Programme Specification (CUR02)

1a	**Programme title**
	BSc (Hons) Optometry
1b	**Programme Leader**
	Alison MacPherson
1c	**Faculty and Subject Network**
	Faculty of Science, Health and Engineering Subject Network: Applied Life Studies
1d	**Awarding institution**
	University of the Highlands and Islands
1e	**Teaching institution**
	University of the Highlands and Islands
1f	**UCAS / JACS code**
	B510
1g	**SFC funding group**
	SFC Funding Group 05
2a	**Date of programme start / date of last re-approval**
	September 2020
2b	**Normal start dates**
	September (Semester 1)
2c	**Exit and final awards**
	Level 7 – Certificate of Higher Education Level 8 – Diploma of Higher Education Level 9 – BSc Vision Science Level 10 – BSc (Hons) Optometry * * This degree programme is regulated by the General Optical Council. The award of qualifications using the protected title of optometrist is limited to qualifications approved by the GOC as meeting the professional standards required. Students who gain sufficient academic credits to receive an honours award but do not meet the professional requirements (2.2 honours classification or above) must receive an alternative award to that approved by the GOC. At level 10 those achieving a 3rd class honours would receive the award BSc (Hons) Vision Science and would not be eligible for direct entry into the College of Optometrists Scheme for Registration.
2d	**Availability for joint honours**
	No
2e	**Professional accreditation**

	This programme currently holds provisional approval from the General Optical Council (GOC). In line with GOC regulations it is expected that the status of the programme will remain as provisional approval until the first cohort have completed their 4 years of study.

2f Language of study / assessment

English

3 Academic Partners

	Responsible AP	Home AP
Executive Office	X	X
Argyll College UHI		
HTC UHI		
Inverness College UHI		
Lews Castle College UHI		
Moray College UHI		X
NAFC Marine Centre UHI		
North Highland College UHI		
Orkney College UHI		
Perth College UHI		
Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI		
SAMS UHI		
Shetland College UHI		
West Highland College UHI		

4a UHI delivery model

The Optometry programme is site-specific and will be delivered from the Centre for Health Science (CfHS), Inverness and Moray College UHI. Due to the specialist clinical facilities required for laboratory and clinical sessions, this programme will only be delivered at these two locations.

4b Modes of attendance

Full time attendance only. Due to the structure of the programme it is not suitable for part time study.

Due to the nature of this programme and in order to incorporate placement activity, this programme will operate with extended semesters from year 1 semester 2. Teaching on these semesters will commence 2 weeks earlier than standard undergraduate degree semesters, essentially extending these semesters to 17 weeks. This will ensure there is adequate provision for teaching, assessment and placement activities to take place.

4c International delivery

No

The programme requires attendance at laboratory and clinical skills classes so will not be available for delivery outside of the UK at this time.

International students requiring a tier 4 visa will be able to apply to enrol on the programme from academic year 2021-22 and be able to study at either Centre for Health Science, Inverness or at Moray College UHI

4d Mode of study

	Year 1 (usually SCQF 7)	**Year 2** (usually SCQF 8)	**Year 3** (usually SCQF 9)	**Year 4** (usually SCQF 10)
Face-to-face (including practical sessions)	15%	41%	32%	11%
Video-conference	3%	2.5%	1%	0%

Online (tutor supported study). VLE, posted learning materials	10%	1%	7%	12%
Self-directed study	64.5%	35.5%	42%	44%
Flipped classroom (learning and formative phases)	3%	13%	9%	5%
Other (please specify) Clinical Placement	4.5%	7%	9%	28%

5	Target market			
	Local	**Scotland**	**UK**	**International**
School Leavers	X	x	x	X
FE Progressors	X	x	x	
Life Changers (21-49)	X	x	x	
Life Enhancers (50+)				
Career Developers	X	x	x	
Employers (upskilling of Dispensing Opticians)	X			
UHI staff				

6a Programme summary

The UHI BSc (Hons) Optometry Programme is an exciting new programme, designed to provide students with a broad and balanced range of optometric knowledge, both clinical and scientific. It aims to develop the practical and professional skills required to enter the College of Optometrists Scheme for Registration, after which graduates can become eligible to become registered optometrists, who are highly skilled in the detection and management of ocular disease and disorders of the visual system.

The programme focuses on developing essential clinical skills, knowledge and understanding of the core scientific principles for Optometry and aims to equip students with the ability to solve both theoretical and clinical problems, learning more advanced skills as the programme progresses. By final year, students will be able to make valid clinical judgements, assessing a broad range of real patients, under the close supervision of experienced eye care professionals. Students also undertake a supervised project within an area of individual Optometric interest.

What is special about this course?

- This Optometry programme is new and very clinical. It delivers the teaching and learning in an exciting way using multimedia as well as classroom teaching. Lots of emphasis is placed on acquiring clinical knowledge and skills to ensure the student is very well placed for the workplace when they graduate
- The course has been designed in collaboration with commercial partners to ensure it is not only intellectually stimulating but also professionally relevant.
- Students will develop a clear understanding of the role and the increasingly common extended role of the optometrist, with a strong emphasis in ensuring the knowledge and skills are acquired to deliver eye care in remote and rural communities.
- Placements within community optometry practice, in urban/rural areas, are incorporated across all 4 years.
- Learning is available on two sites; Inverness and Elgin, with teaching being delivered by a blended learning approach, with strong emphasis on flip classroom, practical clinical simulation sessions and problem based learning (PBL). Learning is also enhanced through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), an innovative and exciting way of learning.

6b Keywords

Optometry, Optician, Vision Science, Eye care, Healthcare

7a External reference points

Whilst being delivered in an innovative way, the structure of this programme is in line with the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement Optometry (September 2015), which defines what can be expected of a graduate in the subject and this covers the following key areas:

a) Graduates with professional aptitude who are safe to practice under supervision, within the pre-registration environment.
b) Graduates with the theoretical knowledge and clinical competence, which provides a basis for continuing professional development, ensuring they are equipped to meet the changing demands of healthcare delivery in the UK.
c) Graduates have an understanding of public health issues, enabling them to apply their knowledge in areas of health need, such as management of eye disease, screening, audit and clinical governance. This requires knowledge of the underlying concepts of health delivery systems with particular emphasis on primary care.
d) Programmes in optometry develop student's expertise in broadly 4 areas:
    - Visual system functions and their correction
    - Ocular health assessment and management
    - Professionalism and leadership
    - Application and translation of expertise

The programme is also structured to enable graduates to achieve the Stage 1 Core Competencies framework as defined by the General Optical Council and progress onto the College of Optometrists Scheme for Registration.

Consideration has also been made, when designing the programme, with regards to the concepts and principles outlined in the ongoing General Optical Council Education Strategic Review Consultation:

news_publications/Publications/ebulletin-/ebulletin-december-2017/education-strategic-review-consultation.cfm

Intended Programme Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop their knowledge, skills, understanding and other attributes in the following areas:

(The programme outcomes are referenced to the QAA statements for Optometry (2015) and The Framework for Qualifications of Higher education Institutions in Scotland (June 2014) and relate to the typical student. Additionally, the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) for Further and Higher Education (2016) have been used as a guiding framework for curriculum design).

Knowledge & Understanding of:

a) Key concepts in relation to the theory and current practice of optometry including the anatomical and physiological characteristics of the visual system.
b) The anomalies of the visual system, appropriate clinical examination and the appropriate methods of visual correction.
c) How to evaluate patients, taking into account signs and symptoms and form a patient management plan. This may include the dispensing of an appropriate appliance taking into account the wide range of commercially available optical appliances or referral into secondary care for further investigation.
d) Systemic and ocular disease and appropriate monitoring/ treatment methods.
e) The importance of Optometry within the framework of primary and secondary care within the UK and the function it offers.
f) The basic legal, ethical and business issues which may occur within professional life.
g) The importance of autonomous learning with regards to continuing professional development and lifelong learning and the ability to judge and evaluate new concepts, procedures and techniques relevant to optometric practice.

Cognitive and intellectual skills, able to:

a) Demonstrate a deeply developed understanding of key aspects of optometry and vision science in the achievement of GOC (Stage 1) defined competencies and satisfy the minimum clinical experience requirements as stipulated by the GOC in order to be awarded a certificate of Clinical Competence (required for entry into pre-registration practice at Stage 2).

b) Demonstrate an ability to recognise and apply appropriate theories, principles and concepts relevant to the science of optometry.
c) Demonstrate a carefully considered approach to the integration of theory and practice. Be able to gather and critically evaluate evidence and information from a wide range of sources, within the field of vision science and draw reasoned conclusions.
d) Demonstrate critical problem solving skills and considered decision making with respect to the management of the ocular health of patients. The ability to think independently in dealing with complex and ambiguous information. With particular reference as to how this applies to the management of the optometric patient.
e) Demonstrate a deep appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge with an ability to reflect and critically review own optometric practice and appreciate the need for continuing professional development.

Practical and professional skills, able to:

a) Demonstrate an appropriate professional attitude towards patients and colleagues. Be able to communicate effectively through the application of a range of skills and methods. Maintain principles and practices of patient confidentiality.
b) Demonstrate proficiency in the assessment and management of patients with a wide range of ocular conditions requiring intervention and correction.
c) Conduct appropriate tests and investigations of visual status in a safe and effective manner.
d) Formulate appropriate management decisions about the ocular health of patients.
e) Discuss the current systems of health care and have an understanding of Government policies with respect to the provision of health care, with specific reference to optometry and the role it plays in shared care.
f) Recognise the moral, ethical and safety issues which are critical to Optometry and the primary health care role.

Transferrable and employment related skills, able to:

a) Demonstrate appropriate written communication skills.
b) Demonstrate an advanced range of communication and other interpersonal skills required to interact with and build working relationships with patients, colleagues and other health care professionals.
c) Reflect upon, identify and solve intellectual and professional problems using the full range of professional resources available.
d) Use organisational skills both individually and at group level. Be able to clarify roles and responsibilities and handle conflicting agendas and opinions.
e) Successfully utilise library and information technology resources to enable effective and evidence based practice.
f) Demonstrate the ability to self-appraise and reflect on practice.

7b Educational aims of the programme

The Educational aims of the BSc (Hons) Optometry programme are to provide a qualification in Optometry, to meet the requirements of the General Optical Council, for entry into the College of Optometrists Scheme for Registration and:

1. To ensure that students have a high quality learning experience.
2. To produce graduates who have an understanding of their discipline and the science which underpins it.
3. To provide students with the opportunity to develop a breadth of understanding of essential facts, concepts, principles and theories relating to the role and practice of an Optometrist.
4. To develop students' critical, analytical, practical, research and communication skills as relevant to optometry and patient care.
5. To prepare students for employment, postgraduate study and career development and to equip students with the ability to demonstrate the clinical skills competencies required for successful completion of GOC core competencies (Stage 1), which are necessary to gain employment as a pre-registration optometrist.
6. To develop in students the skills necessary for life-long independent learning and the acquisition of knowledge to engender an awareness for the needs of those skills.
7. Furthermore, the programme aims to deliver a high quality clinical degree programme that reflects the evolving role and scope of practice of Optometry, not only in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland but also in the UK and beyond. It is designed to be

	a vocationally relevant scientific education for those wishing to enter the optometry profession or to undertake vision science research.
7c	**Programme objectives**
	The BSc (Hons) Optometry module summary for SCQF Level 7-10 will be mapped against the programme objectives and GOC stage 1 competencies. The objectives of the programme are that:
	On completion of the Certificate of Higher Education at SCQF level 7, students will be able to:
	Level 7: • Demonstrate an overall appreciation of the body of knowledge that constitutes the subjects in optometry. • Demonstrate an awareness of the dynamic nature of knowledge and understanding. • Apply knowledge in practical contexts. • Apply knowledge in using some of the basic and routine professional techniques and practices associated with optometry. • Present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas that are routine to the sector. • Use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts. • Accept supervision in less familiar areas of work.
	On completion of the Diploma of Higher Education at SCQF level 8, students will be able to:
	Level 8: • Demonstrate a discerning understanding of a defined range of core theories, concepts, principles and terminology with regards to optometry and vision science. • Demonstrate awareness and understanding of some major current issues and specialisms. • Carry out routine lines of enquiry, development or investigation into professional-level problems and issues. • Adapt to routine practices within accepted standards. • Practice in ways that show awareness of own and other's roles, responsibilities and contributions when carrying out and evaluating tasks.
	On completion of the BSc Vision Science Degree at SCQF Level 9, students will be able to:
	Level 9: • Practise routine methods of enquiry and/or research. • Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues in optometry and vision science. • Identify and analyse routine professional problems and issues. • Interpret, use and evaluate data to achieve goals and targets. • Draw on a range of sources in making clinical judgements. • Seek guidance, manage ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/ or ethical codes of practice, where appropriate.
	On completion of the BSc Honours Optometry Degree at SCQF Level 10, student will be able to:
	Level 10: • Demonstrate a critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles of optometry and vision science. • Execute a defined project of research, development or investigation, identifying and implementing relevant outcomes.

	• Critically identify, define, conceptualise and analyse complex/ professional-level problems and issues. • Offer professional-level insights, interpretations and solutions to problems and issues. • Critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in relation to optometry practice and vision science. • Make critical judgements and develop appropriate management plans for a wide range of patients, taking into account their specific needs. • Exercise autonomy and initiative in professional activities. • Work, under guidance, in a peer relationship with registered optometrists and specialist practitioners from other healthcare disciplines. Furthermore, students at Level 10 will be able to demonstrate '*ability to do'* with regards to the General Optical Council Stage 1 Core Competencies and have obtained the necessary patient episodes to achieve a certificate of clinical competency..
7d	**Teaching and learning approaches**
	UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy 2017 – 2021 *Learning and teaching enhancement values* The twelve values that provide the basis of the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy, and which are intended to provide a 'common language' for sharing and further developing effective practice in learning and teaching, are outlined and defined below. Importantly, the strategy does not assume or expect that each of the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Values will be relevant to every learning and teaching situation or context: 1. Learning for employment 2. Learner choice and personalisation 3. Providing a connected learning experience 4. Evidence-based educational practice 5. Use of clinical problem based learning approach 6. Clinical placements in all 4 years both in the community and in hospital 7. Assessment and feedback for learning 8. Active and creative use of technology 9. Integrated and sustainable teaching practice 10. Supporting the learner as an individual 11. Reflective practice and continuous improvement 12. Supporting professional development in learning and teaching It is the intention of the programme team, as can be seen below, to create and develop opportunities where appropriate to reflect these 12 values so that the student experience can be the best it can be. The BSc (Hons) Optometry is a blend of face-to-face delivery both of theory and practical skills, VC and online learning using the virtual learning environment (VLE) and clinical placements. It is a balance between theoretical and practical. The blended learning approach of this programme, integrates face-to-face and online activities that reinforce, complement, and enhance one another, instead of the online components being an add-on or duplicate of what is taught in the classroom. The programme will utilise a blended learning approach termed "the flipped classroom". The flipped classroom moves away from lecturing as the primary mode of teaching and spends class time engaging in active learning where students are placed at the centre of their own learning experiences (Bergmann and Sams, 2014). In addition to the benefits a flipped classroom offers in terms of enhancing the learning experience for our students, this model works well with large cohorts of students. In the past, lectures were thought to be the most effective mode when delivering teaching to large numbers of students, hence their wide use across higher education. The flipped classroom and related strategies preserve the single classroom and teacher for large cohorts of students that lectures utilise with the added benefits of facilitating higher engagement, deeper learning and more active learning (Towle and Breda 2014; Middleton-Green and Ashelford 2013; Clark et al. 2008).

Flipped Learning is a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into an activity led, dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter.

For elements of the programme students are able to learn at a time and in a place which suits them, receive feedback via the VLE and then progress to the group based reinforcement stage of their learning. Students use digital technology which will allow them to learn at their own pace. The use of video clips, mobile apps and text has the distinct advantage of students using various resources when they want and as many times as they need.

A key part of the optometry programme will be the use of problem based learning from year 2. Students will come together either in a classroom and/or by virtual means to work through appropriate activities setup by teaching staff, which in terms of optometry will centre around clinical cases. Each week the students will be introduced to a new clinical case which will be facilitated by a non-optometric member of staff. The students will be guided to set learning goals for the case and then conduct research as a group (team based learning). Each case will have varied supporting activities including lectures, seminars and practical skills. This approach gives staff the freedom to use creative and innovative ideas which not only reinforces learning but enthuses students to become more deeply involved in the subject being studied. The use of weekly Individual readiness assurance test (iRAT) and team readiness assurance test (tRAT) assessments which consist of individual MCQs and a team application exercises will help to consolidate learning and quickly identify areas where students may be experiencing difficulty. It is also an ideal opportunity to support students who have not performed well in the MCQ phase by giving individual support when feedback has indicated singularly poor performance.

Learning within the flipped classroom approach, both in relation to PBL modules and others will utilise the following phases:

Flipped Classroom Phases:-

1. Learning phase
2. Formative Feedback/Feedforward phase
3. Activity led-Reinforcement phase
4. Assessment phase

1.Learning Phase:
The main focus of learning is video clips - “bite-sized” learning objects and text based learning materials (on a common template) that have been prepared by staff, accessed via the VLE where students can access them when they want to. Students can ask questions on the VLE which can be responded to by other students and/or by the tutor. The video clips and other associated tasks are short and intended to replace the time in the classroom that a tutor uses to “lecture”. So, it’s a virtual classroom in a much more meaningful way than using the VLE on its own. The student might also progress to reading journals or paper based notes etc. or move onto working on practical/ clinical skills sessions.

2. Formative Feedback/Feed-forward Phase:
Students are given appropriate formative feedback or feedforward information through the use of Multiple-choice questions/answers utilising the VLE. Staff are able to monitor student progress through the VLE gradebook and this feedback is used to inform the schedule to be carried out in the activity led reinforcement phase

- Multiple choice questions are good for formative learning.
- The student can also be asked for areas of difficulty /interest they would like to discuss face-to-face or have more practice on when they are in class.
- The student and tutor are both aware of his/her progress on each topic and their strengths & weaknesses.

3. Activity led - Reinforcement Phase

The main focus of this is to assist students individually or as a group using the tutor’s knowledge of the student’s progress made on each topic.

- Students that struggle with certain topics can be given individual help (or in small groups), while others might be given extension work, e.g. more in-depth investigation

	of applications of the concepts studied. As well as individual or group work this may also extend into practical/ clinical skills sessions *4. Assessment Phase* The final phase is the summative part where students complete their assessment work, this can be exam, coursework, clinical skills or practical sessions • *Clinical skills* form an integral part of the programme allowing students to develop skills such as report writing, communications, research, use of measuring instruments, safe working practices, application of reason and analysis etc. The detailed instructions provided for clinical skills sessions will reduce as students' progress through the programme encouraging independence and application of skills gained. • *Research Skills*: another key element is individual research in which the student is required to explore either problems identified within a field of study or practical case example, or which are tutor-driven. The investigation of case studies and the concept of negotiated learning contribute to the student-driven approach which is key to the programme. • *Experiential Learning* forms an important practical element within this Scheme. Whether industry-based or by the use of simulation, it is vital the students are able to practice typical industry tasks to gain knowledge and skills of applying industry standard approaches/techniques to realistic problems. • *Problem-based learning* is the key to our provision of in depth clinical knowledge. The clinical presentations are provided by tutors but what and how they learn is defined by students with support from lecturers/ tutors. The problems are real world cases and through them the student, both individually and in teams, explores how to make a differential diagnosis and how to then come to a diagnosis. They cleverly combine ophthalmic disease and common optometric problems. The tutor facilitates the learning whereby solving the problem may be part of the process, but the focus is on problem-management, not a clear and bounded solution. • *Individual research* whereby students are required to explore problems they have identified within a field of study or practical case example, or which are tutor-driven. • *Collaborative group work* can result in increased participation by students in all components of the programme, better understanding and retention of material, mastery of skills essential to success in the programme or in a career, and increased enthusiasm for learning. Research indicates that, regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats. • *Case Studies* allow for greater engagement with the practical application of theory to practice within an academic learning environment. It is now well documented that students can learn more effectively when actively involved in the learning process. The case study approach is one way in which active learning strategies can be implemented on the programme. There are a number of definitions for the term case study. The programme team defines case studies as student-centred activities based on topics that demonstrate theoretical concepts in an applied setting and will be used in most of the core modules. Further to the above, common student learning activities include lectures, tutorials, access to on-line journals and directed self-reflection. This mix of teaching and learning is designed to achieve positive student outcomes by increasing and deepening knowledge and understanding, improving communication skills, influencing personal growth and development; facilitating individual and group approaches to learning by promoting and encouraging innovative learning methods. Module tutors develop activities that are both practical and action oriented; encouraging students to develop and build skills that will be useful and transferable to future roles.
7e	**Programme structure**

All modules in this degree are 'core' (core progression) ie. module requires to be passed before progression is allowed owing to General Optical Council requirements and accredited status of the programme. The overall pass mark for each module overall is 40% with each element requiring a minimum threshold mark of either 30% or 40% (depending on the type of assessment) in order to achieve a pass for the module overall

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Year 1 Semester 1				
Module	**Credits**	**Teaching Methods**	**Assessments**	**Module Summary**
Study Skills for Optometrists (UB507011)	20	VLE (online) Face to face VC	Essay MCQ exam	Introduction to evidence based practice. Introduction to searching for and understanding evidence, differentiating the quality of evidence by literature appraisal Development of academic writing skills
Principles of Optics (UB507009)	20	Practical sessions Face-to-face VC VLE online seminars	MCQ exam Written exam	Nature of light How light relates to optical principles of lenses and optical instruments Geometric optics: Lens formulae & equations Construction of ray diagrams
Structure & Function of the Visual pathway (UB507006)	20	Flipped classroom Face-to-face Practical sessions VC	Investigative reports Team poster presentation Written examination	Ocular anatomy, physiology and visual function .
Year 1 Semester 2				
Foundations of Clinical practice (UB507008)	20	Face to face VC VLE online Clinical skills sessions	Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) Essay MCQ examination	Introduction to professional optometric practice, Professional, legal and ethical frameworks. Communication
Introduction to Optometry Business Skills (UB507012)	20	VLE online tutor supported/ facilitated study VC	Group business plan Reflective learning account	Introduction to the skills and knowledge required to operate an optometry business either start up or going concern. Learn about different models of optometry business.

				Introduction to marketing, customer service and HR management as well as basic accounting concepts and financial management.
Introduction to Clinical Optometry (UB507007)	20	Face-to-face VC VLE (online, tutor supported study) Practical sessions	Station practical examination (OSPRE) Written examination Reflective diary Essay	Introduction to the many skills required both inside and outside the consulting room including clinical, dispensing and communication that will be built upon as the programme advances. Learning will be further supported by a clinical placement within community optometry practice, for 8 days during the module.
Year 2 Semester 1				
Clinical Case Studies 1 (UB508005)	40	Flipped classroom Practical sessions Face-to-face VC	Individual Readiness Assurance Tests (iRAT) & Team Readiness Assurance Tests (tRAT) MCQ Written examination	Students will gain a foundation knowledge in the physical & biomedical sciences underpinning optometric practice. Students will engage in problem based learning cases drawn from simple and common optometric conditions.
Clinical Optometry 1 (UB508007)	20	Seminars Clinical skills practical sessions Flipped Classroom Face-to-face Clinical placement	Objective structured practical examination stations (OSPREs) Team poster presentation Ongoing completion of reflective clinical logbook Written examination	Development of clinical skills which form the basis of routine eye examination and ophthalmic dispensing. Introduction to and development of clinical core competencies stage 1 as defined by the GOC
Year 2 Semester 2				
	40	Face to face		Students will continue to build on

Clinical Case Studies 2 (UB508006)		VC Flipped classroom Practical sessions	Individual Readiness Assurance Tests (iRAT) & Team Readiness Assurance Tests (tRAT) Clinical assessment Written examination	the foundation knowledge gained in Clinical case studies 1. Students will engage in further problem based learning cases drawn from gradually more complex optometric conditions.
Clinical Optometry 2 (UB508008)	20	Flip classroom Practical sessions Team based learning Face-to-face	Station practical examinations (OSPRE) Team presentation Written case reports Reflective logbook	Students will build on the foundation knowledge gained and developed in introduction to clinical optometry & clinical optometry 1. This module is primarily based on clinical skills practical sessions, continuing to develop the clinical competencies required for optometric practice and the stage 1 core competencies as defined by the GOC.
Year 3 Semester 1				
Clinical Optometry 3 (UB509007)	20	Clinical skills seminars Practical sessions Clinical Placement VLE Face-to-face Flipped classroom	Reflective logbook Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) Clinical Practical examination Reflective report	This builds on the skills from Clinical Optometry 1 & 2 and introduces more advanced clinical skills Students will continue to learn about the GOC stage 1 core competencies. Clinical placement will help to consolidate student's learning .
Clinical Case Studies 3 (UB509006)	40	Problem based learning seminars Flipped classroom Team based learning VC Face-to-face Practical sessions	Team based learning- iRATs tRATs Critical review Written examination Clinical diagnosis assessment	In this module students will build on their knowledge gained in Clinical Case Studies 2. Students will continue to engage in problem-based learning cases drawn from increasingly more complex optometric conditions.
Year 3 Semester 2				

	Advanced Optometric Studies 1 (UB509004)	40	Problem based learning seminars Clinical skills practical Team based learning Inter-professional care plan development Clinical placements (ophthalmology). Flipped classroom Face-to-face	Team based learning – (iRATs) Team readiness assurance tests (tRATs) Written examination team care plan development.	Following on from Clinical Case Studies 1,2,& 3 this module further develops students understanding of ocular disorders and differential diagnosis. Students will begin to demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge in a clinical setting.
	Literature review (UB509005)	20	Face-to-face VLE	Proposal Literature review	This module aims to develop the skills of critical thinking, critical analysis, organisation, time management, literature search, communication and IT skills by students writing a literature review on an Optometric topic that interests them.
	Year 4 Semester 1 & 2				
	Dissertation (UB510001)	40	Face-to-face VLE	Dissertation 9000 words	This module aims to provide students with advanced skills in relation to independent thought, critical analysis, organisation and presentation and an understanding of the scientific approaches in relation to both clinical and laboratory-based vision research.
	Community Optometry (UB510002)	40	Clinical placement VLE	Written case reports OSCE Written exam VLE delivered case simulation quiz Reflective logbook	Within an Optometry Practice setting, students will gain experience in the application of their clinical skills & knowledge under close supervision. This will enable consolidation of skills acquired in the previous 3 years of the programme.

	Advanced Optometric Studies 2 (UB510003)	40	Problem based learning seminars Clinical skills practical sessions Team based learning seminar Face-to-face Flipped classroom	Team based learning – iRATs and team Readiness Assurance Tests (tRAT) Clinical practical examinations	Following on from Clinical Case Studies 1,2 & 3 and Advanced Optometric Studies 1, this module further explores the detection, diagnosis and management of more complex optometric conditions.

7f Assessment map

Assessments

A diverse portfolio of assessments has been scheduled throughout the programme – see section 7e above and the CUR03s. Also, the BSc Hons Optometry assessment schedule for all module LOs can be found in appendix 5

Assessment types include:

- Essays
- Multiple Choice Questionnaires
- Closed book exam
- Practical skills assessment,
- Practical logbook/portfolio
- Clinical assessments
- Clinical case reports
- Objective Structured Practical Examinations (OSPRE)
- Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE)
- Investigative reports
- Graduate Attributes Reflection
- Group Presentation
- Poster presentation
- Team based learning
    - Individual readiness assurance tests (iRATs)
    - Team readiness assurance tests (tRATs)
- Video presentation (individual or group)

8a Entry requirements

Entry requirements for BSc (Hons) Optometry (see Appendix 1)

The minimum pre-requisites for entry to Level 7 will be one of the following:

A.

- Minimum of 4 SQA Highers at Grades ABBB, with a minimum of 2 sciences at Higher from (Physics, biology/human biology, chemistry) or maths at minimum grade B
- Higher English or essay based subject (such as modern studies or history) minimum grade B
- Higher (any) at minimum grade B
- For those that do not have Maths or physics at higher then National 5 (Maths) or National 5 Applications of Maths at minimum grade B or standard grade Maths at minimum grade 2.
- For those that do not have English at higher then National 5 (English) at minimum grade B or standard grade English at minimum grade 2

	OR B. 3 A levels at grade BBB or above: • Two from science subjects (physics, biology/human biology, chemistry) or maths at minimum grade B • General studies not accepted • For those that do not have maths or physics at A-level then GCSE maths at minimum Grade B/5 is required. • For those that do not have English at A level then GCSE English at minimum grade B/5 is required OR C. Applicants that are holders of an HND in relevant science subject may also apply and will be considered on an individual basis. OR D. Applicants with a recognized qualification in Ophthalmic Dispensing may also apply and will be considered on an individual basis. Proof of GOC registration as a Dispensing Optician is required. OR E. Applicants without traditional entry requirements are encouraged to apply and will be considered for the programme on the basis of a portfolio of alternative evidence of the required knowledge and expertise.
8b	**Recruitment and admissions**
	Applications will normally come through UCAS and be considered centrally through UHI Admissions. Interviews will be necessary for entry to this course and will consist of multiple mini interviews (MMI) to be held at the Centre for Health Science (CfHS), Inverness. Students will be awarded a score from the MMI process and be offered a place accordingly. Places at the study centres of Inverness or Moray will be allocated from that point, with applicants being asked to state their preferred site. That preference is taken into account but cannot necessarily be adhered to. All successful applicants will be required to complete a Disclosure Scotland (PVG) check and become PVG members in order to undertake this course. All successful applicants will be required to obtain student membership of the General Optical Council in order to undertake this course All successful applicants must be passed fit by occupational health. This will require a questionnaire and also a personal visit to the occupational health department in addition to and on a separate occasion to the interview day. Recognised European or International equivalent qualifications are considered. If English is not an applicant's first language, evidence of your English language skills must be provided: A minimum score of 7 in the academic International English language Testing System (IELTS) must have been obtained. Individual scores for each section of the test must not be lower than 6, with the exception of the 'Speaking' section, where a minimum score of 7 is required Any student applying with non-traditional entry qualifications should contact the Programme Leader in the first instance for guidance. Applicants will be assessed using the UHI RPL criteria http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/studying-at-uhi/first-steps/recognition-of-prior-learning-and-credit-transfer
8c	**Admissions process**
	All applications will be processed through the Standard Admissions process – applications are processed by admissions staff at UHI. Applicants from remote and rural areas are to be encouraged to apply. UHI has widening access policy so many courses are available, which can be tailored for individual students, if students do not meet the admissions criteria to allow them to work towards achieving the necessary qualifications to be accepted to study optometry

8d	Articulation routes into programme
	Access to Higher Education programmes may be considered. Recognised Access to HE courses – for example, SWAP SWAP grade profile of AAB in one of the following: Access to Biological Science (West Lothian College) Access to Health & Life Sciences (Fife College) Access to Life Science (Dundee & Angus College) Access to Life Sciences (Edinburgh College) Access to Medical & Life Sciences (North East College) Access to Medical Studies (Edinburgh College)
8e	**Progression routes out of programme**
	Graduates of the BSc (Hons) Optometry programme will be equipped for study at postgraduate level at any UK, European or other universities.
9a	**Additional information for prospective students**
	The emphasis of this degree is on the practical application of optometry to reinforce theoretical knowledge. Students will be trained in a range of techniques and will be expected to develop an increasingly accomplished ability to carry out, and report on, procedures underpinned by knowledge and understanding of principles, as expected by the General Optical Council. Students will benefit from a blended learning approach to their degree, at the same time preparing them for engagement and employment in industry. A PVG Disclosure Check and an Occupational Health Check will therefore be required. Student learning will be through practical application, video-conference, online learning and self-directed study. Students will be expected to attend all sessions, most specifically practical sessions. http://www.uhi.ac.uk/home/students/policies-and-regulations/student-charter
9b	**Additional costs to students**
	Placements: Students may be required to attend a clinical placement that is not in the vicinity of their normal place of study. Should this be the case, the individual student is responsible for funding the cost of travel, meals and overnight accommodation (if applicable) to enable attendance at a specified placement location. Students with financial challenges may be able to apply for support. PVG Disclosure check: Students will required to undergo a PVG check as part of the enrolment process onto the programme. **GOC:** Student membership, which must be maintained for the duration of the programme and pre-registration scheme year. **Clinical sessions:** Students will be required to purchase a course specific clinical tunic for wearing during clinical sessions and placement throughout the course. During the early years of study (years 1 & 2) students will be required to purchase small items of ophthalmic equipment: occluder, frame/PD ruler and pen torch. Before the commencement of clinical placements in year 3, students will be required to purchase their own direct ophthalmoscope, retinoscope and Volk lens.
9c	**Additional support for students**
	1 Pre-entry guidance Full and accurate pre-entry information, advice and guidance will be available to all prospective students through a range of information sources including prospectus, tailored leaflet, and web

presence. The recruitment process will take place on a face to face basis and will enable full information to be provided and questions answered prior to application.

Receiving information about the institution, the course, reading lists, a study calendar, the induction programme etc. in advance of starting the course will help clarify expectations and begin to orientate the student to both the institution and the programme. “Drip feeding” information can also help to maintain interest in the institution, helping to convert offers into acceptances.

2 Induction Programme

Full-time students will spend two days in college engaging with the course team to understand the structure and content of the programme. The development of appropriate study techniques will be a key feature in this process along with library, ICT and VLE induction. Time will be spent on activities to develop critical thinking skills, reflective practice and learning styles. The students will also be exposed to examples of a variety of teaching styles within a safe environment whilst engaging with teaching staff and other students. The team view the induction as an on-going and longitudinal activity and students will regularly engage with tutors in activities which will consolidate what they have understood to date. Team building will be an important element of the on-going induction. Although the induction week provides the students’ with essential guidance about their chosen programme and the wider university, it is important to note that the induction process will continue throughout the following weeks of their first year studies. UHI provide materials to support students through this process http://induction.uhi.ac.uk

3 In-Course Support

In-Course guidance provides on-going support for students from both academic aspects (via their Personal Academic Tutor) and welfare aspects via a broad range of support arrangements available through Student Services departments. Students will also be provided with advice and guidance on opportunities for work based placements that may be available throughout their study programme.

The following staff will support the students as follows:

Programme Leader:

A Programme Leader’s role is to co-ordinate the running and assessment of modules that make up the programme and to continue to develop the programme in line with changing technologies and processes. To adapt to new Learning and Teaching techniques as well as taking cognisance of feedback from Quality Enhancement themes.

Example of responsibilities:-

- Ensures the overall quality and consistency of the curriculum across the programme;
- Implements regulations on admissions, accreditation of prior learning, and all aspects of attendance and assessment;
- Develops and manages the programme;
- Keeps tutors informed of programme developments;
- Oversees the day-to-day management of the programme;
- Facilitates and responds to feedback on programme operations;
- Produces annual course reports and organising the Board of Examiners;
- Attends programme leaders meetings.

Module Leader/Tutor

The role of the module leader/tutor is primarily to deliver course materials and tutor learners throughout the module. Some of the areas involved in this role include:

- Introducing participants to the aims and content of the module;
- Coordinating and delivering the module
- Dealing with module-specific enquiries from participants;
- Monitoring progress;

- Giving guidance on appropriate learning resources;
- Assessment of submitted work and examinations;
- Providing reports to the Board of Examiners;
- Providing feedback to students on their work

Personal Academic Tutor (PAT)
Every student is allocated a student PAT who acts as a link between student and module tutors. The adviser has an allocation of time to fulfil this task and holds regular meetings with the student. The role of the PAT is to:

- Review academic progress
- Advise on matters relating to the programme
- Listen to student concerns
- Refer to other services where appropriate
- Assist with study skills
- Help with construction and continuation of learning plan

The PAT has responsibility for monitoring individual progress and general well-being of each student. Module tutors support students in each module and monitor their progress. Progress will be monitored at module committee and/or programme committee meetings as appropriate.

Each student will be provided with access to an online student handbook which will identify the formal policies and procedures of the programme. Many questions that students have will be answered in this documentation, which, in keeping with other written materials, will also be available online.

The team delivering the programme recognise that individual students will have different needs, aspirations, strengths and weaknesses. Their aim is to help support individuals to play to their strengths and achieve their aspirations. The need for additional support will not be a barrier and shall be provided on an individual basis.

4 Pre-Exit Course Support
Support and guidance for students due to exit the course either normally on completion of their programme or as early leavers due to personal circumstances, is available through their PAT and Students Services. With the help of Student Services programme staff will provide assistance to enable a satisfactory post-course progression outcome for students. Students will also be directed towards the UHI careers website that can be found using the following link https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/students/careers/

5 Post Course Support
Post course support can be provided via programme leaders in the form of references and guidance. The UHI Alumni are also an organisation that can provide post-course support to ex-UHI students.

10 Programme-specific regulations

This degree programme is regulated by the General Optical Council. The award of qualifications using the protected title of optometrist is limited to qualifications approved by the GOC as meeting the professional standards required. Students who gain sufficient academic credits to receive an honours award but do not meet the professional requirements (2.2 honours classification or above) must receive an alternative award to that approved by the GOC. At level 10 those achieving a 3rd class honours would receive the award BSc (Hons) Vision Science and would not be eligible for direct entry into the College of Optometrists Scheme for Registration.

All students are required to hold student membership of the GOC and are bound by the GOC Standards for Optical Students. Unprofessional behaviour or serious health problems can affect a student's ability to register with the GOC. Education providers must have procedures to:

a) identify as soon as possible students whose behaviour or health gives concern for the safety of patients or colleagues.
b) take action to help students to improve their behaviour, or make reasonable adjustments where necessary to take account of health issues.
c) make sure that students who are a risk to patients are identified as early as possible and appropriate action is taken to ensure that either deficiencies are corrected, or the student is excluded.

As such, the programme has a formal Causes for Concern process in place (see appendix 4)

Additional resources relating specifically to placements including a student placement handbook and resources for placement providers and supervisors are available as online resources.

11 Quality enhancement

The standards and quality of the programme will be evaluated and maintained in line with the UHI Regulations. The Programme Team committee will comprise of all staff working on the programme and will meet regularly to monitor the progress of the programme. Student evaluation will be considered and corrective action will be taken when necessary.

Students Participation:
Students can input to this process in a number of ways:

- Through feedback to personal academic tutors;
- Through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires distributed twice a year;
- Through student group discussions and input prior to programme committees;
- Through representatives who will be invited to attend Course Committee meetings;
- Through representatives who sit on college and UHI committees.
- Through meeting external examiners at exam boards

It is key to the success of this programme that job specific skills are applied in real environments. This therefore creates the opportunity for working in a number of contextualised settings. This approach will allow for the programme to grow and develop and create a specialised degree.

Learning and Teaching:
The course team will provide an innovative approach to learning and teaching through the use of the flip classroom methods of delivery and problem-based learning (which is further described in section 7d of this document). The programme is designed around this more innovative method of delivery utilising the vast range of resources (text, video, internet, mobile apps etc.) through face to face, VLE, practicals and placements to support delivery of the programme.

Placements:
As with medicine and other health disciplines, the clinical placement is the venue where skills, knowledge and attitudes developed in the theoretical part of the curriculum are applied, developed and integrated. Within optometry education, these clinical placements have traditionally been limited to final year students. This programme aims to get students commencing on community clinical placements within working optometric practices from first year. It will allow students to put the skills they have learned into practice from an early stage and allow them to gain invaluable experience and understanding of the day to day role and responsibilities of an optometrist**.** Participation with respect to placements within both community optometry practices and the Hospital Eye Service are a core requirement of this programme.

UHI is committed to the premise of quality work experience options integrated within the curriculum. As such, it seeks to provide an increasing number of students with the opportunity

	to access placement activity, which allows them to apply their knowledge and skills in a supported environment whilst experiencing the atmosphere and pace of the work place. The recently devised UHI Placement Policy and Guidance and supplementary supporting documents is set out in Appendix 2. This guidance details the procedures required to be completed by the UHI, employer and student before, during and after work placements are carried out. Areas such as Health & safety, liability and insurance are covered by these documents **QAA Enhancement Themes:** Quality enhancement in UHI is guided by the current and previous QAA Enhancement Themes and is driven by a commitment to the UHI core principles of high quality learning and teaching, widening access and student support. Specific QAA themes which will be embraced are: ▪ *Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience (2017-2020)* What information will be considered to be useful to help us identify and understand what we do well and what could be improved. Qualitative and quantitative evidence will be used to identify the issues that would benefit from intervention, help prioritise interventions, and evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions ▪ *Student Transitions* Students will be supported in their transition into the programme and exiting onto employment and postgraduate education ▪ *Research and Teaching Linkages: enhancing graduate attributes* The Individual and Group Projects will be a strong catalyst to implement this theme as will the development of teaching staff scholarly activity aligned to identify curriculum enhancement. Also the potential links with relevant research in UHI. All modules will demonstrate which UHI Graduate Attributes they assess. ▪ *Integrative Assessment* A range of different types of formative activities and summative assessments will be designed to contribute to the learning experience of students ▪ *Flexible Delivery* The variety of learning through face to face online practicals and placements allows flexibility to be embedded in the programme. ▪ *Employability* Embedded in and around the curriculum delivery to enable employability attributes within students by students undertaking practicals, placements and also reflecting on UHI Graduate Attributes. ▪ *Responding to Students Needs* Well established UHI processes for gathering, analysing and responding to student feedback will be used in conjunction with the engineering scheme programmes with an aspiration of contributing to the National Student Survey.
12	**Employability**
	The employability strategy for UHI has the following stated aims: • To ensure that UHI graduates have appropriate skills and attributes for employment within Highlands and islands • To ensure that all students have a range of opportunities to develop their employability skills and attributes through their programme of study at UHI • To encourage and support programme teams in enhancing the engagement with employability offered by their programmes • To further strengthen and widen our links with employers, in order to understand mutual concerns, expand graduate opportunities and enhance UHI's reputation as a place of useful learning. In keeping with the above strategic aims, throughout the Optometry degree programme all students will be assessed using a range of techniques. These will include producing reports,

	the creation of academic posters, submission of essays, MCQs, OSCEs, Individual readiness Assurance Tests (iRATs), Team Readiness Assurance tests (tRATs) and written examinations. Submission of required work will be to agreed deadlines and to a standard commensurate with their level of study. Additionally, collaborative working is increasingly recognised as being a requirement of employers and this is reflected in the use of group work at each level of the course. Further to this, elements of continual assessment have been adopted that require the student to contribute to and engage with their peers via the use of the discussion board. Finally, the programme has close links with the employment sector. These links are enhanced through the use of work placements and resultant feedback from the employer, which can be incorporated into our programmes to continue to develop and enhance our graduate employability. We have used the feedback gained from working with employers to form the decision making with respect to the introduction to optometry business skills module which originally was due to be delivered in year 3 but following consultation has now been redeveloped to form part of the year 1 curriculum, exposing students to the overall structure of optometry business at a much earlier point in their studies. **Graduate Attributes** UHI has set out to identify what the important attributes for our students and graduates might be. As part of this process students, staff and employers were consulted and a set of five attributes were agreed that are important for our students to develop during their time at UHI: 1. Academic Skills 2. Self-Management 3. Social Awareness 4. Communication 5. Interpersonal Skills https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/students/careers/get-experience/graduate-attributes/ It is proposed that students will reflect on achieving the graduate attributes as identified by the module leaders in the module descriptors. **UHI Careers and Employability Centre** The services of the UHI Careers and Employability Centre will be available to all the students https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/students/careers/ which include: • Free confidential careers and employability advice https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/students/careers/contact-us/ • Free confidential CV and application form feedback: https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/students/careers/current-students/cvs--applications/ • Jobs and work placements on our jobs database https://targetconnect.uhi.ac.uk/home.html • Workshops and events offered by videoconference and recordings of previous seminars. • Careers and employability information provided on this website, including a full range of advice sheets, interactive learning resources and links to e-books available in our resource library. • Regular news and opportunities publicised on our Facebook Careers & Alumni Page and Twitter CareerCentre account.
13	**Future programme developments and plans**
	Ongoing Pre- programme delivery development: Staff currently in post: we currently have 8 clinical staff in post and a further full time senior lecturer post out to advert. These people come from a variety of different backgrounds including academia, community and hospital practice, regulatory roles such as with the College of Optometrists and a clinical ophthalmologist. We will be recruiting a technician to help with the practical work and more clinical teachers as the programme goes into years 2 and beyond.

GOC Approval

Provisional approval was recommended by GOC Education Visitor Panel 8th October 2019, subject to conditions. This was ratified by full GOC council on 13th November 2019.. There are 11 conditions to be met at intervals up until June 2021 with a GOC visits to be scheduled at intervals to monitor the programme both during development and delivery.

Marketing

- Marketing strategy for student recruitment to programme was implemented November 2019 and will continue to be developed and updated.

Placements

- The database of placement providers has commenced and is ongoing
- Development of the placement training programme is underway and will be added to for each specific placement
- Placement handbook for students and mentors will be provided to all students and placement providers
- Development of Mentor training as CET – our first general CET session has been held and was accredited for 6 CET points by the GOC. The specific mentor training for placement supervisors is being developed with the aim of this also being eligible for CET points. Practice based supervisors will need to deliver different levels of mentor support depending what level the student is at in their studies and the mentor training is being developed to reflect this, with a general mentor training to be completed by all supervisors and bolt on additional training for those supervising students at level 9 & 10 (years 3 & 4)

Recruitment of Students

- Prospective students are required to attend an interview day, which will consist of MMIs.
- The first MMI interview day was held on 7th February 2020

Planned developments/aspirations over next 3-5 years are:

- To develop staff capability in producing on-line/blended learning materials and use of UHI's blended Learning Checklist and IT Essentials checklist – see section 21.
- To expand employer's links to increase opportunities for student placements.
- To further develop a marketing promotion campaign.
- To contribute to the National Student Feedback Survey.
- Consider an FE programme for access to the degree for those who have not achieved the necessary Highers.
- Consider research opportunities in parallel with the taught course which could contribute to the dissertations in year 4 (this would be in advance of the first cohort commencing level 10)
- To broaden student engagement with involvement in National initiatives.

It is expected that, as the degree matures, increasing and strengthening links with industry and research will develop. The degree is likely to reflect those links and may change in emphasis of content in anticipation of sector needs, changes in optometry education requirements as specified by the GOC and employment demands.

Additional information for internal consideration (not for external publication)

14a	Brief history of academic provision	
	The UHI has a proven record of delivering innovative teaching with the area of Applied Life Studies. The Centre for Health Science in Inverness, a state of the art facility was completed in 2009 and was one of the first in the UK to bring together the public, private and academic sectors to be a focus for excellence in health science and biotechnology. The Centre brings together research, education, training, patient care and business development all under one roof. It accommodates a number of teaching and training departments and has four universities on site - the University of the Highlands and Islands, University of Aberdeen, Robert Gordon University and Glasgow School of Art. Equipped with state of the art training facilities, including a Clinical Skills Centre, to provide continuous education and development opportunities for healthcare professionals, most of the teaching and training undertaken at the Centre is done through the innovative use of technology. This means that it can be delivered to outlying sites in our more remote and rural areas. This breaks down the geographical barriers and opens up opportunities. The UHI provides a three year BSc in Oral Health Science after which dental therapists can perform dental procedures such as extractions and fillings. Teaching of the course is carried out in state of the art facilities including 12 simulated heads which are all linked up through hi tech cameras, computer screens and video conferencing. The UHI Department of Nursing is also based at the Centre for Health Science. There are around 400 students based at the Centre with many of the students studying undergraduate courses leading to registration as nurses. The university also provides continuous professional education for health professionals. The Alexander Graham Bell Centre for Digital Health, situated in Elgin, is a research, education and business hub. The Centre, located on the main Moray campus, has been designed to bring together expertise in Digital Healthcare and Life Sciences within the region and across Scotland and also provides training facilities for NHS Grampian staff. The addition of The BSc (Hons) optometry degree into the course offering from the UHI is a natural progression for the university and will build on the successful Applied Life Studies Subject Network's courses already being delivered from these state of the art facilities. Optometry has an acute shortage of qualified practitioners within the North / North East of Scotland, which is only set to worsen as the population ages and demands for eye care increase. Global policy recommendations of the World Health Organization (2010) suggest regional shortages are best addressed through the recruitment and training of students from under-represented regions. With the University of the Highlands and Islands having a strong history of recruiting students from within remote and rural Scotland, they are well placed to address the current optometry practitioner shortages. The current nursing programme, in particular demonstrates excellent retention rates for nurses within Highlands and Islands post-graduation and the aim is to build on this success with optometry and the GOC.	
14b	**Rationale for the programme**	
	The College of Optometrists Workforce Survey (2015) shows a net loss in capacity over the next 5 years due to shifting demographics in the workforce and it concluded that an additional 800 Optometrists are likely to be needed across the UK to meet the demands of an ageing population with the prevalence of visual impairment and visual health disorders, known to	

correlate with increased age. There are marked regional variations in numbers of optical professionals around the UK, with large clusters in areas surrounding the optometry schools. NES Optometry, Education and Workforce Report (2013) also supports the need for an increased number of Optometrists in Scotland and it is well known within the Optical industry that the North and North East of Scotland has historically had a significant undersupply of Optometrists and this is projected to become even more of an issue with changes to the available Optometry labour market.

The evidence which has been gathered from working on other health related areas which are finding difficulties in recruitment, is that there is a much greater chance of attracting and retaining professionals in this region if they are both drawn from the region and are able to train here. The programme will, of course, be open to students from other parts of Scotland and the UK and as it develops could be offered to students from remote and rural areas both in the UK and overseas. Again evidence from other professions indicates that recruiting individuals who have trained out of the region (and in a Scottish context this typically means in the central belt) is very challenging, but that individuals who migrate into the region for their training in the first place, and who gain exposure to the social and professional environment within the region and its particular features, opportunities and challenges, are more likely to wish to remain. We initially are aiming at a market across the North of Scotland (Highlands and Islands region and North East Scotland) as we are aware that there is a significant shortage of skills in this region. The scale of the programme (maximum 60 per annum) is intended to address this shortage and provide sufficient trained optometrists to backfill those leaving the labour market.

While the Faculty will play a role in the realisation of much of the University's strategy, it will focus primarily on delivering the following Critical Performance indicators:

1. CPI 1a Increasing the total number of students in higher education with UHI;
2. CPI 2 Increase the share of entrants to higher education from within our region;
3. CPI 3a Improve UHI's performance in the National Student Survey for higher education;
4. CPI 4a Increase the employment rates of UHI's full-time higher education leavers
5. CPI 5a Increase the levels of attainment of students engaged in higher education
6. CPI 8a Increase the proportion of higher education entrants from targeted areas of rurality and rural deprivation.
7. CPI 9 Increase the levels of progression from further to higher education

The optometry degree will contribute to all 7 of the CPIs.

In order to be able to easily reference the strategic themes and underlying aims from the UHI strategic vision and plan summary, the themes have been assigned an alphanumeric code to each desired outcome. The BSc (Hons.) Optometry will meet aims A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, B4:

	THE UNIVERSITY FOR ALL OUR REGION A	OUR STUDENTS B
Aim	*The university will act as a force for economic, social and cultural change across the region by connecting and collaborating with businesses, public and third sector partners and communities. We will:*	*The university will continue to meet the needs of learners within the region, while targeting growth in our share of young entrants and students from beyond the region. We will:*
1	Be active partners in community planning within our region and contribute to reduced inequality, improved services, enhanced training and skills development and the promotion of sustainable economic growth.	Ensure our further and higher education curriculum better meets current and future local and regional needs while also including elements of national and international relevance.
2	Provide a professional and consistent approach to employer and community engagement that underpins the relevance of our curriculum and research.	Use our expertise in blended delivery, supported by pedagogical research, to meet the learning, teaching and support needs and expectations of our diverse student body, studying in a wide variety of locations and contexts.
3	Ensure our academic structures and work practices respond effectively to the development needs of communities and key economic sectors.	
4	Work with schools within our region to raise ambition, achievement and progression to higher levels of post-school study.	Enhance connections between our curriculum and employers and the workplace.

Also the BSc (Hons.) Optometry will contribute to the following Faculty Strategic Objectives:

5 Develop a School of Health and Wellbeing to build on existing strengths and provide new opportunities in both teaching and research.

6. To ensure that all graduating students have a wide range of knowledge, skills and attributes, with a particular emphasis on digital skills, which match the requirements of employers.
7. To enhance equal opportunities for access to potential students restricted by employment, geography or personal circumstances within the UHI catchment area and wider.

Finally, the students will benefit from being part of a larger undergraduate population at UHI with all the advantages of having a range of student support services on-site at both Inverness and Moray.

Inverness and Moray will provide opportunities for pre-registration optometry students to connect to UHI's already strong local community networks and use them to develop the wider programme of activities related to rural health that will benefit the needs to the local community as well as retaining practitioners.

	Fit with AP strategic plan: Moray College UHI is currently working on their future strategic plan which demonstrates a commitment to: • Developing a change in mind-set to partnership development • Being pro-active to new initiatives and responsive to partnership needs • Being recognised as a successful contributor within the diverse range of networks we are part of. By being a partner in the delivery of the BSc (Hons.) Optometry degree, this will contribute to growing our Higher Education activity by: • Developing the private sector engagement within subject areas where gaps exist. • Taking a pro-active approach to sourcing partnerships which develop added value: • Work with partners to develop one new centre of expertise within the next 3 years. • Focus on partnerships supporting growth in HE through new and innovative curriculum. • Working with other partner Colleges and stakeholders to develop and validate new curriculum which gets the College recognised within the UHI partnership.	
14c	**Market demand**	
	There is only one university in Scotland offering optometry with an average of five applications for each place. Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) recruits mainly from the Glasgow/ central Scotland area and students tend to want to stay within that location for placements and employment. Data from industry shows a graduate employment rate of 98.9% for Optometrists. There are a significant number of optometrist vacancies currently in Scotland (50+) with a high proportion being in the North/ North East. The average time to fill an Optometrist vacancy in Scotland is currently 377 days. This situation is likely to worsen significantly as the workforce changes. It is estimated that we need two optometry graduates for every one we had 15 years ago to take into account the gender imbalance of the workforce and the trend for part time working. The intake into GCU has not significantly increased to take into account this change in the workforce. As mentioned in section 14b there is evidence from the College of Optometrists workforce survey of replacement demand due to the shifting demographics of the workforce, as well as increased requirement for Optometrists due to the demands of an aging population. The average distance a person has to travel in Scotland to access optometric services is 3.4km, however in the Highlands and Islands this increases to 10Km or more. If the supply of optometrists to remote and rural areas does not significantly improve, there is a high risk that many of these areas will lose their service and access distances will significantly increase. For more details see appendix 3 the UHI Market Assessment form submitted with AD1.	
15a	**Funding stream**	
	SFC Funding Group 05 The programme is proposed to be funded through the following funding sources: • Student fees: Scottish & EU (degree), RUK (degree) and International (degree). Post development phase - these will cover the salaries of the programme lead, tutors and technician • European structural and investment funds have contributed to the programme development: 3 x ESIF funded academic development posts during the development phase. UHI Educational Development Unit (EDU) support: European funded posts for new curriculum development. Optometry has been supported through this. • Commercial investment:	

	Industry stakeholders have confirmed contribution towards capital expenditure in terms of equipment via the FODO educational trust.	
15b	**Projected student numbers**	
	Projected student numbers are estimated to be 60 per annum with an assumed split of 40:20 between the Centre for Health Science, Inverness and Moray College UHI. Over the first four years this would be 240 students. The course will be similar to the BSc in Oral Health Science where this will always be the maximum number of places per year (due to clinical teaching space and the need for a 1:17 staff: student ratio.) These projections have been modelled on the current Optometry course that is run in Scotland at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) which has an average intake of 60 students per year. In terms of demand for those wishing to study optometry this has remained at a steady 5:1 applications per place which indicates that there is market demand for further provision in Scotland. The student base for GCU is largely made up of students from the Greater Glasgow area and some international. Market intelligence indicates that there is a tendency for students to stay close to home and study if opportunities are available. With this Optometry course the aim is to deliver an educational programme that recognises the specific optometric needs of remote and rural communities. For this proposed course we have assumed over half of the applicants will be Scottish students (a large degree hopefully H&Is based), ¼ English students plus a cohort of 10 international students (early dialogue is being undertaken with Sweden who are looking for places to be provided for some of their students as they cannot meet their own demand.) At GCU the attrition rate is 23% (77% completion rate at end of course). Due to the demand of places for Optometry and the wider market recruitment and retention issues we aim to employ a careful recruitment and selection process for course applicants. As demonstrated with the BSc Oral Health Science (which has a low attrition rate of 10-14% of 14 students) we predict our attrition rate to also be low and have applied a rate of 5% per year (20% attrition or 80% completion rate at the end of the course, year 4). This will equate to a total of 222 students at the end of teaching year 4.	

			2020-21	2021-2022	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
SCQF Level 7	**FT**		60	60	60	60	60
	PT		0	0	0	0	0
SCQF Level 8	**FT**		0	57	57	57	57
	PT		0	0	0	0	0
SCQF Level 9	**FT**		0	0	54	54	54
	PT		0	0	0	0	0
SCQF Level 10	**FT**		0	0	0	51	51
	PT		0	0	0	0	0
SCQF Level 11	**FT**		0	0	0	0	0
	PT		0	0	0	0	0
Total FTE			60	117	171	222	222

16	**MAC calculation**
	N/A Due to the specific requirements of the General Optical Council, there is not the opportunity for a wide choice of areas to study. Only 2 UHI modules will be able to be used, however learning material from other UHI modules will be used and contextualised in the development of the modules.

	Also there may be opportunities for interprofessional education when the optometry students can be taught with students from other disciplines/professions.
17	**Marketing and promotion**
	There are a number of recruitment routes: • School-leavers: with Scottish Highers: or A-levels in the case of other UK applicants. Optometry would fall clearly within the STEM and Healthcare areas that we are actively promoting to school pupils. This will include the development of bridging/access pathways for senior phase pupils/school leavers should this be required. • From within existing workforce, either Dispensing Opticians, orthoptists, specialist ophthalmic nurses or individuals looking for career progression from other areas of allied health/social care having previously entered the workplace with lower level qualifications. • Through our collaboration with St Andrews and Dundee we are exploring articulation pathways for students who have attempted access to medicine (Gateway) programmes but are in the 60%+ or so who fail to gain full entry to MBChB programmes or equivalent. These students typically wish to move to another allied health profession route. Optometry would be a possible route to promote. • Mature students and others who have taken non-traditional routes from secondary school into higher education. These individuals represent important elements of the learner demography in the North of Scotland. As part of this we will also consider any emerging vocational/Foundation/Modern Apprenticeship routes developing in other allied health/social care areas that may be of relevance • Some international recruitment
18	**Student engagement and representation**
	Student engagement in the course Student representatives receive training from SPARQS and are supported by staff to enable them to canvas student views across the 2 academic partners. Subject Network Officers are now appointed annually and make significant contribution to the network, with attendance at Subject Network Committees and Development Events. This good practice will be continued for the BSc (Hons.) Optometry programme. **Student feedback** Module level feedback will be gathered by module leaders in all modules using the standard UHI evaluation form. Module leaders will be encouraged to report on student feedback in their annual self-evaluation document and will be encouraged to do a summary of the feedback and proposed actions and outcomes – ' You said, we did'. Teams have found that students are encouraged by seeing what has been achieved to contribute to current evaluations. Mid- semester informal feedback ('How am I doing') may also be sought by many tutors, in order to give the chance to rectify any problems before the end of the module. Students can also give feedback through their Academic Partner quality processes, the Red Button, NSS. Results of the UHI National Student Survey and Red Button are disseminated to staff to identify issues. **Programme level feedback** This will be gathered through informal feedback at specific events and in student support sessions. Academic partners also coordinate focus groups and the feedback gathered is used to quickly inform the Programme Leader or Subject Network leader of any issues. **Student mentor scheme** Student mentoring brings together students to share their knowledge and experience in order to help each other progress. We provide training and a structure for more experienced students to help those new to the University. This is primarily achieved through study groups and small group mentoring, although options are also available for 1:1 mentoring. https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/students/support/mentoring/
19	**Learning resources**

	Specific optometry facilities are to be created within the Centre for Health Science, Inverness and the Alexander Graham Bell Centre at Moray College UHI in Elgin. These will consist of dedicated clinical practice rooms and optical practical skills rooms, the latter being equipped with video-conference resources to enable flexibility of teaching between the two sites. The programme will also utilise existing teaching space, shared with other courses, including tutorial rooms and lecture theatres on both sites. Existing library and e- library facilities will have the relevant optometry books and journals added to their collections. The existing Virtual Learning Environment will have optometry teaching resources added to enrich the learning experience for students.
20	**Staffing (academic and support)**
	Alison MacPherson has been appointed as Head of Optometry (1.0 FTE) and is in post Dr Akash Chima (1.0 FTE senior lecturer) started 1.4.20 Dr Madara Zvirgzdina (1.0 FTE lecturer) started 1.4.20 Judith Banks (0.6 FTE lecturer) already in post. Joel Somerville (0.5 FTE lecturer) already in post Samara Hodi (0.2 FTE lecturer) already in post Colin Pettinger (0.5 FTE lecturer) already in post Professor Sue Lightman (0.6 FTE Optometry Academic Development Advisor- Ophthalmology) already in post A further Senior Lecturer is to be recruited in the summer A technician will be employed for academic year 20/21 Administrative duties will be covered initially by the technician and also by the Department of Optometry staff. The recruitment of part- time PBL facilitators (PhD students) along with clinical supervisors will commence in advance of the second academic teaching year on a visiting lecturer basis. (Clinical supervisors: GOC registered optometrists, dispensing opticians or ophthalmologists.)
21	**Staff development activity and plans**
	Staff development activity is monitored within each Academic Partner and assessed during annual staff reviews. All partners have a comprehensive and well-structured CPD system supported by their individual college management. CET will be undertaken as required by GOC. The UHI Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) is a hub for the enhancement of learning and teaching within the university. They support engagement in pedagogic scholarship and research, through collaborative working and consultation, professional development opportunities, and providing funding and resources. The LTA supports the development of pedagogic practice and research in a range of ways including: ▪ Access to professional development events and opportunities ▪ Providing networking opportunities, resources, and direct support for projects and initiatives ▪ Funded opportunities to enable staff to engage in pedagogic scholarship and research ▪ Establishing groups and fora for colleagues to collaborate in helping share and shape pedagogic developments ▪ Recognising excellence in learning and teaching through the ALPINE framework CPD as required by UHI which may include:

- Staff will be encouraged to undertake UHI Postgraduate certificate/Diploma/Masters in Education if they have not currently got a teaching qualification. They will also be encouraged to become an
    - Associate Fellow
    - Fellow
    - Senior Fellow

  of ALPINE (Accredited Learning, Professional development and Innovation in Education) which is co-ordinated through the Learning and Teaching Academy and is open to any colleagues who deliver, support or lead the development of HE-level learning and teaching. Recognition is based on educational practice and innovation, leadership, and education-related scholarship and research. There are a number of routes to gaining these important national recognitions, including through submitting a portfolio of professional practice or successfully completing the Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary and Higher Education. All applicants must demonstrate how their practice aligns to the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)

- A range of statutory training programmes such as Equality and Diversity, Protecting Vulnerable Groups, Health and Safety.

- Research and scholarship. The team will be able to link with some research teams within UHI (health and wellbeing research cluster and pedagogical research). The aim will be to facilitate interaction between research and teaching staff to promote research informed teaching and potential research opportunities.

- Conferences. Attendance at subject specific conferences is recognised as one of the key ways of enthusing staff and facilitating opportunities across HEIs. The aim will be to encourage attendance by all teaching staff at events on an annual basis.

- External links. Staff will be encouraged to participate in approval/ review panels both in UHI and in other institutions. Staff will also be encouraged to gain appointments as external examiners in other institutions. Opportunities will be sought to collaborate with other institutions particularly in pedagogic research activity, through the developing Learning and teaching Academy.

All staff will be expected to complete the requirements as described in the AD1 L&T report including:

- the Staff copyright training module
- the IT Essentials checklist and have it formally recorded as CPD
- the use of an e-portfolio if agreed will trigger request for staff development

A five year staff development programme and timeline will be devised to enhance the academic and professional qualifications of the degree team. These will focus on building their teaching/learning qualifications and the development of a significant research base for the department

APPENDICES

1. **Entry requirements for undergraduate programmes**
2. **UHI Placement Policy**
3. **Market Assessment form**
4. **Causes for concern process**
5. **Assessment schedule**

Appendix 1: Entry requirements for undergraduate programmes

Academic year (please insert the year in which the information below applies)		**2020/2021**	
Course code:	B510	**Course title:**	**BSc (Hons.) Optometry**

General statement for all programmes

'Prospective students who hold other equivalent qualifications and / or relevant experience are encouraged to apply and will be considered on an individual basis.'

1. **Standard entry requirements for Year 1 (SCQF Level 7)**

General	Specific subjects and grades (if any). ***List all relevant – replacing text in brackets.***	Essential or preferred
Minimum of 4SQA Highers at *grades* ABBB *	2 Sciences at Higher from (*Physics, Biology, Human Biology, Chemistry*) or maths at Grade (B) Higher (*English)* at Grade (B) Higher (*any*) at Grade (B)	Essential Preferred
Minimum of 3A Levels at *grades* BBB *	2 B grades from science subjects (physics, biology, human biology, chemistry) or maths. A level (any) at Grade (B) (General studies not accepted)	Essential
FE courses (SCQF Level 5 or 6) (For example, NC / NQ)	N/A	
Recognised Access to HE courses – for example, SWAP	Access to HE	
International Baccalaureate and other European or International equivalent qualifications	Recognised European or International equivalent qualifications are considered. If English is not your first language, you must have evidence of your English language skills: You must have obtained a minimum score of 7 in the academic International English language Testing System (IELTS). Individual scores for each section of the test must not be lower than 6, with the exception of the 'Speaking' section, where a minimum score of 7 is required. Please note that English language tests need to have been taken no more than two years prior to the start date of the course	Essential

***required**

Additional entry requirements (if applicable)

General	Specific subjects and grades (if any). ***List all relevant – replacing text in brackets.***	Essential or preferred
SQA National 5 **OR** SQA Standard Grade	For those that do not have maths or physics at Higher then : National 5 (*Maths)* at minimum Grade (B) Or Standard Grade (Maths) at minimum Grade (2) For those that do not have English at Higher then: National 5 (English) at minimum Grade B Or Standard Grade (English) at minimum Grade 2	Essential Essential Essential Essential
GCSE	For those that do not have maths or physics at A level then: GCSE (maths) at minimum Grade B is required	Essential
Other information (For example, portfolio, audition)	*N/A*	

Additional information

Please include additional information if applicable. For example, interview required / bridging programme may be available / required, depending on qualification / outcome of interview / test.
Selection Interview required - Essential

APPENDIX 2 – UHI Student Placement Policy & Guidance

See PDF attached

APPENDIX 3

Market intelligence in support of curriculum development proposals
The market assessment form below was developed by the university planning team and is broken down into four stages:

- Provision of key information by the staff proposing the development.
- Face-to-face discussion between the proposers and the planning team to agree the research data required, who will provide it and the timescale.
- All agreed market demand data provided in the required timescale
- Planning team provide an assessment of the development to the relevant faculty based on the market intelligence gathered

Market Assessment Form
Proposed programme name: BSc (Hons) Optometry
Proposer: Alison MacPherson and Crichton Lang
Subject network: Applied Life Studies

Section A –
Brief course description:
BSc (Hons) Optometry: 4 years Full time
Site Specific
Proposed Location: Centre for Health Science, Inverness and Moray College UHI
Completely new course has been developed within the framework of the GOC specific course requirements.
Target audience:
We have a number of recruitment routes

- School-leavers: with Scottish Highers: or A-levels in the case of other UK applicants. Optometry would fall clearly within the STEM and Healthcare areas that we are actively promoting to school pupils. This will include the development of bridging/access pathways for senior phase pupils/school leavers should this be required.
- From within existing workforce, either dispensing opticians, orthoptists, specialist ophthalmic nurses or individuals looking for career progression from other areas of allied health/social care having previously entered the workplace with lower level qualifications.
- Through our collaboration with St Andrews and Dundee we are exploring articulation pathways for students who have attempted access to medicine (Gateway) programmes but are in the 60%+ or so who fail to gain full entry to MBChB programmes or equivalent. These students typically wish to move to another allied health profession route. Optometry would be a possible route to promote.
- Mature students and others who have taken non-traditional routes from secondary school into higher education. These individuals represent important elements of the learner demography in the North of Scotland. As part of this we will also consider any emerging vocational/Foundation/Modern Apprenticeship routes developing in other allied health/social care areas that may be of relevance
- Some international recruitment

Known gaps in the market/rationale for the proposal:
We initially are aiming at a market across the North of Scotland (Highlands and Islands region and North East Scotland) as we are aware that there is a significant shortage of skills in this region. The scale of the programme (20-25 per annum) is intended to address this shortage and provide sufficient trained optometrists to backfill those leaving the labour market. The College of Optometrists Workforce Survey (2015) shows a net loss in capacity over the next 5 years due to shifting demographics in the workforce and it concluded that an additional 800 Optometrists are likely to be needed across the UK to meet the demands of an ageing population with the prevalence of visual impairment and visual health disorders, know to correlate with increased age. There are marked regional variations in numbers of optical professionals around the UK, with large clusters in areas surrounding the optometry schools. NES Optometry, Education and Workforce Report (2013) also supports the need for an increased number of Optometrists in Scotland and it is well known within the Optical industry that the North and North East Scotland has historically had a significant undersupply of Optometrists and this is projected to become even more of an issue with changes to the available Optometry labour market. The evidence we have gathered from working on other health related areas which are finding difficulties in recruitment is that there is a much greater chance of attracting and retaining professionals in this

region if they are both drawn from the region and are able to train here. The programme will, of course, be open to students from other parts of Scotland and the UK and as it develops could be offered to students from remote and rural areas both in the UK and overseas. Again evidence from other professions indicates that recruiting individuals who have trained outwith the region (and in a Scottish context this typically means in the central belt) is very challenging, but that individuals who migrate into the region for their training in the first place, and who gain exposure to the social and professional environment within the region and its particular features, opportunities and challenges, are more likely to wish to remain.

Next step: Arrange a time to discuss the above with the planning team. Email the form to planning@uhi.ac.uk with subject line market demand analysis.

Section B –
Progression demand evidence: school leavers into HE; HNC/D to degree for top-up
Information provided

Industry/employer/research evidence:
Information provided

Other considerations/evidence:
Discussion with Alison MacPherson, the programme lead, focused on the reasons for Specsavers being involved in this development. The recruitment problems within the north of Scotland, limited degree availability and difficulty in retaining students within the area after the professional year. Discussion also highlighted potential USPs: placement-based, community (remote and rural focus) and link to modern industry practice. The possibility of exploring an articulation pathway for Access to Medicine students from St Andrews and Dundee was also discussed in more depth as was the secondary school visits and pilot work Specsavers is already engaged in.

Alison agreed to provide further information, analysis and data available from Specsavers
Documents include the following:
• Information regarding number of pre-registration training places and Summer school places available versus uptake. UK, Scotland and Scotland North
• General market information
• Current optometry vacancies (note some stores may have multiple vacancies). This will give you a snapshot of the challenges specifically of remote and rural optometrist recruitment.
• Summary of entry requirements for a selection of the current Optometry programmes

Next step: completed section B with research data outcomes submitted to planning@uhi.ac.uk

Section C – *Planning team comments on the market analysis work undertaken.*

Students and graduates:
Data was provided which showed Specsavers has unfilled graduate training positions across the UK and Scotland, and unfilled summer placements for students.
There are currently 11 universities across the UK providing a degree course in Optometry (eight in England, one in Wales, one in Northern Ireland and one in Scotland). There are two new courses proposed for England with no confirmed start date (Bristol and Teesside).

The current Optometry course in Scotland (GCU) has an average intake of 60 students per year. This is mainly students from the greater Glasgow area and some international. Recent market intelligence suggests that only 1-2 students per year are from the Highlands and Islands.

The availability of places at GCU for those wishing to study optometry has remained at a steady five applications per place (2012). It would have to be assumed that those unsuccessful applicants take alternative career paths, as there does not appear to be a high intake of Scottish students into other UK institutions providing optometry education. This may be explained in part by the different arrangements relating to tuition fees that exist outside Scotland.

Data provided by Specsavers Graduate recruitment (Specsavers is one of the main providers of Pre –registration training in the UK) shows increased difficulty in filling graduate training places in remote and rural locations. There has been a sharp decline in the numbers of students relocating to the North of Scotland to take up these position and those who relocate tend to leave after the pre-reg year.

The College of Optometrists Optical Workforce Survey (2015) suggested that there are significant regional variations in the numbers of optical professionals around the UK, with higher concentrations in areas surrounding the universities. There is a tendency for graduates to stay close to where they studied and the demand for pre-registration training places is highest in these areas.
In previous years, Specsavers has implemented incentives for students to come to the area - Golden 100, Pro-Tenant relocation support, enhanced packages. These can help but still have not attracted enough students to fill the demand. Some stores have paid to become a Tier 2 sponsor, which helps short term but does not always help with retention.
Specsavers is implementing an early careers strategy for the region to drive more students into Optometry, which would mean that local students could be attending a local course to remain in their local area, which would benefit a great deal.
Employment opportunities
As mentioned in section A there is evidence from the College of Optometrists workforce survey of replacement demand due to the shifting demographics of the workforce, as well as increased requirement for Optometrists due to the demands of an aging population.

The average distance a person has to travel in Scotland to access optometric services is 3.4km, however in the Highlands and Islands this increases to 10Km or more. If the supply of optometrists to remote and rural areas does not significantly improve, there is a high risk that many of these areas will lose their service and access distances will significantly increase.

Data from industry shows a graduate employment rate of 98.9% for Optometrists. There are a significant number of optometrist vacancies currently in Scotland (50+) with a high proportion being in the North/ North East. The average time to fill an Optometrist vacancy in Scotland is currently 377 days. This situation is likely to worsen significantly as the workforce changes. It is estimated that we need two optometry graduates for every one we had 15 years ago to take into account the gender imbalance of the workforce and the trend for part time working. The intake into GCU has not increased to take into account this change in the workforce.

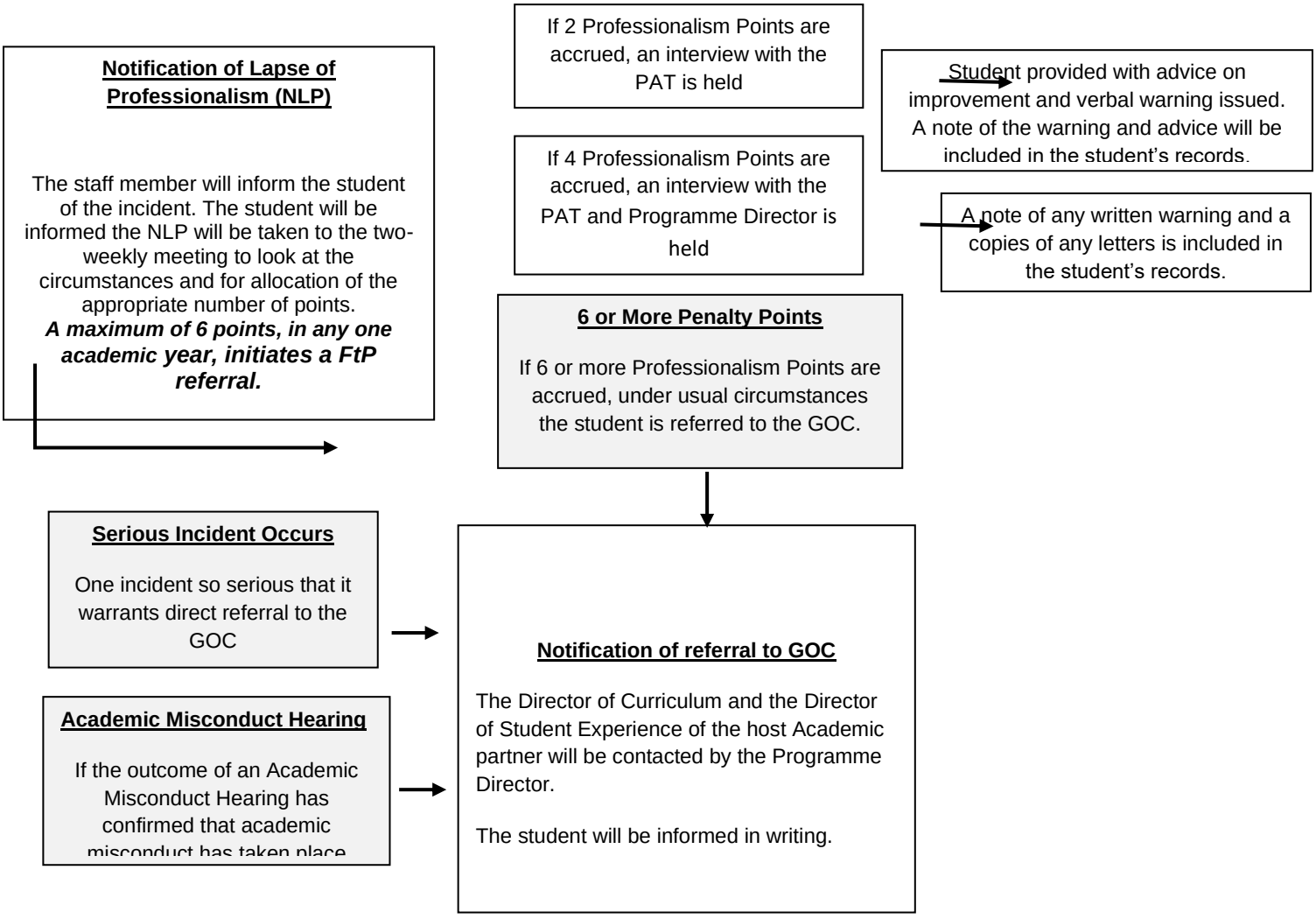
Overall comment

Working with Specsavers has provided a clear market demand case for this programme. There are unfilled vacancies for optometrists, graduate and student placement, which are likely to increase as demographics and working patterns of the current workforce change. There is only one university in Scotland offering optometry with five applications for each place. GCU recruits mainly from the Glasgow area and students want to stay within that location for placements and employment.

The increased distance to travel to access these services for people in rural and remote areas of our region and the sustainability of these services with the current recruitment problem would be useful messages to gain exposure for this degree at the University of the Highlands and Islands and to promote employment opportunities to potential students.

Appendix 4

Diagrammatic representation of Cause for Concern Procedures



Cause for Concern Procedure

Unprofessional behaviour or serious health problems can affect a student's ability to register with the GOC. Education providers must have procedures to:

d) identify as soon as possible students whose behaviour or health gives concern for the safety of patients or colleagues;
e) take action to help students to improve their behaviour, or make reasonable adjustments where necessary to take account of health issues;
f) make sure that students who are a risk to patients are identified as early as possible and appropriate action is taken to ensure that either deficiencies are corrected or the student is excluded.

Examples (illustrative not exhaustive):

- *Student's behaviour has harmed a patient or put a patient at risk of harm*
- *Student has shown deliberate or reckless disregard of professional and clinical responsibilities towards patients or other colleagues*
- *Student's health impairment is compromising patient safety*
- *Student has abused patient's trust or violated their autonomy or other fundamental rights.*
- *Student commits dishonesty, fraud or behaved in a way designed to mislead or harm others.*

1. Notification of Lapse in Professionalism (NLP)

2.1 If Notification of a Lapse in Professionalism (NLP) occurs, the PAT will inform the student of the incident. The student will be informed the NLP will be taken to the two-weekly meeting to look at the circumstances and for allocation of the appropriate number of points.

2.1.1 ***A maximum of 6 penalty points is allowed in any one academic year.*** If 6 or more Professionalism Points are accrued, under usual circumstances the student is referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel or possibly debarred.
2.1.2 If 2 Professionalism Points are accrued, an interview with the PAT is held. The student is provided with advice on improvement and a verbal warning is issued. A note of the warning and advice will be included in the student's records.
2.13 If 4 Professionalism Points are accrued, an interview with the PAT and Programme Director is held. A note of any written warning and a copies of any letters is included in the student's records.

Referral to the GOC regarding Fitness to Practice

A referral to the GOC regarding a student's fitness to practice will be made in the following circumstances:

- Student Behaviour

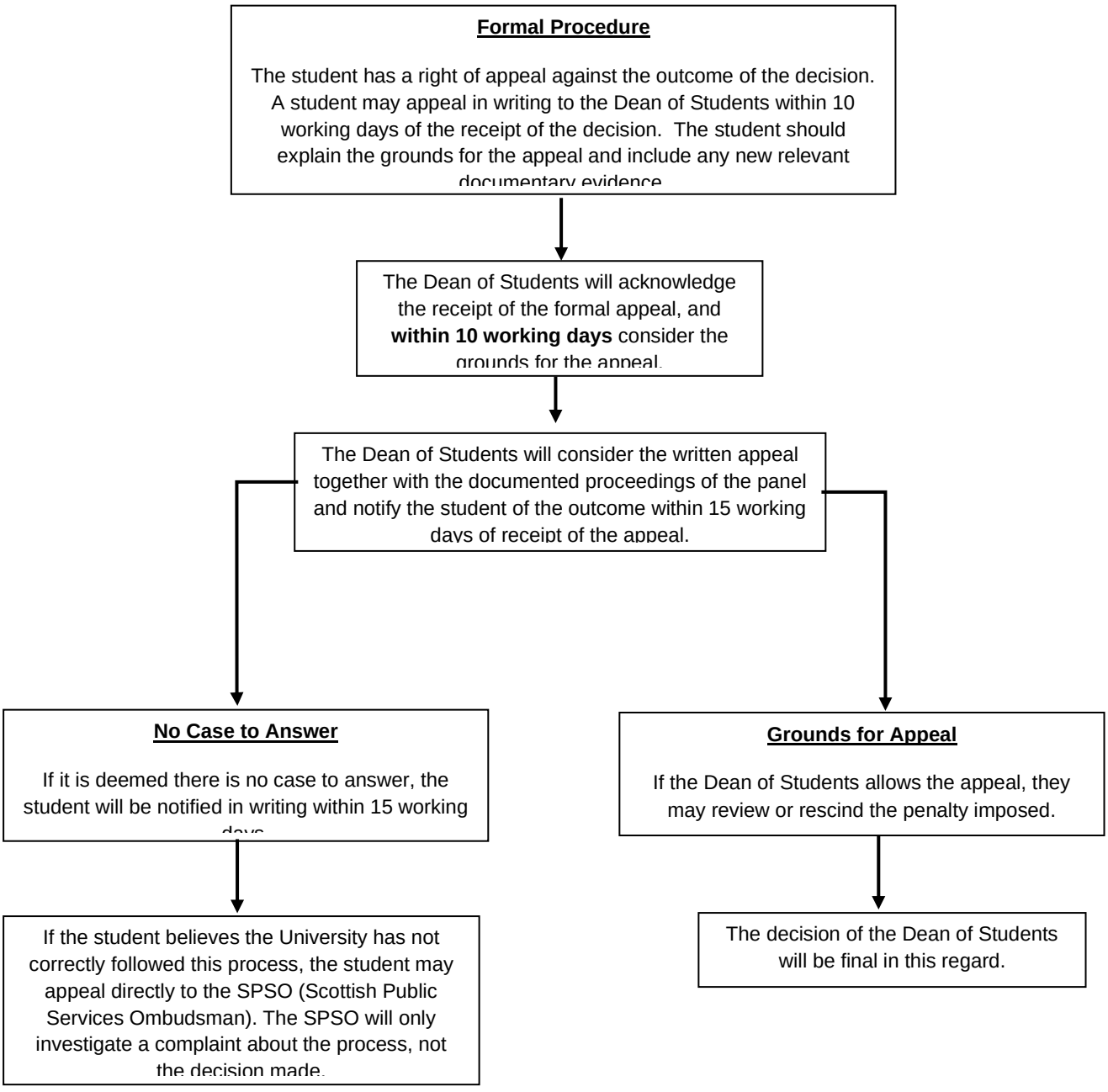
If 6 or more Professionalism Points are accrued.

- One incident so serious occurs that it warrants direct referral
- If the outcome of an Academic Misconduct Hearing has confirmed that academic misconduct has taken place (so serious as to call into question the student's character)

- Identification of a serious health problem which may affect a student's ability to register with the GOC.

All outcomes will be recorded in writing, the appropriate person(s) informed of the decision in order to monitor any further issues

Diagrammatic Representation of Causes for Concern Procedures Appeal Process in Cases of Referral to the GOC



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Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean

APPENDIX 5 - Assessment Schedule

See Excel spreadsheet attached