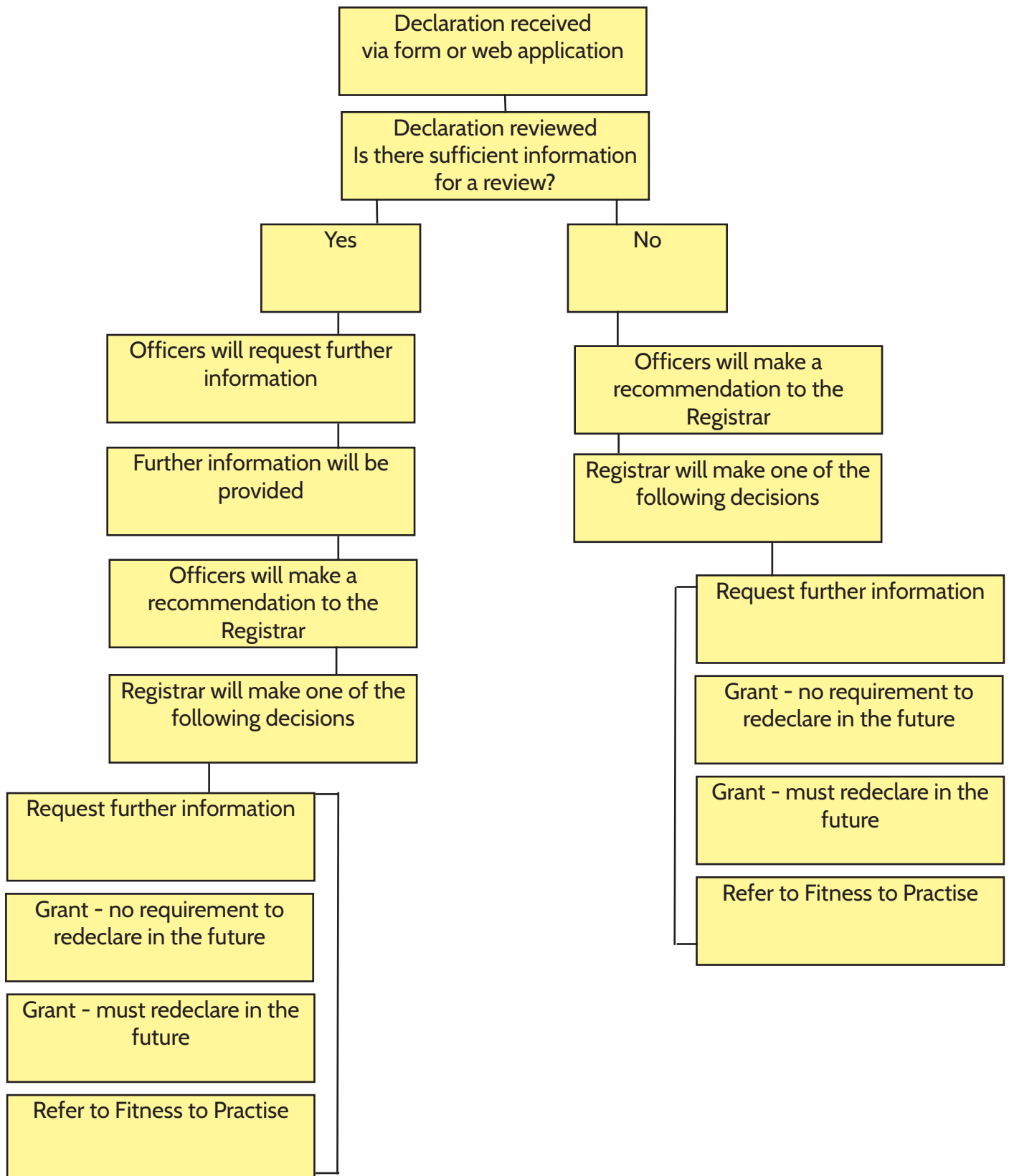
- The GOC Standards framework
  - [Standards of practice for optometrists and dispensing opticians](#)
  - [Standards for optical students](#)
  - [Standards for optical businesses](#)
- [The Opticians Act 1989 and related rules](#)
- [The competencies for optometrists and dispensing opticians](#); and
- [Illegal practice protocol](#).

This guidance is correct as of the date on the front cover. The GOC will periodically review and update this guidance.

# Annex 1: Decision-making process and potential outcomes for registrant and restoration applicants



# Annex 2: Decision-making process and potential outcomes during the retention period



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