



38/39 Fitzwilliam Square
Dublin 2

CORU Consultation on Standards of Proficiency for optometrists, dispensing opticians and dispensing opticians with entitlement to fit contact lenses

FODO Ireland is a representative professional body for opticians in practice in Ireland. Our members include both independent and corporate opticians which operate as primary eye care practitioners. Between them, FODO Ireland members deliver over 55 per cent of the eye care provided per year in Ireland. Our priority is to ensure that the best use is made of the health professionals that we have on the high street to provide a service that best meets the patients' needs.

CORU is consulting on separate standards for each of the three groups of registrants. The codes are substantially the same, with a few variations appropriate to the needs of the particular profession. However in a number of instances there are differences which do not seem justified.

Our detailed response to each set of standards follows. If you have any queries, or wish to discuss any points, please contact me at ann@fodo.com

FODO IRELAND

Standards of proficiency: optometrists

Domain 1: professional autonomy and accountability

1(a) The standards for dispensing opticians and contact lens opticians include a requirement that financial or commercial considerations do not conflict with patients' best interests or safety. This requirement is not included in the standard for optometrists.

In our view this requirement should apply to optometrists as well as dispensing opticians.

1(d) We suggest that it would be clearer to separate out the two issues – ie the first sentence should remain as 1(d) and then professional indemnity insurance should become a new 1(e).

2(a) The phrase “culturally competent” is not clear. It also does not limit the responsibility to promote equality and respect to their professional life and practice, this could be argued to be excessive.

2(d) We are not clear why the requirements in relation to publicly funded services should not apply to optometrists, as they do to dispensing opticians.

Domain 2: Interpersonal and professional relationships

No comments.

Domain 3: Effective communication

1(c) is repeated at 1(h).

Dispensing opticians (including contact lens) have a standard about use of information technology, 1(e), which is not included in the standards for optometrists. We suggest this should also be included for optometrists.

1 (d) This section on appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication is expanded in the two codes for dispensing opticians, 1(g), but not for optometrists. It might be helpful to include a similar explanation for optometrists.

Domain 4: Personal and professional development

1(d) The end of the sentence appears to be missing. We presume it should be exactly the same working as in the standard for dispensing opticians, ie add in the words “and the importance of seeking supervision of practice”.

Domain 5: Provision of quality services

The standard for dispensing opticians includes an additional provision, 5(b), which is not included in the optometrists standard. It would seem just as important that an optometrist provides alternative solutions for the patient as the dispensing optician.

7(c) Should this not also require knowledge of accepted terminology and abbreviations, not just an understanding of why they are used?

9(f) It is not clear why these differ for optometrists and dispensing opticians. Both should recognise the value of case conferences, peer review and other forms of review, and both should involve discussions with colleagues from their own profession, others within their team or practice, and where appropriate other professions.

Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills

1(q) requires an understanding of optical appliances and optical instruments, but safe use, as set out in 1(r), covers only optical appliances (ie when dispensing). It might be better to separate out optical appliances and optical instruments, and include understanding of and safe use of both.

2 (a) This would benefit from redrafting – it is not clear what is meant by “Understand systems and the impact of complexity on patient care”.

Standards of proficiency: dispensing opticians

Domain 1: professional autonomy and accountability

1(d) We suggest that it would be clearer to separate out the two issues – ie the first sentence should remain as 1(d) and then a professional indemnity insurance should become a new 1(e). We are also unclear why a dispensing optician only to understand appropriate indemnity insurance.

2(a) The phrase “culturally competent” is not clear. It also does not limit the responsibility to promote equality and respect to their professional life and practice, this could be argued to be excessive.

Domain 2: Interpersonal and professional relationships

No comments.

Domain 3: Effective communication

Dispensing opticians (including contact lens) have a standard about use of information technology, 1(e), but, unlike optometrists, are not required to understand the benefits, limitations and risks of electronic communications. We suggest that the optometrists 1(i) should be included for dispensing opticians.

We suggest amending 1(i) for dispensing opticians and contact lens opticians to “use an appropriately qualified interpreter”, ie to use the same wording as 1(f) in the optometrist standard.

Domain 4: Personal and professional development

No comments.

Domain 5: Provision of quality services

7(c) Optometrists are required to understand the need to use accepted terminology and abbreviations, but dispensing opticians only terminology (not abbreviations). It should surely be both. We believe that both should also be expected to know accepted terminology and abbreviations.

9(f) It is not clear why these differ for optometrists and dispensing opticians. Both should recognise the value of case conferences, peer review and other forms of review, and both should involve discussions with colleagues from their own profession, others within their team or practice, and where appropriate other professions.

Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills

The standard for optometrists begins with the requirement to have knowledge of the legal and ethical framework within which optometry operates, 1(a). It is not clear why there is not a similar requirement in the standards for dispensing opticians.

1(e) We suggest the sentence should continue “and demonstrate the ability to perform an examination of the external eye and related structures”, as per the first part of the requirement for contact lens opticians.

2 (a) This would benefit from redrafting – it is not clear what is meant by “Understand systems and the impact of complexity on patient care”.

2(d) All three codes should use the same wording. We suggest all three should use the same wording as in the standard for optometrists.

2 (e) The standards for dispensing opticians (and contact lens opticians) should be the same as for optometrists, a dispensing optician may become a practice manager or owner and therefore also needs to understand the requirements for professional indemnity insurance.

Standards of proficiency: dispensing opticians with entitlement to fit contact lenses

Domain 1: professional autonomy and accountability

1(d) We suggest that it would be clearer to separate out the two issues – ie the first sentence should remain as 1(d) and then a professional indemnity insurance should become a new 1(e). We are also unclear why a dispensing optician is only required to understand appropriate indemnity insurance.

2(a) The phrase “culturally competent” is not clear. It also does not limit the responsibility to promote equality and respect to their professional life and practice, this could be argued to be excessive.

Domain 2: Interpersonal and professional relationships

No comments.

Domain 3: Effective communication

Dispensing opticians (contact lens) have a standard about use of information technology, 1(e), but, unlike optometrists, are not required to understand the benefits, limitations and risks of electronic communications. We suggest that the optometrists 1(i) should be included for dispensing opticians.

We suggest amending 1(i) to “use an appropriately qualified interpreter”, ie to use the same wording as 1(f) in the optometrist standard.

Domain 4: Personal and professional development

No comments.

Domain 5: Provision of quality services

7(c) Optometrists are required to understand the need to use accepted terminology and abbreviations, but dispensing opticians only terminology (not abbreviations). It should surely be both. We believe that both should also be expected to know accepted terminology and abbreviations.

9(f) It is not clear why these differ from those for optometrists. Both should recognise the value of case conferences, peer review and other forms of review, and both should involve discussions with colleagues from their own profession, others within their team or practice, and where appropriate other professions.

Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills

The standard for optometrists begins with the requirement to have knowledge of the legal and ethical framework within which optometry operates, 1(a). It is not clear why there is not a similar requirement in this standard.

2 (a) This would benefit from redrafting – it is not clear what is meant by “Understand systems and the impact of complexity on patient care”.

2(d) All three codes should use the same wording. We suggest all three should use the same wording as in the standard for optometrists.

2 (e) The standard should be the same as for optometrists, a dispensing optician may become a practice manager or owner and therefore also needs to understand the requirements for professional indemnity insurance.