








Action Plan: Opticians of Manitoba (OOM)


 Complete

In response to the Fairness Commissioner's Recommendations, the Opticians of Manitoba proposed the following action plan as of November 2012.

OMFC Recommendations	Action Plan	Status as of May 2016
1.	With regard to the assessment and registration information, that OOM provide clear, complete and accurate information about:	
a.	Manitoba Standards and qualification criteria; The definition of an optician is being revised and expanded to provide greater clarity for applicants and will be completed and available in the portal for Internationally Educated Opticians on the Opticians of Manitoba's (OOM)website. Information about the qualifications needed and formal assessment criteria used by the Opticians of Manitoba to determine upon initial application whether an Internationally Educated Optician (IEP) will qualify for a PLAR assessment will be added to the registration material on the portal for IEP'S on the OOM website.	 July 2013
b.	The academic training requirement; The information on academic training requirements included in the portal of the Opticians of Manitoba's website for Internationally Educated Opticians will be expanded to include following statement, "applicants with appropriate work experience who have little or no formal training or education in opticianry are also eligible for the PLAR assessment. It should be noted however that it is more likely that the required standard will be met where the applicant has had formal education in opticianry.	 July 2013
c.	The eligibility criteria for the PLAR assessment and the criteria determining the various PLAR assessment outcomes; A Competencies Steering committee was set up by NACOR this past year to update the National Competencies for Canadian Opticians 2007 edition. The writing group will begin its work in January 2013 and Canadian regulatory bodies will have the approved essential core competencies for an entry level optician which will include performance indicators and cues, available for implementation and use by April, 2013. We will then have formal updated criteria to be used in determining results of the initial assessment of qualifications, to support the validity and reliability of the GAP analysis and interview results and to support the recommendations for bridging programs , thereby providing greater transparency and ensuring fairness for applicants . These updated competencies will also be in a newer format which should make it easier to understand and follow. <i>May 2016:</i> <i>The National Competencies for opticians were released in April 2013. Since that time the Opticians of Manitoba have been developing practice directives which will replace the current Professional Standards of Practice for opticians in Manitoba. They describe in detail the performance expectations for optician in each area of practice addressed in the National Competencies document. This document is also being given to all PLAR applicants so that they know what the knowledge level and performance expectations are for Licensed Opticians in Manitoba. They will also be able to view the Practice directives and guidelines once they are implemented and posted on the Opticians of Manitoba website which we anticipate will be in the Fall of 2016 by which time the work of the Focus Group which was set up to review the documents and the 60 day period for stakeholder review will have been completed.</i> <i>A national committee has also completed their work on updating the criteria to support the validity and reliability of the gap analysis and interviewers' results to support the recommendations for bridging programs. They have developed and implemented the use of a score card for use by all interviewers of PLAR candidates across Canada, specific questions to</i>	 March 2016

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	<p><i>be asked by interviewers in relation to a particular competency and are in the process of adding the applicable bridging programs for each competency areas on the score card so that Registration Committees across Canada are assigning bridging programs consistently. The score card was made available to all optician regulatory bodies in Canada in March 2016. These initiatives are designed to ensure the fairness and consistency of the PLAR interview process in Canada and greater transparency.</i></p> <p><i>A national committee is also in the process of developing a free, online anonymous, Pre Assessment tool based on the National Competencies for Opticians which does not require invigilation. It has been developed so that candidates can use the tool from their computer anywhere in the world to be better able to assess their own qualifications before coming to Canada and entering the PLAR process. Once the work is completed, the tool will be posted on the website each and can be accessed on the Opticians of Manitoba website.</i></p>	
d. The need for a basic versus a comprehensive credential assessment;	<p>Manitoba requires applicants to provide a comprehensive assessment. The information in the portal for Internationally Educated Professionals on the Opticians of Manitoba’s website will be clarified and corrected to read “comprehensive credential assessment .“</p> <p><i>May 2016: Manitoba no longer requires PLAR candidates to submit a credentials evaluation performed by a third party.</i></p>	 July 2015
e. Assessment results timelines, better time range information and common associated costs in the registration process;	<p>Specific timelines and dates for the following key assessment steps will be added to the information on the portal for IEPs on the OOM website; estimated time required to accumulate documents required for the initial application and the translation of documents, length of time to receive PLAR results, fees for the NACOR exam and length of time to receive the results of the NACOR exam, additional fee information including estimated fees for initial translation and assessment of documents, cost for travel and accommodation if the applicant wishes to write the national exam in another province, bridging courses and fee payment options.</p>	 July 2013
f. Access to records.	<p>The following sentence will be added to the Information on the portal for IEP’S on the OOM website and to the decision letter which is sent to applicants following with their assessment results their interview:”Applicants have the right to access their records. This includes your detailed assessment records. IF you wish to see your records please send your request in writing by email to the Registrar of the Opticians of Manitoba.”</p>	 July 2013
2. With respect to the appeal process:		
a. That OOM ensure the National Exam results are subject to appeal, either working with the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators to develop a review process or assuming responsibility to ensure Manitoba’s exam candidates have an opportunity to appeal;	<p>The National exam results are currently subject to appeal. The letters regarding the national exams are sent out by NACOR. The OOM will therefore be required to work with NACOR to ensure that the letters contain the information regarding the candidate’s right to appeal.</p>	 Jan. 2014

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<p>b. That OOM's appeal information make clear that appeal opportunities are not restricted to issues of procedure;</p>	<p>The OOM will develop a policy/procedure for appeal of decisions which will include the requirement for the provision of written reasons in plain language, for appeal decisions.</p> <p>The information regarding appeals and the policy and procedure for submitting a request for an appeal will be included on the IEP portal of the OOM website.</p> <p>The information regarding appeals in the decision letter will be expanded so that it is clear to applicants that the OOM has no restrictions on the characteristics of appeals that it will hear, i.e. appeal opportunities are not restricted to issues of procedure. However, the merit of the reason for the appeal will also be taken into consideration.</p>	<p>✓ Jan. 2014</p> <p>✓ Dec. 2013</p> <p>✓ Dec. 2013</p>
<p>c. That OOM introduce a pre-appeal step in the appeal process;</p>	<p>This has already been implemented, i.e. the first step in the appeal process is a decision review. The information regarding this step will be added in the section on appeals in the OOM Decision letter as well as in the portal for IEPs on the OOM website.</p>	<p>✓ Jan. 2014</p>
<p>d. That OOM's appeal information accompany any assessment decision subject to appeal.</p>	<p>The information regarding appeals in the decision letter will be expanded so that it is clear to applicants that the OOM has no restrictions or characteristics of appeals that it will hear, i.e. appeal opportunities are not restricted to issues of procedure.</p>	<p>✓ Jan. 2014</p>
<p>3. That OOM develop formal criteria for its initial PLAR eligibility assessment and for the PLAR assessment outcomes;</p>	<p>The definition of an optician is being revised and expanded to provide greater clarity for applicants and will be completed and available in the portal for Internationally Educated Opticians on the Opticians of Manitoba's (OOM)website . Information about the qualifications needed and formal assessment criteria used by the Opticians of Manitoba to determine upon initial application whether an Internationally Educated Optician (IEP) will qualify for a PLAR assessment will be quantified where possible, e.g.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the number of hours of experience working in the industry can be quantified and a description of the types of tasks that their experience must include 2. the number of fittings required can be quantified. 3. the documentation that is required to prove this experience <p>This will be added to the registration material on the portal for IEP'S on the OOM website.</p>	<p>✓ Apr. 2014</p>
<p>4. That OOM provide sufficient written reason for registration decisions that deny eligibility for the PLAR assessment, that condition registration upon a PLAR assessment result or that uphold registration decisions upon appeal;</p>	<p>Applicants' qualifications deficiencies will be disclosed in detail, in plain language so that applicants can see with specificity where they failed to meet the criteria for eligibility for the PLAR assessment.</p> <p><i>May 2016</i> The information provided in Decision letters is now based on the candidates' PLAR score cards. The Registration Committee can now articulate specifically in the decision letter where the candidate failed ,during the PLAR process ,to demonstrate their competency in relation to any particular national competency.</p>	<p>✓ March 2016</p>
<p>5. That OOM disclose to applicants the detailed results of their PLAR assessments.</p>	<p>The detailed results of their PLAR assessments will be disclosed to applicants in plain language. This will include the online GAP Analysis results for each section/topic area and the report which includes the Recommendations made following the interview so that applicants can see specifically where they failed to meet the pre-established performance criteria and standards.</p>	<p>✓ Jan. 2014</p>

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	<p>We are in the process of gathering samples from Ontario and British Columbia of more detailed decision letters that they are using in order to include the same amount of detail in our letters. We will include this level of detail in future letters.</p> <p>The following statement will be added to the section on Registration and Licensing Step 1. PLAR Gap Analysis in the portal for Internationally Educated Professionals on the Opticians Of Manitoba website:</p> <p>“If the Registration Committee decides that further assessment and/or training is required prior to registration after reviewing all of your documentation, work experience, Gap Analysis, interview results and recommendations, you will receive detailed information on the results of your online GAP Analysis and in-person interview. This information will be included either with or in the decision letter.”</p>	 Dec. 2013