

## BRIEFING NOTE

**TO:** Council

**FROM:** Quality Assurance Committee

**DATE:** February 26, 2020

**SUBJECT:** 7.0 Deferral and Extension Requests

☒ For Decision

☐ For Information

☐ Monitoring Report

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### Purpose:

To review updates to the Quality Assurance Internal Policy Manual and proposed guidelines to assist with reviewing deferral or extension requests from registrants who have been randomly selected to participate in the Competency Review & Evaluation (CRE) Process.

### Background:

All opticians who have a current certificate of registration (i.e. who are not administratively suspended) are eligible to be randomly selected to participate in the annual CRE Process. Those opticians that are selected are required to submit their Professional Portfolio from the most recent calendar year to the College. Some of the opticians selected are also required to engage in the Multi-Source Feedback process. Under Policy 2.6 of the Quality Assurance Policy Manual, the College may grant a deferral or extension to an optician selected to participate in the CRE Process. A deferral or extension may be requested with respect to the Professional Portfolio, the Multi-Source Feedback process or both. All requests for deferrals or extensions require approval by the College and are considered on a case by case basis.

Policy 2.6 does not currently stipulate whether requests for deferrals and extensions will be reviewed by the entire committee, a panel or the Chair only. The current practice when a request for reviewing a request for a deferral or extension is as follows:

- QA staff review the request for completeness. If any information or documents appear to be missing, staff will follow up with the registrant.
- The request is then reviewed by the QAC Chair (or Vice-Chair where the Chair declares a conflict).
- The Chair (or Vice-Chair, as the case may be) will either grant or deny the request, or alternatively can exercise their discretion to bring the request to the full QAC or a panel of the QAC for a decision.

**For Consideration:**

To ensure fairness and consistency in decision making, the committee has proposed updates to Policy 2.6, as well as draft guidelines, that clarify how requests for extensions and deferrals will be dealt with, and the types of supporting information that will be considered by the committee. Proposed updates to the Quality Assurance Internal Policy Manual and draft guidelines are attached. The guidelines are intended as an internal document to help guide the committee and ensure consistency in decision-making.

**Recommendation:**

The Quality Assurance Committee recommends that Council approve the updated Quality Assurance Internal Policy Manual and the attached proposed guidelines.

## 2.6 QA Competency Review and Evaluation- Step 1 Request for Deferral, Extension and Exemption

### Policy date:

Council Approval of Policy – May 29, 2017

### Applicable Regulation and Legislation:

*Opticianry Act, 1991 S.O. 1991, Part III of Ontario Regulation 219/94*

S. 9 Every member who holds a certificate of registration as a registered optician shall participate in the program and fulfill its requirements.

S. 11(4) A member shall undergo a peer and practice assessment of his or her knowledge, skills and judgment if

- (a) the member is selected under subsection(3) or
- (b) a request is made to review the records of a member's self-assessment, continuing education or professional development activities under section 10 and the records, in the opinion of the Committee, are not complete or fail to demonstrate that the member has engaged in adequate self-assessment, continuing education or professional development activities; or
- (c) the member is selected on the basis of other criteria specified by the Committee and published on the College's website at least three months before the member is selected on the basis of that criteria.

### Principle:

As self-regulated professionals, it is critical to public protection that members participate in QA Competency Review and Evaluation (a peer and practice assessment). The Committee does recognize that illness and extenuating circumstances (such as death in the family or a personal/family crisis) and leave of absence from practising may affect a member's ability to engage in the Competency Review and Evaluation process.

### Policy:

2.6.1 A deferral is a delay in engaging in QA-Competency Review and Evaluation until the following random selection cycle. The member automatically engages in QA Competency Review and Evaluation the following ~~random selection cycle~~.

2.6.2 An extension is a delay in submitting the Professional Portfolio mandatory materials and/or the completed multi-source feedback surveys. The member is expected to engage in the current random selection cycle however his/her deadlines for participation can be extended to a maximum of thirty (30) days.

2.6.3 An exemption is when a member does not participate in the current random selection process and will not be automatically included in the next ~~random selection cycle~~. However, the member will be placed back into the random selection pool if and when he/she meets the established criteria.

2.6.4 The member is required to submit his/her request for deferral, extension

and/or exemption in writing addressed to the QA Committee.

~~2.6.4~~2.6.5 The request for a deferral, extension and/or exemption must be accompanied by such supporting documents as the QAC shall from time to time determine to be appropriate.

~~2.6.5~~2.6.6 ~~A deferral may be granted for:~~ When determining whether the request for a deferral or extension should be granted, the following factors may be taken into account:

- ~~personal illness~~ or incapacity of the member
- ~~C~~urrently not practising (e.g. leave of absence from work, ~~maternity parental~~ leave)
- ~~R~~etirement (member still has an active status)
- Serious illness or death of a close family member
- ~~death in the family~~
- Loss or destruction of relevant records
- Other personal crisis or extenuating circumstances that impact the member's ability to ~~cope with additional stress~~ engage in the Competency Review and Evaluation or meet certain deadlines
- Whether the member was granted a deferral the previous year
- The timing of the request (e.g. whether the request was made before or after the deadline for submitting CRE-related materials)

~~2.6.6~~ — A member will submit a signed doctor's note accompanied by his/her request for deferral when the request for deferral is based on illness, death in the family, and/or personal crisis.

~~2.6.7~~ — A member will submit evidence of retirement (e.g. signed communication sent to his/her employer stating retirement date/last day of work).

~~2.6.8~~2.6.7 A member will be granted an exemption if he/she does not meet the established random selection criteria as described in policy number 2.1.3 when randomly selected.

~~2.6.9~~2.6.8 The request and all supporting documents will be provided to the QAC for review, or to a panel of the QAC that has been selected by the Chair.

2.6.9 Upon review of the request, the QAC (or panel) may:

- Grant the request
- Deny the request; or
- Request additional information.