

Fair Registration Practices Report

Opticians (2008)

The answers that you submitted to OFC can be seen below.

Provision of Information About Registration Practices (1 / 13)

Describe how you make information about registration practices available to individuals applying or intending to apply for registration. Specify the tools used to provide information, and the manner in which you make that information available, current, accurate and user friendly in each of these subcategories:

a) steps to initiate the registration process

Information is readily available on the College of Opticians website. Regulations, by-laws and all policies that govern the registration process are posted on the website, as well as some forms. The website is updated regularly. The College also sends information packages out to applicants who e-mail / fax or mail their inquires.

For internationally educated applicants there is a staff member assigned to deal with initial inquires and she provides information promptly. Most inquiries come to us by e-mail or phone.

The College also reviews the initial registration packages and the information posted on a regular basis. The information is revised regularly for accuracy and ease of use. In some instances, the College automatically sends the registration packages / information to applicants when they become eligible for another class of registration or become eligible to take the exams.

b) requirements for registration

Again, the information is posted on the website, including the regulations, by-laws and policies. Once an inquiry has been received, an information package is mailed to the potential applicant. The package usually contains a cover letter, info sheet(s) and application forms outlining the requirements for registration in detail. Staff members are always available to answer questions or provide any further information by e-mail or phone. If an applicant wishes to meet with the registration staff, that can be arranged. The registration application packages are regularly reviewed for accuracy and ease of use.

c) explanation of how the requirements for

A registration package contains all this

registration are to be met, such as the number of years of schooling required for a degree to be deemed equivalent to an Ontario undergraduate degree, length and type of work experience, credit hours or program content

information. The requirements are clearly outlined, such as the requirement to have both eyeglasses dispensing and contact lens dispensing education / training. For internationally educated applicants, a certain number of dispensing hours and fittings(work experience)is required - we accept the applicant's statutory declaration regarding practical experience. There are explanations about the process of credential assessment done by WES, as well as what kind of an assessment the College of Opticians requires.

d) any education or practical experience required for registration that must be completed in Ontario or practice that must be supervised by a member of the profession who is registered in Ontario

For internationally educated applicants, there is no requirement for education / practical experience to be completed in Ontario. The College of Opticians accepts the applicant's statutory declaration regarding the number of dispensing hours and fittings he / she has completed in the home country. There is a minimum number of dispensing hours (1,000) and fittings, but these do not have to be done in Ontario.

For Ontario-based applicants there is a registration requirement of 1,000 hours of dispensing experience to be acquired while the applicant is registered as a Student / Intern Optician and works under the supervision of an Ontario Registered Optician, Optometrist or a Physician.

e) requirements that may be satisfied through acceptable alternatives

For internationally educated applicants, if providing any of the original documents would present undue hardship for the applicant, the College of Opticians would advise the applicant of acceptable alternatives: a statutory declaration, detailed letter of explanation of his / her individual circumstances, letters from supervisors, employers, etc. The applicant may also be asked to sit an assessment test to demonstrate his / her level of knowledge and skills in opticianry.

f) the steps in the assessment process

The assessment process is explained in detail in the application package. The process is also outlined on the website, perhaps in less detail due to space constraints. The College staff are available to answer any questions by phone, e-mail or in person.

g) the documentation of qualifications that must accompany each application; indicate which documents, if any, are required only from internationally trained applicants

Any diploma(s), certificate(s), course outline, official transcript, school information; WES course-by-course evaluation, language proficiency test results (if education completed not in English / French). Again, if obtaining these documents would cause undue hardship to the applicant, there are alternative ways of proving the applicant's credentials.

h) alternatives to the documentation if applicants

A statutory declaration, detailed letter of

cannot obtain the required documentation for reasons beyond their control	explanation of the applicant's individual circumstances, letters from employers, supervisors, etc.
i) how applicants can contact your organization	By e-mail, mail, fax, telephone, in person. If an applicant would like to make an appointment to discuss the process or his / her individual circumstances, he / she can meet with the Registration Coordinator or Director of Professional Programs.
j) how, why and how often your organization initiates communication with applicants about their applications	If the application is not complete, the registration department will contact the applicant to request the missing documents. Also, an internationally educated applicant is contacted right before his / her file is presented to the Registration Committee. Shortly after the meeting, the applicant will be contacted with the decision of the Registration Committee usually within 5 business days).
k) the process for dealing with documents provided in languages other than English or French	The College requires documents to be translated into English / French. This information is again, provided in the initial registration package. The College however, endeavours to be flexible and reasonable, we might accept a photocopy of a translation if the circumstances warrant.
l) the role of third-party organizations, such as qualification assessment agencies, organizations that conduct examinations or institutions that provide bridging programs, that applicants may come into contact with during the registration process	<p>The College requires a course-by-course evaluation by WES for internationally educated applicants and the applicants are advised accordingly on the College website and in the application package. The applicants contact WES directly and bear the costs of the evaluation. The applicants who were not educated in English / French must also provide evidence of language proficiency - there is a number of language proficiency tests we accept (according to the policy that is made available to the applicants early in the process).</p> <p>All applicants (including Ontario-based applicants) other than licensed Opticians from other provinces who come to us under the MRA, must pass the National Eyeglasses and the National Contact Lenses Exam. The exams are administered by NACOR (National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators) - the exam administration is facilitated by the College of Opticians.</p> <p>Bridging programs are individually tailored on as-needed basis by teaching institutions. The contents / length of the program depends on the applicant's individual upgrading needs as determined by the Registration Committee after an assessment. The College works closely with the teaching institutions in developing an appropriate upgrading / bridging program for each applicant.</p>
m) any timelines, deadlines or time limits that	For internationally educated applicants, once

applicants will be subject to during the registration process

the file is complete, it is presented to the Registration Committee at their next meeting. The Committee usually meets once every 6 weeks or so. However, if the case is urgent, the Committee is willing to meet electronically / teleconference and make a decision. There could be a delay on the applicant's part though - gathering documents sometimes takes quite a long time.

Once the Committee's decision has been made, the applicant will be notified, usually within 5 business days.

If an internationally educated applicant's file has been inactive for one year - no contact, no new documents submitted, etc. - the file will be closed, but could be re-activated at a later date.

For Ontario-based / MRA applicants the application processing times are usually 6-8 weeks and all applicants are advised of this in their application package. In most cases, applications are processed sooner.

n) the amount of time that the registration process usually takes

For internationally educated applicants, this depends on the time the applicant needs to gather and submit his documents. Once all the documents (or a detailed letter of explanation + statutory declaration, etc) have been submitted, the file is presented to the Registration Committee at their next meeting (usually no longer than 6 weeks thereafter). The Committee may make a decision to request more information or perhaps to request the applicant to sit an assessment test. The test is then scheduled within next 2-4 weeks. If the applicant is successful, he / she can usually get registered as an Intern Optician within 4 - 6 weeks.

For Ontario-based / MRA applicants, once we receive their application and documents, it takes 6-8 weeks to process - applicants are advised of this in their application package. As mentioned above, in most cases, applications do get processed sooner.

o) information about all fees associated with registration, such as fees for initial application, exams and exam rewrites, course enrolment or issuance of licence

All the fees are outlined in the College of Opticians By-Law that is posted on the website. The fee structure is also explained in the initial package the applicant receives. At every step thereafter, the fees are again outlined in the communication with the applicant.

p) accommodation of applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment

The College does not receive this type of requests very often. Such requests usually occur with respect to examinations. Every reasonable effort is made to accommodate the applicant (meeting in person with the applicant, assistance with completing forms, etc). If it's a question of special accommodations at exams,

more time or frequent breaks in between the exam sections may be approved. All exam candidates receive a copy of a Candidate's Examination Handbook, which clearly outlines the policy on how NACOR deals with special needs requests.

Amount of Fees (2 / 13)

Are any of the fees different for internationally trained applicants? If yes, please explain.

There is a non-refundable application fee for the evaluation of the applicant's credentials / documents / file by the Registration Committee of \$500.00 (plus GST). However, this fee is only required once the applicant's file is ready for the Committee's review. If the file, for whatever reason, never gets to this point (abandoned, etc.) no fee is charged. This fee does not apply to Ontario-based / MRA candidates, since the Registration Committee would not have to evaluate their credentials.

Provision of Timely Decisions, Responses and Reasons (3 / 13)

a) What are your timelines for making registration decisions

Once an applicant's file is complete, it is presented to the Registration Committee at their next meeting. The Committee usually meets once every 6 weeks or so. However, if the case is urgent, the Committee is willing to meet electronically / teleconference and make a decision. There could be a delay on the applicant's part though - gathering documents sometimes takes a long time. Once the Committee's decision has been made, the applicant will be notified, usually within 5 business days. If an applicant's file has been inactive for one year - no contact, no new documents submitted, etc. - the file will be closed, but could be re-activated at a later date.

The processing of the Ontario-based / MRA applications is set at 6-8 weeks. In most cases, however, the applications do get processed sooner.

b) What are your timelines for responding to applicants in writing

If the applicant requests a written response, it's usually provided within one week. E-mail is used more and more as means of communication with the applicants and they seem to prefer it. Mail service can take long especially if the applicant is still in his / her home country.

c) What are your timelines for providing written reasons to applicants about all registration decisions, internal reviews and appeal decisions

After the Committee has made a decision, the applicant is advised in writing usually within 5 business days. This notice includes the information on how to appeal from the decision and to whom. If the applicant wishes, the Committee may look at the matter again, especially if there are some additional

documents.

d) Explain how your organization ensures that it adheres to these timelines.

After every Committee meeting, there is a "to-do" list for the Registration staff and usually letting applicants know about registration decisions takes priority. The applicants are regularly advised prior to the meeting that they can inquire the following day after the meeting to learn about the decision. The official letter / e-mail will follow within about 5 days.

Access to Records (4 / 13)

a) Describe how you give applicants access to their own records related to their applications for registration.

The applicant can always come to the office and review their file. We get this kind of requests very, very rarely.

b) Explain why access to applicants' own records would be limited or refused.

I can't think of a reason, other than for complaint files and certain discipline files.

c) State how and when you give applicants estimates of the fees for making records available.

There is no specified fee.

d) List the fees for making records available.

There is no specified fee.

e) Describe the circumstances under which payment of the fees for making records available would be waived or would have been waived.

Again, this does not seem to apply.

Resources for Applicants (5 / 13)

a) List and describe any resources that are available to applicants, such as application guides, exam blueprints or programs for orientation to the profession.

The application package contains a detailed guide as to the process and required documents. The College website has a lot of information and links posted. For the assessment test, there is an information sheet / test outline available. For the registration exam, there is a Candidate's examination handbook, which is also downloadable on the NACOR's (National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators) website. Applicants can also receive information and explanations by e-mail, phone or in person.

b) Describe how your organization provides information to applicants about these resources.

The application package contains a detailed guide as to the process and required documents. The website has a lot of information and links posted. For the assessment test, for example, there is an information sheet / test outline provided to applicants who are requested to sit the test. For the registration exam, there is a Candidate's Examination handbook provided to each candidate, which is also downloadable on the NACOR's (National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators) website. This booklet is mailed to applicants once they become intern opticians and are eligible to sit the exam. They are however encouraged to visit the NACOR's website for

information at the early stages of the registration process. Applicants can also receive information and any explanation by phone, e-mail or in person.

Internal Review or Appeal Processes (6 / 13)

This section refers to initial internal reviews or appeals.

a) List your timelines for completing internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions.

The College of Opticians has an informal internal review mechanism - for internationally educated applicants - if the applicant wishes, or if he / she has additional information / documents, the Registration Committee will re-visit the file at their next meeting. Usually, meetings are scheduled every 6 weeks or so, but if the matter is urgent, this can be done via e-meeting / teleconferencing.

For the Ontario-based / MRA applicants, the matter can be "escalated" from the Registration Department to the Registrar for a review.

i. State the number of internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions that exceeded your timelines.

Again, this process is quite informal and there has never been a problem with timelines and exceeding them.

ii. Among internal reviews or appeals that exceeded your timelines, state the number that were from internationally trained applicants.

N/A

b) Specify the opportunities you provide for applicants to make submissions regarding internal reviews or appeals.

The applicant can always provide additional explanations / documents. Even after the Committee's decision was made and the applicant notified about it, if there is another matter the applicant raises, the Committee will re-visit the file.

An Ontario-based / MRA applicant whose application is going to be reviewed by the Registrar may provide additional documents / explanations.

c) Explain how you inform applicants about the form in which they must make their submissions (i.e., orally, in writing or by electronic means) for internal reviews or appeals.

Usually, this is done by telephone / e-mail.

d) State how you ensure that no one who acted as a decision-maker in a registration decision acts as a decision-maker in an internal review or appeal of the same registration decision.

This is not the system the College uses. Most "internal appeals" happen due to additional documents and explanations being provided by the applicant. The requests are reviewed by the Registration Committee, in the case of internationally educated applicants, or the Registrar, for the Ontario-based / MRA applicants.

The College of Opticians is not a big College, there is a limited number of Registration Committee members and the whole Committee

works as a Panel.

e) Describe your internal review or appeal process.

The College of Opticians has an informal internal review mechanism - if the applicant wishes, or if he / she has additional information / documents, the Registration Committee will re-visit the file at their next meeting. Most "internal appeals" happen due to additional documents and explanations being provided after the decision has been made and they are reviewed by the Registration Committee.

For the Ontario-based / MRA applicants, the matter can be "escalated" from the Registration Department to the Registrar.

f) State the composition of the committee that makes decisions about registration, which may be called a Registration Committee or Appeals Committee: how many members does the committee have; how many committee members are members of the profession in Ontario; and how many committee members are internationally trained members of the profession in Ontario.

The Registration Committee makes decisions regarding registration matters and internationally educated applications. It consists of 6 members. 4 are Opticians (3 are Council members and one is an Optician non-Council member appointed to the Committee) and 2 are public members. Currently, the Committee does not have any Optician members who have been internationally educated.

Information on Appeal Rights (7 / 13)

This section refers to reviews or appeals that are available after an internal review or appeal. Describe how you inform applicants of any rights they have to request a further review of or appeal from a decision.

The letter informing an applicant of the decision of the Registration Committee has a section that informs the applicant of his / her right to appeal from the Committee's decision to HPARB. It outlines the contact info, deadlines and other pertinent information.

Assessment of Qualifications (8 / 13)

This category covers your processes for assessing all qualifications, such as academic credentials, competencies, language ability or practical experience.

a) List the criteria that must be met in order for an applicant's qualifications to satisfy the entry-to-practice requirements for your profession.

Ontario-based applicants - must have graduated from an Opticianry program approved by the MTCU or a program deemed equivalent by the Registration Committee, must have successfully completed the National Eyeglasses and the National Contact Lenses exam and have completed at least 1,000 hours of verified dispensing experience.

MRA applicants - must currently be holding an Eyeglasses license as well as a Contact Lens license from another province. If the applicant is an EG-only Optician, he / she may apply for a Student Optician license while in the process of completing the CL upgrading program.

Internationally educated applicants - must provide a course-by-course evaluation from

WES, transcript, any diploma(s), certificate(s) they have, information about the teaching institution, information on any licensing exam(s) they passed, whether they are licensed in their home country, statement of experience and proof of language proficiency as per the College Language Proficiency Policy. Once approved (may include an assessment test), such an applicant must successfully pass the National EG and the National CL exam. At this point, the applicant becomes eligible to apply for an Optician license.

b) Describe the methodology used to determine whether a program completed outside of Canada satisfies the requirements for registration.

The programs completed outside of Canada are assessed on an individual basis; however, the Committee ensures that there is consistency and equal treatment of applicants. The Registration Committee assesses whether the program meets the College of Opticians Entry-to-practice competencies for each individual applicant.

c) Explain how work experience in the profession is assessed.

The applicant must give a statutory declaration regarding the number of hours of dispensing experience (approximately), as well as the approximate number of fittings. If the applicant has other documents to corroborate the statement, he /she is encouraged to submit them, however it is not mandatory. Also, if the applicant is requested to sit an assessment test, the Committee can verify first-hand if the applicant possesses the skills and knowledge of opticianry comparable to applicants educated in Ontario.

d) Describe how your organization ensures that information used in the assessment about educational systems and credentials of applicants from outside Canada is current and accurate.

The Committee evaluates how the program the applicant completed meets the College of Opticians Entry-to-practice competencies. Given the average number of applicants, this is done on a case-by-case basis. The documents (course curriculum, transcript, information about the program and the teaching institution) are provided by the applicant or by the school directly.

e) Describe how previous assessment decisions are used to assist in maintaining consistency when assessing credentials of applicants from the same jurisdictions or institutions.

The support staff to the Registration Committee ensure that all relevant previous assessment decisions are brought to the attention of the Committee in order to maintain consistency.

f) Explain how the status of an institution in its home country affects recognition of the credentials of applicants by your organization.

The Registration Committee relies on WES to assess the authenticity of an internationally educated applicant's credentials. The status of an institution (private or public, etc.) is not essential, as long as the course curriculum mostly meets the requirements of the Entry-to-practice competencies.

g) Describe how your organization accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment.

The College of Opticians of Ontario endeavours to accommodate any request of this kind if reasonable and possible. This could include meeting in person, the applicant bringing a

support person, assistance with completing the forms, etc. Special needs requests are mostly seen when it comes to examinations - please refer to this section of the survey.

h) State the average length of time required to complete the entire registration process, from when the process is initiated to when a registration decision is issued.

Ontario-based applicants - on average 6-8 weeks once the documents have been received.

MRA applicants - on average 6-8 weeks processing time once the documents have been received.

Usually, applications get processed sooner, however, applicants are notified of this timeframe with a note that they may receive their registration sooner.

Internationally trained applicants - varies greatly, depends on when the file is complete to be reviewed by the Registration Committee. Also, if the applicant is requested to sit an assessment test this could delay the process. On average, these files are reviewed within 1-2 months from the date of receipt, the applicants are normally notified promptly of the Committee's decision. However, if there is an assessment test the applicant needs to sit, that could add another 1-2 months. Then, the applicant must take the National EG and the National CL exam, which could take another month or so. There is 6-8 weeks for the exam results to be announced. After that, there is a 6-8 week period to receive a full license. Ideally, it should take about 8-10 months if the case is straight forward.

i. State whether the average time differs for internationally trained individuals.

Please see above (h).

ii. If the average time differs for internationally trained individuals, state whether it is greater or less than the average for all applicants, and the reasons for the difference.

Again, please see above (h). The answer to this question seems obvious - the process for assessing and evaluating internationally educated applicants is different from the process used for the Ontario-based or the MRA applicants.

i) If your organization conducts credential assessments:

i. Explain how you determine the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.

This is done by WES.

ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.

The Committee assesses whether the program the applicant has completed meets the Entry-to-practice competencies and whether it is comparable to a similar Ontario-based program. However, this process is flexible. An internationally educated applicant may demonstrate his level of knowledge and skills on an assessment test despite certain gaps in education / experience.

iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

Again, since the assessment test has a high practical component (due to the nature of the profession), the applicant has a chance to demonstrate his / her knowledge and skills in opticianry. Also, the applicant's statutory declaration regarding his / her work experience is always considered in the Committee's deliberations.

j) If your organization conducts competency assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

The program contents (course outline), length of the program, number of teaching / practical hours, etc. are compared to the Entry-to-practice competencies to determine if the competency requirements have mostly been met. This way, the program is evaluated as to whether it is comparable to an approved Ontario program (which teaches to the Entry-to-practice competencies).

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

The Entry-to-practice competencies have scheduled review dates.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.

The College of Opticians uses Entry-to-practice competencies when assessing applicants. The work experience (which presumably takes place after the applicant had already been licensed in his home country) would not be considered "entry-to-practice". For internationally educated applicants, it is certainly taken into account by the Registration Committee, just in a different context.

k) If your organization conducts prior learning assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.

The College of Opticians does not assess prior learning. Should this be necessary, the applicant would be directed to a teaching institution.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.

N/A

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.

N/A

l) If your organization administers examinations:

i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.

The College of Opticians facilitates the administration of the National EG and the National CL exam. The exams are administered by NACOR.

ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.

N/A

iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.

N/A

Third-Party Organizations (9 / 13)

a) List any third-party organizations (such as language testers, credential assessors or examiners) relied upon by your organization to make assessment decisions.

Language Testers:
TOEFL, Canadian Language Benchmarks, MELAB, IELTS, TestCan
Credential Assessors:
WES
Examiners:
NACOR (National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators), through the NEC (National Examinations Committee), a sub-committee of NACOR

b) Explain what measures your organization takes to ensure that any third-party organization that it relies upon to make an assessment:

i. provides information about assessment practices to applicants

The College of Opticians ensures that relevant information is posted on the third-party organizations' website. The College also provides links on our website. The College provides information in the information / application packages about these organizations and their role. For example, the College provides copies of NACOR Candidate's Examination Handbooks to eligible exam candidates.

ii. utilizes current and accurate information about qualifications from outside Canada

WES has done several presentations to the Registration Committee about methods they use to ensure current and accurate information is used. Their system / database is updated regularly and they frequently research conditions in foreign countries with respect to education.

iii. provides timely decisions, responses and reasons to applicants

The College monitors if, for example, NACOR follows their 8-week policy about notifying exam candidates of the exam results.

iv. provides training to individuals assessing qualifications

N/A

v. provides access to records related to the assessment to applicants

N/A

vi. accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment

We ensure that any of the applicants with special needs is given all reasonable consideration. For example, NACOR has a policy in place how to process requests of this nature and will work closely with the College of Opticians to ensure fairness.

c) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct credential assessments:

i. Explain how the third party determines the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the

WES relies on their research and extensive database when assessing credentials.

credential presented for assessment.

ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.

N/A

iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

N/A

d) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct competency assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

N/A

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

N/A

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.

N/A

e) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct prior learning assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.

N/A

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.

N/A

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.

N/A

f) If your organization relies on a third party to administer examinations:

i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.

The National Examination Committee (NEC) is a working sub-committee of NACOR (the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators) responsible for the development of examination content and policy. The administration of the examinations is designated to NACOR.

In 1998 Assessment Strategies, specialists in professional examination development and assessment, was contracted to assess the examinations and marking criteria and to outline any improvements that were required.

Establishing a Pass Mark

Critical to the reliability of examination results is the method by which the pass mark is established. The method used by the NEC to establish the pass mark for the examinations is the modified Angoff method. Using this method each component of the examination is isolated. Each member of the examination review panel is asked the question, If 100 candidates of entry level competence were to answer this question, what percentage of candidates would

get the correct answer? If there is a divergence in opinion of more than 30%, those delegates estimating at the high and low end of the spectrum are required to provide a rationale to defend their estimation. A second poll is taken, and a third until all delegates have rethought and realigned their assessment and are satisfied in validity of their pass marks. Assessment Strategies uses the data collected to establish the pass mark for the examination.

(Source: NACOR website)

ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.

The NEC met a minimum of 4 times a year during the development phase of the examinations and continues to meet 2 or three times a year to evaluate results and make modifications to content as required.

Examination Security and Integrity

The NEC has developed a bank of questions. Each candidate receives an examination paper with a mix of questions that differs from other candidate's papers.

In order to ensure uniformity of exam application, the NEC has developed candidate and examiner instructions for each section of the examination. Examinations are held in various locations throughout the country and NACOR sends an Examination Moderator to each sitting of the examination. The host province supplies a Chief Examiner as well as invigilators. All examination papers are sent from the NACOR office to the Examination Moderator who transports them to the exam site, collects them upon completion of the examination and is responsible for returning the examinations to the NACOR office for marking.

(Source: NACOR website)

iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.

The NEC met a minimum of 4 times a year during the development phase of the examinations and continues to meet 2 or three times a year to evaluate results and make modifications to content as required.

Establishing a Pass Mark

Critical to the reliability of examination results is the method by which the pass mark is established. The method used by the National Examination Committee to establish the pass mark for the examinations is the modified Angoff method. Using this method each component of the examination is isolated. Each member of the examination review panel is asked the question, If 100 candidates of entry level competence were to answer this question, what percentage of candidates would get the correct answer? If there is a divergence in opinion of more than 30%, those

delegates estimating at the high and low end of the spectrum are required to provide a rationale to defend their estimation. A second poll is taken, and a third until all delegates have rethought and realigned their assessment and are satisfied in validity of their pass marks. Assessment Strategies uses the data collected to establish the pass mark for the examination.

(Source: NACOR website)

Training (10 / 13)

a) Describe the training that your organization provides to:

i. individuals who assess qualifications

There is an in-depth orientation for the Registration Committee members at their first meeting every year. The Committee members also attend any available relevant training sessions. For example, they have attended "Managing Cultural Differences" workshop (ORAC) recently. Several staff members that deal with applicants directly have attended this workshop as well.

ii. individuals who make registration decisions

Please see above.

iii. individuals who make internal review or appeal decisions

Please see above.

Agreements on the Recognition of Qualifications (11 / 13)

Examples of agreements on the recognition of professional qualifications include mutual recognition, reciprocity and labour mobility agreements. Such agreements may be national or international, between regulatory bodies, associations or jurisdictions.

a) List any agreements on the recognition of qualifications that were in place during the reporting period.

Mutual Recognition Agreement Among Opticianry Regulators - Ontario signed on the MRA in 2001. The MRA has now been signed by 9 of the 10 provincial authorities. They are: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador.

b) Explain the impact of these agreements on the registration process or on applicants for registration.

MRA provides for an Optician who is currently licensed and who is deemed to be in good standing in their home province to be accepted for licensure in any other province or territory in Canada.

The College has developed a policy on how to deal with Opticians from other provinces who do not hold both the eyeglasses and the contact lens license. In Ontario, there is no dual-licensing system - Ontario opticians are licensed for both the eyeglasses and the contact lens dispensing. Therefore, there is a material difference in the scope of practice between Ontario and Quebec on one side

(combined license) and all other provinces (separate licenses). Subsequently, EG-only Opticians in good standing from other provinces may register in Ontario as student opticians while they are in the process of completing their CL upgrading. Once they pass the National CL exam, they may apply for a full combined license in Ontario.

Data Collection (12 / 13)

Languages in which application information materials are available

a) Indicate the languages in which application information materials are available.

Language	Yes/No
English	Yes
French	No
Other (please specify)	

Paid staff employed by your organization

b) State the number of paid staff employed by your organization in the following categories.

Category	Staff
Total staff employed by the regulatory body	11
Staff involved in appeals process	1
Staff involved in registration process	5

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Countries where internationally educated applicants were initially trained

c) List the countries where your internationally educated applicants* were initially trained in the profession, and the number of applicants trained in each country.

Applicants	Country of training (Canada excluded)	Number of applicants**
Largest number	ASIA (1 Korea, 1 Phillipines, 1 Singapore, 1 Isreal, 1 Iran, 2 India)	7
Second-largest number	UK	4
Third-largest number	USA	4
Fourth-largest number	Africa (2 Nigeria, 1 Algeria)	3
Fifth-largest number	(1 Romania, 1 Jamaica)	2

* Persons who have applied to start the process for entry to the profession.

**Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained

d) Indicate where your members* were initially trained in the profession (use only numbers, do not enter commas or decimals).

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Total Members	558	142	2	18	1582	2302
Non-practising members	8	4	0	0	53	65

* Persons who are currently able to use the protected title or professional designation of your profession.

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

Applications your organization processed in the past year

e) State the number of applications your organization processed in the past year (use only numbers, do not enter commas or decimals).

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
New applications received	93	52	0	3	0	148
Applicants actively pursuing licensing (applicants who had some contact with your organization in the reporting year)	52	16	4	16	3	91
Inactive applicants (applicants who had no contact with your organization in the	0	0	0	0	0	0

reporting year)						
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	49	2	0	0	0	51
Applicants who became members	86	41	0	3	0	130
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of license* but were not issued a license	0	0	0	1	0	1
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of license*	0	1	1	0	0	2

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

Please note: Of the 93 applications received in the 2008 year from Ontario, 86 were processed and approved in 2008, 4 were received in 2008 but were processed in 2009.

Of the 52 applications received in the 2008 year from Other Canadian Provinces, 41 were processed and approved in 2008, 1 was received in 2008 but was processed in 2009.

*Unsure what you mean by inactive above. Are these individuals who requested and were sent an application in 2008 but never returned it; OR individuals who prior to December 31, 2008 either requested and were sent application and never returned it, or returned their application but were missing information?

* An alternative class of license enables its holder to practise with limitations, but additional registration requirements must be met in order for the member to be fully licensed. Please list and describe below the alternative classes of license that your organization grants, such as student, intern, associate, provisional or temporary.

	Class of License	Description
a)	Student Optician	A Registered Student Optician may dispense eyeglasses, contact lenses or sub-normal vision devices only under supervision or direction of a registered Optician, Optometrist or Ophthalmologist who is physically present in the place in which the dispensing takes place at the time it takes place. In order to obtain and keep a certificate of registration a Student Optician must be enrolled in an approved Ontario opticianry program or be in the process of completing additional training, as ordered by the Registration Committee of the College of Opticians.
		A Registered Intern Optician may dispense

b)	Intern Optician	eyeglasses, contact lenses or sub-normal vision devices only under supervision or direction of a registered Optician, Optometrist or Ophthalmologist who is physically present in the place in which the dispensing takes place at the time it takes place. An Intern Optician must have successfully completed and graduated from an approved Ontario opticianry program or have completed any additional training as ordered by the Registration Committee of the College of Opticians.
c)		

Reviews and appeals your organization processed in the past year

f) State the number of reviews and appeals your organization processed in the past year (use only numbers, do not enter commas or decimals).

	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
Jan. 1 to Dec. 31	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Applications that were subject to an internal review or that were referred to a statutory committee of your governing council, such as a Registration Committee	0	0	0	0	0	0
Applicants who initiated an appeal of a registration decision	0	1	0	0	0	1
Appeals heard	0	1	0	0	0	1
Registration decisions changed following an appeal	0	0	0	0	0	0

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

Certification (13 / 13)

I hereby certify that:

- - I have reviewed the information submitted in this Fair Registration Practices Report (the "Report")
- - all information required to be provided in the Report is included; and
- - the information contained in the Report is accurate.

Name of individual with authority to sign on behalf of the organization:

Caroline MacIsaac

Title:

Registrar

Date:

February 27, 2009