

Registration Committee Policy Handbook: Table of Contents

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Routine Registration Policy

To expedite and streamline the registration process, the following 3 categories of registration applicants are considered routine and should be processed immediately by the administration, and reported to the registration committee:¹

1. New registrations applicants who passed a registration committee approved course & approved examination
2. Canadian Labour mobility applicants under the Mutual Recognition Agreement
3. New Student Contact Lens Fitter applicants.

The policy on routine registrations creates an efficient internal process for approving applications for registrations, while providing necessary oversight by the registration committee. The Registrar's office aims to process completed applications between 5 to 10 business days.

The registration committee is responsible for considering registration applications. New registrants of the College of Opticians are required to meet the requirements described in the Bylaws. The requirements described in the Bylaws are translated into a simple checklist of items in certain registration categories that are routinely approved.

The following routine registration approvals have been delegated to the Registrar, effective November 4, 2007:

New Registrations: Applicants for registration as Dispensing Optician or New Contact Lens Fitter Optician, who have passed a registration committee approved course and examination, and have met the registration requirements under the Bylaws.

New Student Registrations: Applicants for registration as student optician, such as Student Contact Lens Fitters, who are enrolled in an education program.

Labour Mobility, Mutual Recognition Agreement: Applicants for registration under the Mutual Recognition Agreement as Dispensing Optician or New Contact Lens Fitter Optician, who are opticians in good standing from Canadian provinces

Re-instatement within 3 years: Applicants for re-instatement of registration, who have lapsed their registration for no longer than 3 years.

The following non-routine registration applications remain the responsibility of the committee:

Non-Routine Categories:

An application that does not fall into the category of routine registration approval will be considered to be a non-routine application. A non-routine application will be reviewed by the registration committee on an individual basis. The approval of the application will require a motion by the registration committee. Listed below are some examples of non-routine categories of registration:

Non-practising Requests: Requests to change status from practicing to non-practicing, or the reverse

Labour Mobility, Quebec: Applicants for registration who are opticians in good standing from the province of Quebec.

International Labour Mobility: Applicants for registration who are educated and/or registered outside of Canada.

Re-instatement over 3 years: Applicants for re-instatement of registration, who have lapsed their registration for over 3 years.

Reports:

A list of routine approvals by the Registrar's office will be circulated to the registration every month or whenever the registration committee requests such a list.

Change in Registration

To ensure opticians changing registration status or renewing registration meet all requirements, and that no gaps are present when changing registration status or when renewing registration, the registration committee will use the following rules to guide committee decisions.²

If a person who ...

1. ... maintains their registration without completing Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE)

In order to renew their registration, a registrant under this Category must:

- Make-up their MCE before registration is accepted (registrant will remain in the same MCE cycle);
- Re-write and pass the entry exam (MCE cycle will be reset based on the new entry date).

2. ... maintains non-practicing registration for less than 3 years, without record of their MCE

In order to renew their registration, a registrant under this Category must:

- Prove to the Registration Committee that they were practicing and in good standing in another jurisdiction;
- Make-up MCE before registration application is accepted (registrant will remain in the same MCE cycle); or
- Re-write and pass the entry exam (MCE cycle will be reset based on to the new entry date).

3. ... requests re-instatement of a registration suspended for less than 3 years

In order to re-instate their registration, a former registrant under this Category must pass a criminal record check and complete one of the following:

- Prove to the Registration Committee that they were practicing and in good standing in another jurisdiction;
- Make-up their MCE before registration is accepted (registrant will remain in the same MCE cycle); or
- Re-write and pass the entry exam (MCE cycle will be reset based on to the new entry date).

4. ... requests re-instatement of a registration suspended for more than 3 years

In order to reinstate their registration, a former registrant under this Category, [nb. Registrant must pass a criminal record check] must complete one of the following:

- Prove to the Registration Committee that they were practicing and in good standing in another jurisdiction;

- Graduate from an accredited Optician training program and rewrite the entry exam, if s/he has never completed an accredited Optician training program (MCE cycle will be reset based on to the new entry date); or
- Successfully complete all courses specified by a committee approved upgrade program necessary to equal an accredited Optician training program, and then pass the entry exam (MCE cycle will be reset based on to the new entry date).

5. ... switches between non-practicing under 3 years and re-instatement more than once in 3 years

In order to renew their registration, a registrant under this Category must:

- Must write a letter to the Registration Committee, explaining why they lapsed their registration after 3 years of non-practicing, and obtain the approval of the registration committee to comply with any of the protocols above, in order to avoid the requirement to re-write and pass the entry exam, unless the applicant so chooses

6. ... returns to practicing from over 3 years of non-practicing

In order to renew their registration, a registrant under this Category must:

- Must prove to the Registration Committee that they were practicing in another jurisdiction by providing a letter from the jurisdiction's regulatory body;
- Must write a letter to the Registration Committee, explaining why they maintained over 3 years of non-practicing registration and obtain the approval of the registration committee to comply with any of the protocols, or
- Re-write and pass the entry exam.

To ensure a registrant is current with their ability to practice, a registrant who maintains more than 3 consecutive years of non-practicing registration, may be required to pass the registration examination to change status to practicing status.³

A non-practising registrant who is practicing in another jurisdiction may change status to practising by proving to the registration committee that they were practicing elsewhere. A letter from that jurisdiction's regulatory body will be considered as proof.⁴

Non-Practising Declaration

The College requires assurance from non-practising registrants that they will not be dispensing or fitting. Prior to change, non-practising registrants were required to complete an affidavit. This typically requires a registrant to complete an affidavit in front of a notary, which is costly and time-consuming. Both an affidavit and declaration has the same impact.

The College now requires a non-practising registrant to complete a declaration in front of a witness, who can be an individual the registrant knows.⁵

Canadian Labour Mobility

All opticians from Canadian jurisdictions are considered as having the competency to practice in British Columbia. Therefore, opticians from other Canadian jurisdictions in good standing are eligible to register in British Columbia, by submitting standard forms and fees: a letter of goodstanding from the Regulatory Body in their province of origin, application for Criminal Records Search, Registration Fee and completion of the Continuing Education Requirements from their province of origin.^{6 7}

International Labour Mobility

To ensure that all credential documentation received by the College authenticated, the registration committee uses the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) International Credential Evaluation Service to verify that they are authentic. Once the documentation is verified as authentic, the course content of the authenticated credentials must be evaluated by the registration committee. This evaluation requires the outline of the curriculum.⁸

An international applicant applying to accredit their education will complete a “comprehensive report” with BCIT International Credential Evaluation Service. An international applicant applying to accredit their education will complete a “basic report” with BCIT International Credential Evaluation Service, if s/he has a letter of good standing from the Regulatory Body in their place of origin.⁹

Exam Policies

Examination Attempts

The College of Opticians will adopt the national registration examinations.¹⁰ Adopting the examinations includes adopting the national registration examination policies.

Exam candidates would like to pass the examinations as soon as possible so they can begin practicing as opticians. When a candidate does not pass, s/he may not realize there are weaknesses in their skills, and wish to write the next scheduled exam. Therefore, an examination candidate can only write an exam once per year, so candidates would not exhaust their attempts too soon.¹¹

To create an environment for the candidate to inspect and improve on his/her own weaknesses, a candidate who wrote the exam for a 3rd time must carefully evaluate why s/he failed the last 3 attempts and wait for 1 year before writing the exam for the 4th time. S/he must submit a proposal detailing how a supervisor will help the applicant upgrade his/her abilities in order to competent to pass on the 4th attempt. This supervisor must be a registrant of this College with at least 5 years of experience. The letter must also detail the role the supervisor will take on. After failing the 4th registration exam attempt, the exam applicant will no longer be permitted to write the registration examinations.¹²

Setting Examination Dates¹³

The College of Opticians of British Columbia (COBC) administer entrance to practice examinations for graduates of Canadian Opticianry education programs twice annually. The Board has determined that the COBC use the National Ocular Sciences examinations as the entry to practice examinations for the College. The Bylaws of the COBC stipulate that all examinations required to be taken under these bylaws must be prepared by or under the direction of the registration committee and approved by the Board.

The registration committee in fulfilling those duties: determines the time and place for the holding of examinations, designate examiners and substitutes, determines the procedures for the conduct of the examinations, reviews the results of the examination or re-examination for each applicant, and makes a determination as to each applicants qualification for registration as either a Registered Optician or a Registered Contact Lens Fitter.

Provided that the Registrar adheres to the following procedure the dates for the COBC entry to practice Examinations (the "Exam Dates") may be set by the Registrar:

- 1) To determine the Exam Dates the Registrar of the College is to consult with the National Examination committee, the Chair of the Registration Committee and the Chief Examiner for the College at least 12 months prior to any Examination.
- 2) The Exam Dates shall be on or around:
 - a. the last weekend of May, and
 - b. the first weekend of October;

These dates are determined with consideration given to avoiding where possible any dates that will not conflict with statutory holidays or the national opticians Ocular Sciences examinations dates held in other Canadian jurisdictions. The Registrar shall issue notice of the Exam Dates: by report to the registration committee, by posting the information on the College web site, by written (email, fax or mail) notice to the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators or posting the information on its web site, and by written (email, fax or mail) notice to the Canadian institutions accredited to teach ocular sciences.

Adopting National Policies

The Registration committee adopts the following national policies, each of which the COBC is a contributor in creating for national application: the NACOR Policies on the conduct of Candidates for Examination (contained in the National Ocular Sciences Examination Candidates Handbook) as amended from time to time, and the National Examination committee's Administrative Polices as amended from time to time.

Examination Capacity

The COBC entry to practice examinations require candidates to use equipment in the Examination. NACOR and the host province provide equipment for the COBC entry to practice Examinations but applicants to be Candidates for Examination may exceed the equipment available, and many candidates prefer to bring their own optical equipment to the examination, (equipment for which NACOR and the host province assume no responsibility, and the accuracy of calibration of which is the candidate's responsibility under the National Examination policy),

Any application to sit the COBC entry to practice Examination that is received when the capacity of the examination is exceeded shall be dealt with as follows:

- 1) In the case of the number of candidates exceeding the capacity of available examiners, the applicant shall be wait-listed and be notified of:
 - a. this status as wait-listed for the examination due to over-subscription for available examiners,
 - b. how to keep apprised of the status, and
 - c. how to withdraw from the list,

- 2) In the case of the number of candidates exceeding availability of radiuscopes, keratometers and lensometers (the "Equipment") the applicant shall be wait-listed for the examination due to Equipment availability and be notified of:
 - a. this status as wait-listed for the examination due to Equipment availability,
 - b. how to keep apprised of the status and the specific item, or items, of Equipment that is over-subscribed,
 - c. how to withdraw from the list, and
 - d. that the applicant may be removed from this wait-list if the applicant advises that the applicant will not use the oversubscribed Equipment but will supply, for their own use, the specific item, or items, of Equipment that is over-subscribed. The self supplied Equipment may only be used by that applicant at the examination unless the applicant advises that there is a formal sharing agreement with another applicant (advising of the name of that applicant) or an Equipment supplier, or on the day of the examination the applicant, who is self supplying the Equipment, authorizes the use of the equipment by others.

Registration Time Limitation

To reduce the likelihood that exam candidates will work unsupervised upon passing their registration examinations, exam candidates who pass must register within 30 days if they are practicing. Exam candidates have 90 days to register if they are not working.^{14 15}

Criminal Records Review

This review tells the College that a Registrant has no previous offenses against children. New registrants will be allowed to be conditionally registered pending the result of their Criminal Record Search, on the condition they sign an undertaking not to fit and dispense eyeglasses or contact lenses to people under the age of 19 without supervision.¹⁶

If a registrant fails the review or refuses to conduct this review, s/he will be conditionally registered. S/he must sign an undertaking to be supervised when working with anyone under the age of 19.

Supervision of Student Contact Lens Fitters

A contact lens student in an educational institution must be registered as a Student Contact Lens Fitter.

Only student Contact Lens Fitters can be supervised by the Contact Lens Fitters to fit and

dispense contact lenses. A contact lens student must register as a Student Contact Lens Fitter after completing schooling and before passing the registration examination. S/he must maintain registration as Student Contact Lens Fitter because s/he still requires supervision prior to and during the registration examination.

That, once a Student Contact Lens Fitter has successfully graduated from a course of study approved by the Board, a Student Contact Lens Fitter may continue to meet the requirements of Section 37(1)(b) of the Bylaws, by continuing his or her training under the direct supervision of a Registered Contact Lens Fitter at the place of business of the Registered Contact Lens Fitter.¹⁷

Teaching Staff in Schools

Proper supervision and other standards of practice must also apply in schools. Only practising opticians may supervise non-registrants and student contact lens fitters. Therefore, all teaching staff must be registered as practicing opticians.¹⁸

Duplicate Certificates

Each registrant is held responsible for the fitting and dispensing of eyewear at their respective dispensaries. A registrant can only physically attend one dispensary at a time, but may work at multiple locations. Secondary certificates will not be issued for use at a secondary dispensary. Opticians who work in more than 1 location should carry their certificate to the secondary location.¹⁹

Duplicate certificates will be issued in the following situations:

Change of Name: a registrant would return original certificate to the College, and pay a printing fee(s) for new certificate(s).

Lost certificate: a registrant would sign an affidavit to assure that the certificate was lost, and pay printing fee for certificate.

Damaged certificate: a registrant would sign an affidavit to declare that the certificate was lost, and pay printing fee for certificate.

End Notes

1

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 11/07, Item 2

[CARRIED] MOTION – moved by Stephanie Weir, and seconded by Clara Mainville that:

Michael Tsao is to use the above guidelines to draft a policy for routine, and then circulate the policy to the registration committee for approval.

The registration committee reviewed the practices of how other health regulatory bodies delegate routine registration to the Registrar and the committee adopted the following categories as routine registrations that can be approved by the Registrar.

Routine Categories:

New registrations applicants who passed a registration committee approved course & approved examination
Canadian Labour mobility applicants under the Mutual Recognition Agreement.
New Student Contact Lens Fitter applicants.

The Committee discussed whether non-practising applications should be delegated to the Registrar. The committee concluded by specifying that change of status applications need to be circulated to the registration committee for approval.

Non-routine Categories:

Change of Status to Non-practising
Change to Practising
Quebec and International applicants must be reviewed by Registration Committee.

REGISTRATION CORRESPONDENCE 01/08

The guidelines were approved circulated and approved on January 2, 2008

2

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 11/ 2007, item 6

[CARRIED] MOTION – moved by John Kerns, and seconded by Stephanie Weir that:

The amended Registration Policy is adopted by the registration committee. Language revisions to this policy is are left open for Kent Ashby.

3

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 11/00, Item 2

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved

That, the Registration Committee recommends to the Board

That, the exam used for the purpose of changing from non-practicing to practicing registration after three consecutive years be called the Re-entry Registration Exam.

That, the fee for the re-entry registration exam remains the same as the current registration exams.

That, any registrant who challenges the re-entry registration exam will be allowed two attempts only; should he/she fail both attempts, the individual will have to meet all requirements as if they were an initial registration.

That, any registrant who fails the contact lens re-entry registration exam may be registered as a dispensing optician only; should this individual wish to work as a contact lens fitter, he/she must meet all requirements as if they were an initial contact lens fitter.

4

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 9/99, Item 3

[CARRIED] Motion – On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved,

That, the Committee recommends to the Board that after more than three consecutive years of non-practising registration, registrants who wish to re-activate their license must either prove to the Registration Committee that they were practising in another jurisdiction by providing a letter from that jurisdiction's regulatory body ,or, if they were not practising elsewhere they must successfully retake the licensing exam(s) to re-activate their license(s).

5

REGISTRATION CORRESPONDENCE MARCH 8, 2006, Item B

[CARRIED] Motion – On motion, moved and resolved

That, the new non-practising declaration under oath be adopted in place of the current non-practising affidavit.

6

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING 04/05, Item 11

[CARRIED] Motion: On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved

That, the Committee recommend to the Board that applicants applying for registration in BC are eligible for licensing providing they submit to the College, a letter of goodstanding from the Regulatory Body where they currently hold their license, application for Criminal Records Search, Registration Fee and completion of the Continuing Education Requirements.

7

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 11/97, Item 4

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved,

That, the Committee recommend to the Board that the Bylaws should be amended to give permission to sit the registration exams to someone that shows proof of licensure in another jurisdiction for a period of at least three of five current years.

8

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 03/07, Item 3

ICES verifies that the educational documents are authentic, while the course content of the education documents must be evaluated by the COBC. This evaluation requires the curriculum.

9

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 07/06, Item 2

[CARRIED] Motion: Moved by Kent Ashby, and seconded by Stephanie Weir

For International applicants: If a person can provide a certificate of professional good standing, the person may provide that certificate and a basic International Credential Evaluation Services (ICES) report. The ICES report must include authentication of the certificate and education. If a person cannot provide a certificate of professional good standing, the person will provide a comprehensive ICES report. ICES reports are to be sent directly to the College of Opticians by ICES. In all cases, the committee will review the documentation for consideration on whether the person may be permitted to sit the registration examination. All other precursors to registration will apply.

10

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING 04/05, Item 11

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved

That, the College of Opticians of BC adopt the National Examination as soon as practicable.

11

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 4/99, Item 3

[CARRIED] Motion – On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved,

That, the Committee recommends to the Board that an exam candidate will be expected to write once per year, unless special circumstances exist, for a total of 3 attempts. Any special circumstances are to be reviewed by the Committee and their recommendation brought before the Board.

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 11/00, Item 3**[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved**

That, the Registration Committee recommends to the Board that those candidates who fail the fourth exam attempt will not be permitted any further attempts to sit our exam. The maximum number of times one can challenge our exam is four.

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved

That, the Registration Committee recommends to the Board that the proposal provided by the exam candidate must be accompanied by a letter from the supervisor, who is a registrant of this College and possesses no less than five years of work experience in optics. The letter must also detail the role the supervisor will take on. If the exam candidate cannot find a suitable supervisor, he/she will be required to retake an approved optical program.

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved

That, the Registration Committee recommends to the Board that no time limit be set for those who wait to sit our registration exam after graduating from an approved optical training program.

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 12/98 , Item 2**[CARRIED] Motion – On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved,**

That, the Committee recommends to the Board that exam appeals based on special circumstances only should be considered, and that each appeal should be evaluated on an individual basis.

Exam failure policy after maximum number of attempts

[CARRIED] Motion – On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved,

That, the Committee recommends to the Board that a candidate that fails a registration exam three times be required to explain to the Board in writing why he/she failed and what additional training he/she wants to take before sitting the exam again in one year and that, this training must meet with the Committee's and the Board's approval.

REGISTRATION CORRESPONDENCE March 4, 2009**[CARRIED] BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The COBC entry to practice Examinations shall be administered twice annually.

Provided that the Registrar adheres to the following procedure the dates for the COBC entry to practice Examinations (the "Exam Dates") may be set by the Registrar:

- 1) To determine the Exam Dates the Registrar of the College is to consult with the National Examination committee, the Chair of the Registration Committee and the Chief Examiner for the College at least 12 months prior to any Examination.
- 2) The Exam Dates shall be on or around:
 - a. the last weekend of May, and
 - b. the first weekend of October;

with consideration given to avoiding where possible any dates that will not conflict with statutory holidays or the national opticians Ocular Sciences examinations dates held in other Canadian jurisdictions.

- 3) The Registrar shall issue notice of the Exam Dates:
 - a. by report to the registration committee,
 - b. by posting the information on the College web site,
 - c. by written (email, fax or mail) notice to the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators or posting the information on its web site, and
 - d. by written (email, fax or mail) notice to the Canadian institutions accredited to teach ocular sciences.

[CARRIED] BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Registration committee adopts the following national policies, each of which the COBC is a contributor in creating for national application:

- 1) the NACOR Policies on the conduct of Candidates for Examination (contained in the National Ocular Sciences Examination Candidates Handbook) as amended from time to time, and
- 2) the National Examination committee's Administrative Polices as amended from time to time.

[CARRIED] BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Any application to sit the COBC entry to practice Examination that is received when the capacity of the examination is exceeded shall be dealt with as follows:

- 1) In the case of the number of candidates exceeding the capacity of available examiners, the applicant shall be wait-listed and be notified of:
 - a. this status as wait-listed for the examination due to over-subscription for available examiners,
 - b. how to keep apprised of the status, and
 - c. how to withdraw from the list,
- 2) In the case of the number of candidates exceeding availability of radiuscopes, keratometers and lensometers (the "Equipment") the applicant shall be wait-listed for the examination due to Equipment availability and be notified of:
 - a. this status as wait-listed for the examination due to Equipment availability,
 - b. how to keep apprised of the status and the specific item, or items, of Equipment that is over-subscribed,
 - c. how to withdraw from the list, and
 - d. that the applicant may be removed from this wait-list if the applicant advises that the applicant will not use the oversubscribed Equipment but will supply, for their own use, the specific item, or items, of Equipment that is over-subscribed. The self supplied Equipment may only be used by that applicant at the examination unless the applicant advises that there is a formal sharing agreement with another applicant (advising of the name of that applicant) or an Equipment supplier, or on the day of the examination the applicant, who is self supplying the Equipment, authorizes the use of the equipment by others.

14

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING 4/98 - Item 5

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved,

That, candidates that have been successful on their exam(s) and are working in the industry shall be required to register with the College within 30 days of receiving their exam results.

That, those candidates that have been successful on their exam(s) and not working in the industry shall be required to register as non-practicing registrants with the College within 90 days of receiving their exam results.

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved

That, the previous motion be incorporated into our bylaws.

15

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING 4/98 - Item 5

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved,

That, candidates that have been successful on their exam(s) and are working in the industry shall be required to register with the College within 10 days of receiving their exam results.

That, those candidates that have been successful on their exam(s) and not working in the industry shall be required to register as non-practising with the College within 90 days of receiving their exam results

16

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 11/97, Item 3

[CARRIED] Motion - On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved,

That, new dispensing registrants be allowed to be conditionally registered pending the result of their Criminal Record Search on the condition they sign an undertaking not to dispense eyeglasses or contact lenses to people under the age of 19 without supervision.

17

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING 4/98, Item 5

[CARRIED] Motion: On motion, duly moved and seconded, be it resolved

That, once a Student Contact Lens Fitter has successfully graduated from a course of study approved by the Board, a Student Contact Lens Fitter may continue to meet the requirements of Section 37(1)(b) of the Bylaws, by continuing his or her training under the direct supervision of a Registered Contact Lens Fitter at the place of business of the Registered Contact Lens Fitter.

18

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 11/ 2007, Item 6

[CARRIED] Motion – moved, and seconded that:

All teaching staff for education program must maintain practicing registration in order to teach.

19

MINUTES OF REGISTRATION MEETING 11/ 2007, Item 4

[CARRIED] MOTION – moved, and seconded that:

Duplicate certificates are only allowed to be issued as replacements.

[CARRIED] MOTION – moved, and seconded that:

Registrants must complete an affidavit to replace lost certificate.