



## **Continuing Education and Training (CET)**

A guide for registrants in  
the 2016-18 CET cycle

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## About the General Optical Council

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The General Optical Council (GOC) is the regulator for the optical professions in the UK. Our purpose is to protect the public by promoting high standards of education, performance and conduct amongst opticians. We currently register around 29,000 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student opticians and optical businesses.

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## About this guide

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It is essential that optical professionals maintain the up to date skills and knowledge needed to practise safely and effectively throughout their career. To ensure this, we oversee a mandatory Continuing Education and Training (CET) scheme.

The scheme is designed to ensure all those on the GOC registers keep their skills and knowledge up-to-date and remain fit to practise. This means registrants not only have to get 36 points in each three-year cycle, but have to meet other requirements in order to remain registered.

This guide explains the requirements for each registrant group and aims to help registrants to ensure they meet the requirements of the scheme.

## Purpose of the CET Scheme

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CET is a statutory requirement for all fully-qualified optometrists and dispensing opticians. The CET scheme is a points-based scheme that runs over a three-year cycle from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2018. All full registrants must earn a minimum number of CET points and meet required competencies by the end of each cycle to stay on the registers.

Registrants can manage their CET portfolio, and maintain a record of their completed CET points in the MyGOC section of the GOC website.

# What are the CET requirements?

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## **The following general principles apply to all registrants from 1 January 2016:**

1. The new three year cycle runs from 1 January 2016 – 31 December 2018.
2. There is a 36 points requirement per cycle for all dispensing opticians and optometrists.
3. There is an expectation that registrants spread their CET activity throughout the three year cycle obtaining a minimum of six points per year (see page 6).
4. The number of points awarded for a CET activity reflects the level of engagement with peers or experts required and the extent to which the activity supports reflection by the participant. For example, peer review and clinical skills CET carry more points than attendance at lectures or article-based CET.
5. At least 18 of the 36 points required must be achieved through interactive CET. Interactive types of learning, including those that will be offered as distance learning, are available to ensure all registrants can meet this requirement, even those with difficulties physically attending events.
6. Every registrant has an electronic CET portfolio. This is known as the MyCET account and can be found in the MyGOC section of the GOC website. We expect you to keep a record of your CET activities in your MyCET account.
7. A scope of practice statement and at least one learning goal must be created in the Personal Development Plan which is available via your MyCET account.

## **Specific requirements for optometrists**

For optometrists the CET carried out to obtain the required 36 points must:

1. Involve participation in at least one peer review event. A peer review event can either be a registrant-led peer review group or a peer discussion delivered by a CET provider;
2. Cover all optometry competency units (see page 6); and
3. Involve gaining at least 18 points through interactive CET.

### **Specific requirements for dispensing opticians**

For dispensing opticians the CET carried out to obtain the required 36 points must:

1. Cover all dispensing optics competency units (see page 7); and
2. Involve gaining at least 18 points through interactive CET.

### **Specific requirements for contact lens opticians**

For contact lens opticians the CET carried out to obtain the required 36 points must:

1. Involve gaining 18 points in relation to their contact lens specialty CET;
2. Involve gaining 18 points in relation to general CET;
3. Involve participation in at least one peer review event approved for contact lens specialty competencies – a peer review event can either be a registrant-led peer review group or a peer discussion delivered by a CET provider;
4. Cover all general dispensing optics competency units (see page 7);
5. Cover all contact lens specialty competencies (see page 7); and
6. Involve gaining at least 18 points through interactive CET.

### **Specific requirements for therapeutic specialist optometrists**

For therapeutic specialist optometrists, the CET carried to obtain the required 36 points must:

1. Involve participation in at least one peer review event approved for therapeutics speciality competencies – a peer review event can either be a registrant-led peer review group or a peer discussion delivered by a CET provider;
2. Involve gaining at least 18 points through interactive CET; and
3. Cover all general optometry competency units (see page 7).

In addition, therapeutic specialist optometrists must gain 18 additional therapeutics specialty CET points covering all therapeutics speciality competency units (see page 7).

## **Reflection on scope of practice and planning CET**

All registrants are expected to complete a Personal Development Plan (PDP) in relation to each three-year CET cycle. This will involve:

- completing a scope of practice statement which they can use to reflect on their practice; and
- setting learning goals which should be related to areas of current practice that they wish to revise or update, or new areas of practice that they wish to develop. Once a learning goal has been set, registrants should select CET activities that will help them meet this goal. Registrants can also add non-CET activities to demonstrate that they have met a learning goal.

The system will automatically create a learning goal for standards of practice within the PDP. All registrants will be expected to link at least one piece of CET related to standards of practice to this learning goal during the three year CET cycle.

MyGOC contains hints, tips and a video to help registrants use the PDP effectively.

## **Annual points target**

We expect registrants to undertake CET on a regular basis throughout the three year cycle to ensure that CET is an integral and ongoing feature of their career. Our expectation is that registrants will plan their CET responsibly and gain a minimum of six CET points each year. The Registrar may use information on the annual completion of CET when considering whether to approve a registrant's application for retention.

# Competencies

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When checking a registrant’s CET points at the end of the cycle we check that all competency units relevant to the registrant’s group are covered. If registrants hold a speciality qualification where competencies overlap both general and specialist practice, they are only required to complete that competency by doing speciality CET (for example, the ‘standards of practice’ competency).

## Optometry

 COMMUNICATION	 STANDARDS OF PRACTICE	 OCULAR EXAMINATION
 OPTICAL APPLIANCES	 CONTACT LENSES	 OCULAR DISEASE
 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL FUNCTION	 BINOCULAR VISION	

## Dispensing Optics

 COMMUNICATION	 STANDARDS OF PRACTICE	 OCULAR EXAMINATION
 OPTICAL APPLIANCES	 CONTACT LENSES	 LOW VISION
 REFRACTIVE MANAGEMENT	 OCULAR ABNORMALITIES	 PAEDIATRIC DISPENSING

## Contact Lens Opticians

 COMMUNICATION	 STANDARDS OF PRACTICE	 OCULAR EXAMINATION
 VERIFICATION & IDENTIFICATION	 CONTACT LENSES	

## Therapeutic Prescribing

 KNOWLEDGE	 OPTIONS	 SHARE DECISION MAKING
 SAFE	 PROFESSIONAL	 ALWAYS IMPROVING
 INFORMATION	 THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM	 SELF & OTHERS

Registrants logging into their MyCET account are able see their progress in covering the competencies via the tracking facility in their MyCET record (see page 12). This shows which competencies to date have been covered by the CET undertaken and which still need covering.

The relevant competency icon changes from grey to coloured once that competency has been achieved. By clicking on an outstanding competency icon registrants can search for available CET relevant to that competency. This helps registrants to plan their CET activity in advance, ensuring all of the requirements are met before the end of the cycle.

In the example below, the four competencies coloured blue have been covered. The four in grey have not.



## Peer review events

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Peer review events are intended to prevent the risk of some registrants becoming professionally isolated and not interacting with peers.

Peer review events help registrants to share their own experience and expertise with one another and learn from colleagues. Registrants are able to discuss interesting, difficult or unusual cases which relate to specific competencies and exchange ideas about different ways of handling them. We know that our registrants have a lot of good practice to share and peer review is designed to help them learn from each other.

There are two types of CET activities that are considered as peer review events and these are:

### 1. Registrant-led peer review groups

These are groups of between four and ten registrants who meet for a case-based discussion session using their own cases. One registrant should undertake the role of group leader with the responsibility for applying to us for approval for the group before the event. All registrant-led peer reviews must be linked to a specific competency and the group leader should inform other attendees of the topic or theme which their cases must relate in order to meet the competency or competencies selected. A copy of the competency framework for each registrant group is available on our website at <https://www.optical.org/en/Education/CET/cet-requirements-for-registrants.cfm>

The group leader can apply for GOC approval for a registrant-led peer review by clicking on the "setup peer review group" button within his or her own MyCET record. The approval application requires specification of the following details:

- » Date, time and venue for group meeting
- » Type of registrants in group e.g. number of optometrists, dispensing opticians, contact lens opticians and therapeutic specialist optometrists
- » Topic or theme that cases relate to
- » Identification of competency unit(s) relevant to topic or theme
- » High-level learning objectives which demonstrate how the participants will meet the competency or competencies to be discussed at the peer review. These should reflect what the participant will learn or understand by the end of the peer review, such as, "to understand effective communication techniques when dealing with paediatric cases", "to be able to make referral decisions for patients with suspected glaucoma" or "to improve record keeping by drawing on good practice".

When discussing real cases, registrants should not share confidential patient information, such as names, addresses and dates of birth.

After the event, the group leader will upload the list of attendees' names and GOC numbers (including their own) into

the event record held within their own MyCET account. This will allocate pending points to each of the attendees' MyCET accounts.

Each registrant must log in to their MyCET account and record their learning in a reflection statement prior to being able to accept the pending peer review points.

Further guidance on peer review events can be found in our CET principles and requirements document in the CET section of our website.

## **2. Peer discussion delivered by a CET provider**

This is a CET-provider led event where cases or topics are provided and learning objectives are set in advance by the provider. These events can involve a large number of attendees, although delegates should be split into discussion groups of between four and ten registrants plus a facilitator.

Facilitators do not participate in the discussion as a delegate but have a specific role in managing the discussion to ensure it enables achievement of the specified learning objectives. Facilitators do not receive peer review event points or competencies but can claim one general point for facilitating CET, up to a maximum of six points per CET cycle.

### **Online peer review events**

In exceptional cases, where a registrant makes a written application

demonstrating a legitimate reason why they cannot physically attend a peer review event, we will consider permitting participation via online real-time audio and video services.

### **Reflection statements for peer review events**

All registrants, regardless of which of the above types of peer review events they have completed, must complete a reflection statement to capture their learning in relation to the peer review.

Registrants do this by completing a template within their MyCET record which appears when logging in to accept their pending CET points for the peer review (see page 12 for more details of the online MyCET system). The purpose of the reflection statement is to capture a summary of the discussion and of the learning, development and good practice identified. In completing your reflection statements you are asked to do the following:

- » Summarise the clinical skills and competencies that were discussed during this session;
- » List the main things you learned from this session;
- » Describe how you will apply this learning in your practice; and
- » Consider if the session has identified any areas where further personal learning is needed and if so briefly, describe them.

We may audit a percentage of registrant reflection statements each year and in doing so, consider the content alongside the learning objectives specified when CET approval was granted.

Registrants should log in as soon as possible after receiving the notification that their pending points are available, to ensure they complete their reflection statements while the learning is still fresh in their minds.



## Interactive CET

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Interactive CET can be identified by the following icon, which will be published in advertising materials for courses or against activities listed on the CET Directory in your MyCET record (see page 12):



Interactive CET can be defined as any CET which involves either:

- » Physical attendance such as lectures, workshops or peer review events; or
  - » Distance learning which includes an interactive element.
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# Your online CET portfolio for the 2016–18 cycle

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Registrants access their CET portfolio, known as MyCET, by logging in to the MyGOC area of the GOC website ([www.optical.org](http://www.optical.org)). This is the same place where online retention is completed. Here registrants can log their points and check CET requirements and progress.

**Login**

This is the page to log into MyGOC, the registrants' area of our website.

Here you can update your registration details, check and update your CET record and complete your retention application.

If your query is urgent, please contact the Registration team on 020 7580 3898 (option 1).

Username

Password

**Login** →

**Forgotten your password?** [Reset Password](#)

Please note that at busy times the password reset email can take up to three hours to arrive.

If you are a CET Provider or are not currently on the GOC Register please [click here](#) to access your CET account.

**Help**

**Individual registrants**

Your **user name** is your GOC number including the hyphen. **For example, 01-1234 or D-1234.**

**Body corporates**

Your **user name** is your GOC number including the hyphen. **For example, CO-1234.**

**Having problems?** Try our [guide for logging in to the registrants' area](#), or one of our [reference guides](#) below:

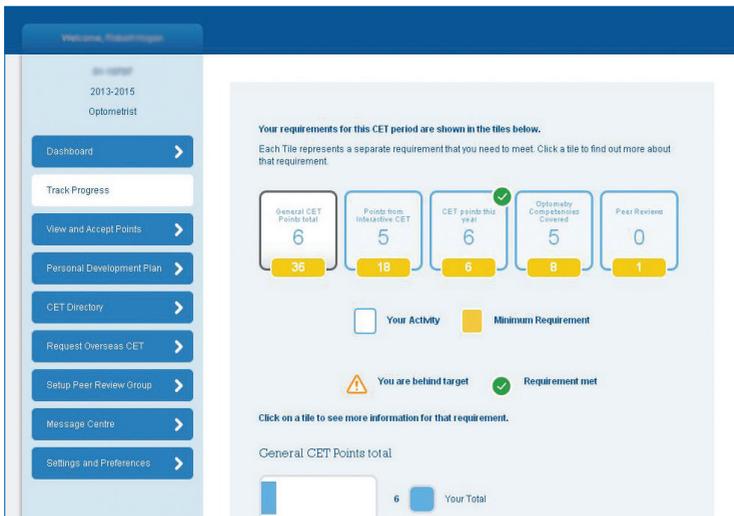
- [How to log into MyGOC](#)
- [How to change your MyGOC password](#)
- [How to validate your email address](#)
- [Quick reference guide to MyGOC](#)

To use MyGOC we recommend using one of the following browsers: Internet Explorer, Firefox or Google Chrome. We cannot guarantee that MyGOC will work in other browsers, including mobile browsers.

Your MyCET record has the following features:

- A progress page to enable registrants to track how many general, specialist or interactive points they need, which competencies have been covered, if the six points per year target has been met and whether any peer review has been completed.
- A facility to provide feedback on CET attended when accepting pending points. This is important so that CET providers and the GOC can understand if there are any issues with the CET provided and how they can be addressed in the future. Provision of this feedback will not affect the points or competencies gained from the CET activity in question.
- A template to help registrants record reflection statements, capture interactions with peers and link CET activity to a learning goal in their personal development plan. These reflection statements must be completed for peer review events. They are optional for other CET activities, but we encourage registrants to complete them in relation to all CET which they do as a matter of good practice.

- d) A personal development plan so registrants can define their scope of practice, set learning objectives and plan their development.
- e) Register their own local registrant-led peer review group.
- f) Apply for non-UK continuing professional development events to be awarded CET points in advance of these happening.
- g) A message centre to contact the GOC if there are any questions related to your CET.
- h) A CET directory where you can search for CET events by location, provider name, mode of learning, competencies covered and topic.
- i) The facility to set notification preferences to be informed when new CET matching your criteria is available.



## How to find CET to meet your learning goals and requirements

Your MyCET record includes a search facility to find CET events, known as the CET directory. You can search to find CET that:

- is available in your local area or online;
- is offered by a particular provider; or
- is in a particular mode of learning, topic or competency.

It is quick and easy to use and the search results will give you all the information you need to plan your CET – who the CET is targeted at, whether it's interactive, which competency or competencies it covers and how to book a place.

Search for the CET you need:

The screenshot shows the 'MyCET' search interface on the General Optical Council website. The header includes the logo and navigation links: 'My OOC | OOC Dashboard | Contact Us | Logout'. A user greeting bar says 'Welcome, [Name]'. A sidebar on the left contains navigation buttons: 'Dashboard', 'Track Progress', 'View and Accept Points', 'Personal Development Plan', 'CET Directory' (highlighted), 'Request Overseas CET', 'Setup Peer Review Group', 'Message Centre', and 'Settings and Preferences'. The main content area is titled 'Search for CET' and contains several filter sections: 'Search by Title, Description or CET Provider' with a text input field; 'Filter by Location, Competency' with dropdown menus for 'Scotland' and '4. Optical Applica...'; 'Filter by CET Type' with a dropdown for 'Skills Workshop' and a checked checkbox for 'Include Distance Learning'; and 'Filter by date' with two date input fields showing '01/05/2013' and '31/05/2013'. A blue 'Search' button is at the bottom right. A link at the bottom reads 'Save this search and notify me when CET matching this search is added to the CET Directory'.

View the details of the CET matching your criteria:

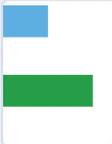
Search results	
<b>Title</b>	What Shall I see?
<b>Date &amp; Location</b>	12/1/16 Stevenage, UK
<b>Description</b>	This lecture provides an overview of the development of facial structure in children and how different types of frames are adapted to follow this development.
<b>Provider</b>	CET Provider
<b>Type of CET</b>	Lecture
<b>Interactive?</b>	 Yes
<b>Points</b>	1 (General)
<b>Target groups</b>	<b>Optometrist</b>  <small>OPTICAL APPLIANCES</small> <b>Dispensing Optician</b>   <small>PAEDIATRIC DISPENSING</small> <small>OPTICAL APPLIANCES</small>
<a href="#">View Session</a>	

Also, when checking your progress in meeting the competencies relevant to your registrant group, you can click on each of the competency icons on your track progress screen (known as the dashboard) to search directly for CET covering that competency:

 You are behind target
 Requirement met

Click on a tile to see more information for that requirement.

**Optometry Competencies Covered**

	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>4  Your Total</p> <p>0  Your Target To Date</p> <p>8  Your Minimum Requirement</p> <p>0  Peer Average</p> </div> </div>
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**Competencies Achieved**

  
COMMUNICATION

  
STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

  
OCULAR EXAMINATION

  
OPTICAL APPLIANCES

  
CONTACT LENSES

  
OCULAR DISEASE

  
ASSESSMENT OF BINOCULAR VISION



**You need to complete CET in 4 competencies.**  
Click a competency to search for CET in that field.

### First login during 2016–18 cycle

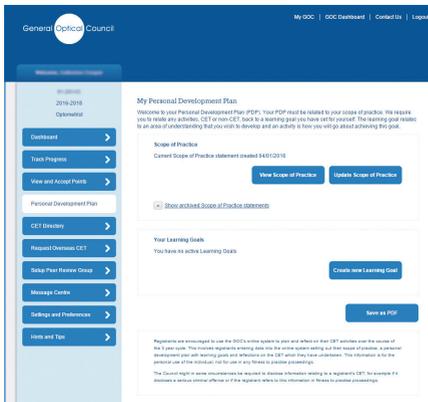
When you login for the first time during the cycle you will be taken directly to your Personal Development Plan, where you will be required to: define your scope of practice; identify specific areas of practice that you want to revise or update; identify areas of your practice that you wish to develop; and set at least one learning goal. You will not be able to progress further until this is completed.

# Your Personal Development Plan

## What is the Personal Development Plan for?

As a registrant you must keep up-to-date the knowledge and skills relevant to your scope of practice.

Your Personal Development Plan is a facility which allows you to reflect on practice, set learning goals and store information on how these have been met.



Other things you can do in your PDP:

- Search for CET activities to meet your learning goals
- Record non-CET activities you have done, some of which may help to meet your learning goals. (This might include continuing professional development activities or the outcomes of appraisals.)
- Upload information or feedback statements from third parties.

## CET and your Personal Development Plan

All CET you complete must be linked to a learning goal. You will automatically be asked to link CET activities to a learning goal when accepting pending points within your MyCET account. This will involve a simple click to select the learning goal that applies.

We require you to set at least one learning goal in the 2016-18 cycle, although we encourage you to follow the process of identifying and meeting learning goals, and then reflecting on what you have learnt as a matter of good practice.

The system will automatically create a learning goal for standards of practice within the PDP. All registrants will be expected to link at least one piece of CET related to standards of practice to this learning goal during the three year CET cycle.

## Frequently asked questions

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### **What if I can't meet the CET requirements?**

All GOC registrants are expected to meet the CET requirements in order to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. CET is available in a wide range of formats, including distance learning. This means that even registrants based outside of the UK, on a career break or struggling to attend events can access CET regularly.

To be on the GOC register you must be fit to practise and be able to undertake CET. Anyone who experiences exceptional circumstances affecting their ability to undertake CET for an extended period of time should inform us. The Registrar will take these circumstances into account when determining whether or not a registrant should be removed from the Register for failing to meet all the CET requirements.

### **What happens if I don't meet my CET requirements by the end of the cycle?**

The 2016–18 cycle ends on 31 December 2018 and registrants who have failed to meet their CET requirements by that date may be removed from the GOC register, resulting in them being unable to practise.

### **I want to restore to the GOC register – what are the CET requirements?**

In order to restore your registration following removal, a registrant:

- Will have to make up any shortfall they have in meeting the CET requirement from a previous CET cycle which

can include some or all of CET points, competencies, interactive points or peer reviews.

- Will have to demonstrate that in the last 12 months they have completed a minimum of 12 general CET points, achieved 50 per cent of these points from interactive CET, covered all the general competencies for their professional group, and completed a peer review, if required for their professional group.

Those registrants who are restoring to a specialist register will be required to:

- Complete the shortfall in specialist CET from the previous CET cycle.
- Demonstrate that in the last 12 months they have undertaken a minimum of 6 specialist CET points, of which 50 per cent are interactive, met all the specialist CET competencies for their professional group and undertaken a specialist peer review for their professional group.
- For contact lens opticians the six specialist points can count towards their general requirements under bullet point two when applying to restore both general and specialist registration at the same time.
- For therapeutic prescribers the six specialist points must always be in addition to the 12 points required under bullet point two, when applying to restore both general and specialist registration at the same time.

For more information see [www.optical.org/en/Registration/Restoring\\_to\\_the\\_registers/index.cfm](http://www.optical.org/en/Registration/Restoring_to_the_registers/index.cfm)

### **How do I log into my MyCET account?**

Registrants access their MyCET account via the MyGOC section of our website, as for online retention. If you have forgotten your login or password, please follow the instructions on the MyGOC screen to access your account.

### **Does the peer review requirement mean I will be judged by my peers?**

Peer review events should not be about individual practitioners making or offering judgment on the decisions or practices of others. They are designed to offer an environment in which registrants can engage in case-based discussion with a group of four to ten peers, which will help them to consider their own decision-making and record-keeping.

### **How can I do peer review if I am not currently working in practice?**

Registrants in clinical practice may choose to use their own case records. Alternatively, example case records can be used, ensuring registrants not currently in clinical practice can also benefit from these sessions. Some CET providers produce example cases to use for this purpose.

### **Why is there a limit on non-interactive CET, such as text-based distance learning?**

Research we conducted in 2010 identified risks associated with registrants

completing all or most of their CET via text-based distance learning (e.g. journal articles) under a previous cycle. This meant that many registrants had been achieving their CET points with little or no interaction with peers, potentially leading to professional isolation. This is why registrants must gain at least 50 per cent of their points through interactive learning methods.

### **Do I have to do a separate CET activity for each competency unit?**

No. You must cover all competency units in your CET, but many CET activities will cover more than one competency area.

### **I live outside of the UK, how will I meet the peer review and the interactive requirements?**

Interactive CET is available in a range of formats. Registrants living abroad or who have other geographical difficulties organising or joining a local peer review event may be able to apply to do peer review online or using video conferencing facilities. We do not have an obligation to ensure that CET is available in countries outside of the UK as our statutory powers relate only to practice in the UK. If registrants living outside of the UK think they may have difficulty in meeting these requirements they are advised to make early plans to avoid any last minute difficulties at the end of the CET cycle.

### **How do I count activities towards my CET requirements that I completed outside of the UK?**

If you complete continuing professional

development activities in other countries then these may be able to count towards your CET requirements. However, approval of these activities must be gained in advance of completing them. Alternatively, approval can be gained from the provider of these activities if they have applied to become a recognised CET provider.

You can apply through MyGOC to have these activities approved. Please refer to the CET principles and requirements document on our website for further details.

### **I can't meet my points requirement – when should I tell the GOC?**

If you have exceptional circumstances which have prevented you from practising then you may not have been able to complete some of your CET requirements. You should attempt to complete as many of the CET requirements as possible by the end of the CET cycle. However, if you feel that you will not be able to meet the requirements, then you should refer to our policy on exceptional circumstances and complete the application form available on our website at <https://www.optical.org/en/Education/CET/index.cfm>

### **Will the GOC make sure there is enough CET available in my area to enable me to meet the requirements?**

We work with CET providers to seek to ensure that all registrants, regardless of geographical location or other barriers to learning, will have access to sufficient CET to meet our requirements.

### **What is scope of practice and why do I need to make this statement?**

The CET system will guide you through the process of defining your scope of practice. Your scope of practice statement is designed to be a helpful tool to enable you to identify and then reflect on your scope of practice before identifying CET to enable you to maintain your current practice and/or develop new areas of practice.

### **How many learning goals do I need to have in my personal development plan?**

You need to have a minimum of one learning goal in your personal development plan. We encourage you to set more than one as a matter of good practice. All the CET you complete should be linked to one of your learning goals. The system will automatically create a learning goal for standards of practice within the PDP. All registrants will be expected to link at least one piece of CET related to standards of practice to this learning goal during the three year CET cycle.

### **Where can I get more information about CET?**

Please visit the CET section of our website: [www.optical.org](http://www.optical.org) or ring our CET helpline on 020 7307 9488.

We also produce a CET principles and requirements document that provides more in-depth guidance on how the CET scheme operates. This is available on our website.

