



# Annual plan 2023

Association of British Dispensing Opticians





# WELCOME to ABDO'S ANNUAL PLAN 2023

Building a brighter future for dispensing opticians



**T**he Association of British Dispensing Opticians' (ABDO) Annual Plan 2023 sets out the work we will be doing on your behalf in the year ahead. We know that the ever increasing cost of living will make this a challenging year, and we will be doing everything we can to support you. As your professional body, and the only professional body focused solely on dispensing opticians, we will always be on your side.

Our help lines and member support have never been busier, and we expect that level of activity to remain during 2023. The wide range of services from legal helpline support on employment and related issues, counselling services and personal help through the Benevolent Fund are all often used by people who never thought they would need them. Our separate professional indemnity (PI) insurance is an outstanding success at unbeatable low rates, which demonstrate the professionalism of our members.

Beyond this, ABDO offers members a full range of benefits, from the rigorous examinations which members take at the start of their career, and as they pursue specialisms, to the extensive continuing professional development (CPD) programme. ABDO is committed to delivering sufficient CPD to allow members to attain at least the minimum CPD requirement over the CPD cycle, through distance learning articles in *Dispensing Optics*, interactive CPD webinars, online peer discussions and practical training days.

Members also get access to a wide range of discounts allowing those who make the most of them to recoup much of the cost of their membership.

The Association has six priorities for 2023 that we would like to highlight:

1. *Review, enhance and promote the products, services and benefits that we provide for members.*
2. *Raise awareness of members' roles among employers and other stakeholders.*
3. *Review and clarify our priorities in relation to enabling members' professional development.*
4. *Ensure that we are equipped as an organisation to meet the needs of members in both the short and long term.*
5. *Advance the profession by developing and implementing our research strategy.*
6. *Review our international activity to ensure that we are delivering sustainable benefits for members.*

These priorities will ensure that your membership body is working in an efficient, focused and sustainable way for your benefit, both now and into the future. ABDO exists to meet the needs of members at every stage of their careers and we look forward to continuing to provide the support you need in 2023 and beyond.



**Daryl Newsome**  
ABDO President



**Alistair Bridge**  
Chief Executive





**ABDO's role has five elements**

**SUPPORTING MEMBERS**

supporting members by providing services, products and benefits that recognise their diverse needs and interests.

**REPRESENTING MEMBERS**

representing members to protect and promote their interests.

**PROMOTING AWARENESS**

raising awareness of the roles which members carry out for the benefit of patients and the public.

**DEVELOPING MEMBERS**

enabling members to develop their careers and highlighting opportunities for them to do so.

**ADVANCING THE PROFESSION**

advancing the profession by developing opportunities for members to expand their roles, including the clinical services they provide, and commissioning, supporting and disseminating high-quality research.

These five elements provide the framework for our annual plan, where we set out our planned activities for the year ahead, and annual report, where we report on our activity and achievements during the previous year.

*The five elements are shown in the diagram opposite. This highlights the fact that by improving the quality of eyecare, these activities will benefit patients and the public too.*

**In summary, ABDO's purpose is:**  
 "To support and represent members, promote awareness of their roles, enable their professional development and advance the profession as a whole."



## ABDO's vision is that by 2026 we will have:

- Advanced the profession by developing opportunities for all members to enhance their roles, including delivering clinical services and taking on responsibility for leadership and management.
- Implemented the GOC's new education standards and outcomes and ensured that our registrable qualifications prepare students for future roles and protect patients and the public.
- Supported members in their careers, including by delivering our programme of continuing professional development and a range of flexible qualifications and accreditations to deliver clinical and low vision services.
- Developed the evidence base for the profession by commissioning, supporting and disseminating high-quality research.
- Continued to improve the range of services, products and benefits that we provide for members to meet their diverse needs.
- Improved how we communicate and collaborate with stakeholders and colleagues.
- Increased the understanding and recognition of members' roles among the public and patients, healthcare professionals, employers, commissioners, and policy makers.
- Ensured that our organisation is sustainable, including financially and environmentally, for the benefit of current and future members, and the world in which we all live.

Achieving our vision will depend on ABDO Board members and staff living by the following values, which define the nature of the organisation we want to be:

- We are passionately committed to our members, who are at the heart of everything we do.
- We maintain high standards for our members and our work.
- We are proactive in adapting to changing circumstances.
- We are driven by a sense of common purpose.
- We respect each other and our different areas of expertise.
- We work collaboratively with our colleagues and other organisations.
- We are open and transparent about our work.
- We strive to continuously improve what we do and how we work together.

**our members  
are at the heart  
of everything  
we do.**





Our Annual Plan sets out activities that we will be carrying out for the benefit of members in the year ahead. These are shown below in relation to the five elements of ABDO's purpose, along with the cross cutting activities that support the organisation's work.

However, we have six priorities for 2023 that we would like to highlight:

1. Review, enhance and promote the products, services and benefits that we provide for members.
2. Raise awareness of members' roles among employers and other stakeholders.
3. Review and clarify our priorities in relation to enabling members' professional development.
4. Ensure that we are equipped as an organisation to meet the needs of members in both the short and long term.
5. Advance the profession by developing and implementing our research strategy.
6. Review our international activity to ensure that we are delivering sustainable benefits for members.



## Supporting members

We will support members by providing services, products and benefits that meet their diverse needs and interests. We will:

- Respond to members' enquiries, providing professional, personalised advice and identifying issues that require action for the benefit of members.
- Review and enhance the insurance policies available to members, including practice owners.
- Support members through our regular communications, including promoting all ABDO services, products, member benefits and membership grades.
- Continue to provide members with clinical support and guidance by phone and email and through the Clinical Hub on our website, which provides a 'one stop shop' for all clinical information a dispensing optician needs to build on their core skills and expand their scope of practice, such as guidance on triage, clinical decision-making and further clinical career development opportunities.
- Have a stronger focus on diversity, inclusion and equality to improve our engagement with members regardless of their particular characteristics.
- Enable members to operate in a more environmentally sustainable way. This will include promoting the wide range of resources available on our website and more widely, and the use of our self-assessment tool.
- Continue to offer a mentoring platform, a free and convenient way for members to gain access to support from an experienced mentor, as well as being able to offer mentoring support to other members.
- Update our *Independent Practice Guide* and offer support and advice for members aspiring to run their own independent practice through our Become an Independent event.
- Continue to provide members with business support and guidance through the Business Hub on our website and monthly Business Bites articles on leadership and management in *Dispensing Optics* and *DO Online*.



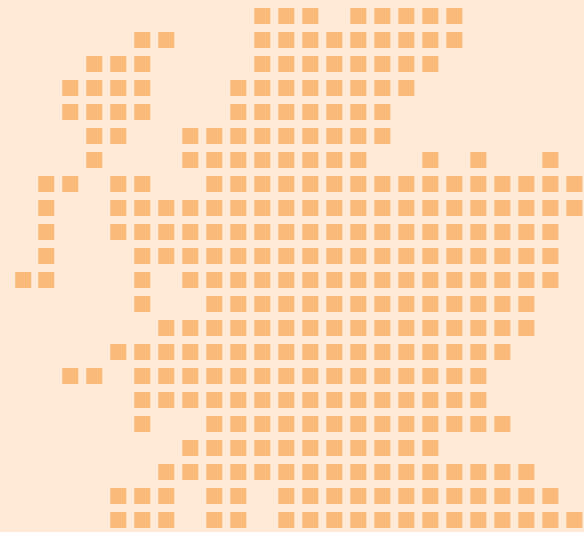
**We will support members by providing services, products and benefits that meet their diverse needs and interests.**



**Representing members**

ABDO will represent members to protect and promote their interests. We will:

- Influence the commissioning of, and fees payable for, eye care services across the UK by engaging with governments and representative bodies and representing our members in a wide range of forums.
- Contribute to the development of new eyecare pathways and services, including through our involvement with and support for LOCSU.



**Promoting awareness**

ABDO will promote awareness of the roles which members carry out for the benefit of patients and the public. We will:

- Conduct a campaign to raise awareness of members' roles among employers, drawing on our research to understand employer perspectives.
- Continue to raise awareness of the benefits of a career in eyecare and eye wear through our Careers in Eyecare programme.



- Represent members through our membership of various cross-sector groups, such as the Domiciliary Eyecare Committee and the GOC's Fitness to Practise stakeholder group.
- Track and influence developments in regulation, including the General Optical Council (GOC) review of the Opticians Act and associated policies.
- Influence and learn from international developments, particularly through our membership of the European Council of Optometry and Optics and the European Academy of Optometry and Optics.



- Highlight our members' roles at sector events, including the 100% Optical 2023 trade exhibition.
- Continue our programme of engagement with employers, recognising that they have a key role in determining the roles that our members play and the opportunities they have to develop.

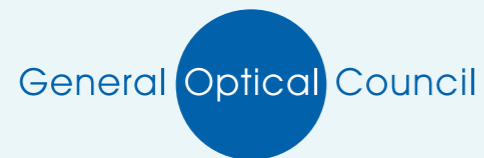
**ABDO will promote awareness of the roles which members carry out for the benefit of patients and the public.**



## Developing members

ABDO will enable members to develop their careers and highlight opportunities for them to do so. We will:

- Enable members' continuing professional development (CPD) through a wide range of CPD-accredited activities, including:
  - articles in our monthly journal *Dispensing Optics*
  - webinars
  - regional meetings
  - online peer review workshops
  - recorded lectures
  - online child and adult safeguarding courses
  - clinical training days
  - online e-learning modules on the GOC's standards of practice
  - online journal club
  - contact lens masterclass workshops
  - extended services training days
  - industry partnership events
  - partnership with NHS Education for Scotland (NES).
- Support members in identifying and achieving their CPD goals, including through our professional development toolbox.
- Revise our Level 6 diploma in ophthalmic dispensing (FBDO diploma) in line with the GOC's new standards for qualification providers and new outcomes for dispensing opticians, which will be reflected in the new FBDO syllabus.
- Review the syllabus and examinations relating to our Level 6 certificate in contact lens practice in line with the GOC's new outcomes for contact lens opticians and standards for qualification providers.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the apprenticeship standard for dispensing optics to offer another route to registration for students that enables employers to draw down on the apprenticeship levy.

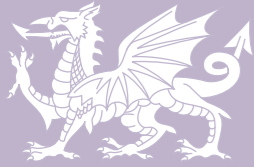


- Continue to deliver our registrable qualifications, including the FBDO Diploma, under the existing system, in parallel with developing our approach to future qualifications. This current activity has many different elements, including:
  - running theory and practical examinations
  - assessing pre-qualification period (PQP) portfolios
  - engaging with and supporting students, academic staff, supervisors and employers
  - running a student revision event
  - supervisor training
  - quality assurance of education institutes that offer our qualifications
  - support for the delivery of examinations overseas.
- Review and clarify our priorities for professional development and develop a flexible programme of further training and qualifications.
- Offer a range of activities under the Focus on... banner to support the extension of members' clinical knowledge and skills, including a new Focus on OCT (Optical Coherence Tomographer) course on clinical imaging and the existing extended services training for contact lens opticians, which is also now available to employers on a bespoke basis.
- Deliver management and leadership training that we offer, including delivering qualifications in collaboration with the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and short CPD-accredited courses and workshops on specific topics, such as change management and managing conflict.



**ABDO will enable members to develop their careers and highlight opportunities for them to do so.**





## Advancing the profession

ABDO will advance the profession, including by developing opportunities for members to expand their roles and commissioning, supporting and disseminating high-quality research. We will:

- Influence the transformation of eyecare services across the UK nations, encouraging more eyecare services to be provided in the community rather than in hospitals.
- Develop and implement our research strategy to develop a stronger evidence base for the profession, including publishing research papers and articles and supporting research by members.
- Continue to lead cross-sector collaboration on sustainability, building on the SEE (Social, Ethical, and Environmental) summits for the environment held in 2021 and 2022.
- Show leadership on equality, diversity and inclusion, promoting opportunities for all members and providing support and guidance for members who experience harassment and discrimination.
- Advance the profession internationally through our membership and support for the International Opticians' Association.
- Develop a career framework for dispensing opticians, highlighting the diverse ways in which members can develop over the course of their careers.

## Cross-cutting activities

A range of cross-cutting activities will enable ABDO to carry out the work outlined in this report and fulfil our purpose, including:

- Financial management and reporting.
- IT support and development, including delivering ongoing staff training, maintaining and developing our membership database, and minimising our vulnerability to cyber-attacks through effective cybersecurity measures.
- Raising awareness of all aspects of our work through regular email bulletins, our website and social media.
- Continuing work to reduce and offset greenhouse gas emissions and operate more sustainably.
- Informing and educating members through our monthly journal, Dispensing Optics, uploading regular content to the DO Online section of our website and circulating our bi-monthly DO newsletter.
- Managing and supporting our network of regional and local teams.
- Governance support for the Board and Research and Clinical Committee.
- Developing our approach to evaluating and reporting on our performance in implementing the strategic plan, including through a survey of members.
- Developing our annual plan and our annual report.



**ABDO will advance the profession by developing opportunities for members to expand their roles.**





abdo | Examinations



abdo | CLINICAL



careers in  
eyecare

DISPENSING  
OPTICS

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