

Diploma in Contact Lens Practice Syllabus 2023

Training Diary for trainees

Pre-Qualification Period

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Introduction

The Contact Lens Training Diary has been designed to help those Dispensing Opticians undertaking Contact Lens Training and their Supervisors prepare to meet the required outcomes. It provides structured practical skills development and contains:-

- A timetable for practical clinical experience – in a natural progression from the simple tasks to the complex fittings, and in line with theory knowledge gained during the preparation for the theory examinations.
- A breakdown of specific aims in understanding and experience
- A schedule for patient numbers
- A plan for achievement of outcomes
- Reminder notes regarding important dates for the various applications linked to your training and the examinations.

The Diary also contains the following:-

- Assessment Table – to indicate where the Outcomes for Registration (OfR) are assessed.
- Notes on the case record requirements for the practical examination – so these can be developed during the training period
- Patient Tracking Charts – to collate patients fitted during the personal clinical experience so that the most suitable patients may be selected for the case record element of the examination; also to help monitoring their progress so that you carry out the appropriate aftercare yourself.

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IMPORTANT NOTES

Supervised Practical Experience

You have undertaken a training programme which introduces you to the theory and the practical aspects of contact lens practice. To be awarded the Association's Diploma in Contact Lens Practice you must demonstrate that you have attained the level of knowledge and practical skills required for successful assessment in the GOC Outcomes for Registration (OfR) in the Specialty of Contact Lens Practice. To achieve that aim you need to be personally involved with patients, in all stages of contact lens wear from fitting contact lenses to neophytes (who have never worn lenses before) to carrying out refitting and aftercare on established wearers. Registration of your supervisor and practice is required as soon as you begin practical experience as until they are registered with the Association, you may not begin collating the time and hours of your practical experience. You are required to gain practical experience for the equivalent of 1 day per week from the that point until you achieve the qualification and enter the GOC Contact Lens Specialty Register.

Diploma in Contact Lens Practice Syllabus

You have received via your training course or the ABDO website, a link to the ABDO Diploma in Contact Lens Practice Syllabus. This details the areas which will be covered by your course and which the theory examinations will address as well as details of the practical assessments. It contains information regarding your supervision and the registration of your Practice Education Lead (PEL) and main practice – and supporting Practice Task Supervisors (PTS) and additional practice if appropriate. The website contains the various application forms with respect to supervision etc.

Personal Clinical Experience Hours Chart

In the Examinations section of the ABDO website there is a Personal Clinical Experience Hours Chart for you to record the hours you spend personally carrying out contact lens consultations with patients. Your PEL/PTS is required to sign each day's entry. Please note it is the responsibility of your PEL to provide a list of suitably qualified PTS and/or additional practice.

To enter for the practical examination, you must have achieved a minimum of 225 hours of personal clinical experience and a copy of your hours chart will be required to accompany the Final Declaration which is signed by your PEL and uploaded with the case records.

Development of Best Practice

In the practical examination you will be examined in a section entitled 'Initial Assessment' on your history taking and knowledge of contact lens contraindications, your slit-lamp routine and ability to take keratometry readings – and on your knowledge of the use of the instruments involved. So you should follow best practice in those areas every time you see a patient. Ensure you have a full slit-lamp routine and follow it every time you use a slit-lamp, from the beginning of your practical experience.

You should develop a routine for the appropriate stages of a new fit or refit, and of an aftercare consultation – include all the information gathering and all the checks which should be made in an ideal appointment, and carry them out with every patient. You should be permitted a longer appointment time whilst you are a trainee contact lens optician so that you always have time to complete all the stages.

In practice you should know all about the lenses and solutions you are using for your patients – and in the practice visit you will be asked to talk in detail about the lenses and care products you usually use in practice. So, the best way to prepare is to learn all about the lens material, design and care products you are going to give each patient – and to keep remembering the information! You will also be expected to have a general knowledge of other available products, whether or not our practice has access to them.

Patient base for case records

The case record requirements for the practical examination have been set to provide you with a broad range of experience during your training so that when you have passed all the assessments, both theory and practical, you should be capable of immediate contact lens practice – unsupervised. So, make sure you see patients regularly in the practice and see that you follow up yourself the patients you fit. You should take personal responsibility for the follow-up appointment arrangements and should not expect the practice to remember that you wish to see a specific patient. The chart at the back of this diary is there to help you record the patients you fit with contact lenses and the relevant information regarding the category to which they apply and their aftercare frequency. The diary pages provide advice on the number of patients you should start at each stage and ideally you will have a number of patients from which to select the most appropriate for the examination.

Assessment of the GOC Outcomes for Registration

All 6 Units of the Diploma in Contact Lens Practice are designed to assess both your background knowledge and elements of the General Optical Council Outcomes for Registration. The majority of the outcomes are assessed in Unit 4, the practical examination, Unit 5 the practice visit and Unit 6 the Case records and portfolio. A chart is in the syllabus to clarify where the outcomes are addressed in the various assessments. Full details of the outcomes on the GOC website [www.optical.org].

Success in the Practice Visit assessments is a requirement for entry to the practical examination, so you must request a practice visit by completing the appropriate form between 12 and 6 months before you intend to sit the Practical examination by the following deadlines:-

31 July for the Winter practical examination session
31 January for the Summer practical examination session.

The form is available to download on the ABDO website.

Once you have applied for the Practice Visit, a member of the Association's Visitor team will contact you at the appropriate time, to make arrangements to visit your supervisor and yourself at your contact lens experience practice. The visit cycles for the appropriate examination session begin on the following dates:-

31 July for the Winter examinations
31 January for the Summer examinations

Supervision and Practice Registration with the Association

As mentioned above, you must complete an application form to register your PEL and main practice as soon as you begin practical experience. Your PEL must remain on the ABDO register of approved supervisors throughout your training and until you are qualified as a Contact Lens Optician. In the period 12 – 6 months prior to your practical examination, a practice visit will take place to approve continued supervision – and to carry out the Practice Visit assessments. The application forms must be completed within the deadlines above. If it becomes necessary for you to change PEL or main practice during your training, it is essential that you advise ABDO Examinations and Registration Department IMMEDIATELY, completing the change of details form - this available from the ABDO website.

Practice Task Supervisors and Additional Practice Registration with the Association

You may, if appropriate, register additional Practice Task Supervisors and additional practices (if applicable). The person(s) selected must be suitably qualified for the tasks that they are supervising.

Full details on the registering of supervisors can be found in the 2024 Portfolio guidance for trainees.

Your PEL is responsible for registering suitably qualified PTS and additional practice.

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WHAT to do and WHEN: October to December

PERIOD	PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE	SPECIFIC AIMS	PATIENTS
October to December	All aspects of lens collection Involvement in all aspects of new fittings and aftercare (under total supervision)	To gain experience in the use of: (a) Keratometer (b) Slit-lamp To gain understanding of: (a) fitting procedures (b) aftercare procedures	Begin fitting 5 patients Ideally 1 Rigid and 4 Soft [under full supervision but trainee responsible for all appointments]

By the end of the period

TRAINEE SHOWING COMPETENCE IN...	SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lens collection including wearing schedules• Clinical record completion• Good hygiene• GOC Rules• Keratometry and other initial measurements• Lens orders	

REMINDER NOTES

An application for registration of your PEL must be submitted as soon as you begin your practical experience.

WHAT to do and WHEN: January to March

PERIOD	PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE	SPECIFIC AIMS	PATIENTS
January to March	<p>All aspects of aftercare (checked by or reporting back to Supervisor)</p> <p>Further involvement in simple and complex fittings – and aftercare [under supervision]</p>	<p>To gain experience in simple rigid and soft lens fittings</p> <p>To gain experience in routine aftercare</p>	<p>Carry out all aspects of aftercare (reporting back to Supervisor)</p> <p>Begin fitting a further 10 patients – to build patient base for selection of suitable case records for practical examination including Toric, presbyopic and paediatric patients</p>

By the end of the period

TRAINEE SHOWING COMPETENCE IN...	SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial patient discussion • Slit-lamp operation and observation (not recognition/action at this stage) • Simple aftercare consultations 	

REMINDER NOTES
<p>Theory examination application must be with ABDO Examinations and Registration Department by 1 March – it is suggested it is sent at least two weeks prior to that date.</p>

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WHAT to do and WHEN: April to June

PERIOD	PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE	SPECIFIC AIMS	PATIENTS
April to June	Simple rigid and soft fittings All aspects of aftercare (reporting back to the Supervisor) Complex fittings (under supervision) Involvement in all aspects of new fittings and aftercare (under total supervision)	To gain experience in complex fittings	Begin fitting a further 12 patients – to build patient base for selection of suitable case records for practical examination including toric, presbyopic and paediatric patients Involvement in resolving patient issues with vision/comfort

By the end of the period

TRAINEE SHOWING COMPETENCE IN...	SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple rigid and soft lens fittings• All aspects of aftercare• Communication skills	

REMINDER NOTES

IF the student is planning to take the practical examination in the following **JANUARY**, the application for a practice visit and the in –practice Competency 5.2 assessment **MUST** be submitted by **31 July**.

WHAT to do and WHEN: Before the Certificate Practical Examination

PERIOD	PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE	SPECIFIC AIMS	PATIENTS
July onwards	Expand their experience in all aspects of contact lens practice	To increase knowledge of contact lens practice	<p>Expand patient base to gain further experience and if timing allows, enable a wider choice of case records for the practical examination</p> <p>Clinical Signs resolution through major change of management</p> <p>Involvement in referral</p>

By the end of the period

TRAINEE SHOWING COMPETENCE IN...	SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary assessment • Rigid and soft fittings including some complex lenses • Aftercare • Lens verification and recognition • Effective communication • Legal and professional issues 	

REMINDER NOTES
<p>IF THE STUDENT IS PLANNING TO TAKE THE PRACTICAL EXAMINATION IN THE WINTER SESSION, THE FOLLOWING DATES APPLY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application for a practice visit and the in –practice Competency 5.2 assessment MUST be submitted by 31 July. • Examination application must be submitted to the Examinations and Registration Department by 1 September. <p>IF THE STUDENT IS PLANNING TO TAKE THE PRACTICAL EXAMINATION IN THE SUMMER SESSION, THE FOLLOWING DATES APPLY.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application for a practice visit and the in –practice Competency 5.2 assessment MUST be submitted by 31 January. • Examination application must be submitted to the Examinations and Registration Department by 1 March at the latest.

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Case Records Information

For Unit 6 of the ABDO Diploma in Contact Lens Practice, candidates are required to present 15 case records chosen from the patients fitted and managed during the personal clinical experience period. A number of the case records will be discussed in detail with the candidate, including decisions made and actions taken.

The records must reach ABDO by 31 March (for Summer practical exams) or 30 September (for Winter practical exams). The Final Declaration must be uploaded with the case records, signed by the Practice Education Lead (PEL) stating that the candidate has achieved the minimum of 225 hours of personal, clinical practical experience and that the case records are copies of records of patients who are traceable to records in the practice.

The case records should demonstrate the range and depth of experience of the candidate and are required to meet the following criteria:

Fitted Patients (10)

- **2 presbyopic patients** demonstrating management of both distance and near visual requirements. Please note that a minimum of 1 of these patients must have been fitted with bifocal/multifocal contact lenses for their near vision requirements
- **2 rigid lens patients** – Please note that we are unable to accept Ortho-K patients for this category, although corneal, mini-scleral and scleral lenses can be included
- **2 astigmatic patients** fitted with toric contact lenses
- **2 paediatric patients** (defined as aged under 16). Please note that a minimum of 1 of these must be myopic and have some discussion around myopia management as part of their fitting process (although specific myopia management lenses do not have to be fitted to the patient)
- **2 patients with prescriptions of 5.00D or more**

For the fitted patients, the patients are required to have been fitted and monitored until the fitting is deemed to have been completed (with specifications issued) and to have a minimum of 1 routine aftercare appointment after the fitting has been completed

Managed Patients (5)

- **2 existing patients showing clinical signs caused by contact lens wear** (issues with the cornea or adnexa) which require refitting or a major change in management. These case records do not need to have been originally fitted by the candidate
- **2 existing patients who have attended the practice with concerns caused by contact lens wear** (this could include issues with vision or comfort) which require refitting or a major change in management. These case records do not need to have been originally fitted by the candidate
- **1 patient showing clinical signs or symptoms that require referral** outside of the practice (not to an optometrist). This record does not necessarily need to have been refitted or managed by the candidate, nor does this case record does not need to have been originally fitted by the candidate

For the managed patients, the patients must be monitored until the existing issues have been resolved and at least one full aftercare to have taken place after the issue has been resolved.

If a case record does not meet the above criteria, it will be considered invalid. Candidates will be given feedback on the reason for the invalidity and will be required to resubmit either an amended record or a replacement record. Only when all 15 records have been accepted as valid can arrangements be made for your case record discussion.

The notes for **ALL** records should report **appropriate** aftercare so the number of appointments will depend on the type of lens, the type of lens wear and the patient's ocular status. Whilst some patients will be neophytes requiring more support, other patients who are established wearers may require less frequent aftercare consultations. Candidates should be aware that they are demonstrating appropriate aftercare for the situations they are reporting.

NB: Those re-sitting the case records section of the examination should be aware that if they are replacing any of their original case records, they will need to submit to ABDO to ensure that they are valid before arrangements can be made for a further case record discussion.

Case Record Presentation

The records are not required to be photocopies of the originals as it is appreciated that the practical experience practice record format may not demonstrate the candidate's full potential. However, the record of the initial appointment should not exceed the equivalent two sides of A4 and the following consultations should not generally exceed the equivalent of one side of A4 for each appointment.

Contact Lens Patient Tracking Chart

The last three columns are to record aftercare appointment timing, to ensure you carry out the follow-up appointments yourself.

[illegible]

It is suggested that you use this chart to record the details of your patients – and to tick the category they cover for the case records requirement of the examination.

The last three columns are to record aftercare appointment timing, to ensure you carry out the follow-up appointments yourself.

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