



Optometry Australia
Advanced Practice Recognition Program

Program Overview and Assessment Processes

Optometry Australia Credentialed Advanced Practitioner - Glaucoma (OACAP-G)



*Optometry Australia
Credentialed Advanced Practitioner*

Introduction

All therapeutically endorsed optometrists in Australia and New Zealand who are currently registered to practice with the Optometry Board of Australia are recognised as having met the Entry-level Competency Standards for Optometry which include diagnosing and managing patients with glaucoma.

Optometrists who have completed the Advanced Practice Recognition - Glaucoma program are recognised as having met the minimum requirements as set out in the Advanced Competency Standards in Glaucoma and have the required expertise necessary for managing more complex glaucoma cases in clinical practice.

Applying to become an advanced glaucoma practitioner through Optometry Australia's Advanced Practice Recognition Program involves several steps. First, candidates need to apply and gain admission to an application round. Depending on availability, this could be the next available round or a later one if there is a waitlist. It's a good idea to start preparing your application for each step early, so you're ready to submit when the intake round opens as we have a short period of time for each round.

For Steps 2 to 4, candidates can reattempt each item once, with feedback provided to support improvement. Finally, once Steps 2 to 4 are completed successfully, candidates proceed to Step 5, the Clinical Discussion Interview.

All candidates will need to provide a Statutory Declaration confirming that the evidence submitted is their own work and not that of another practitioner or generated by Artificial Intelligence, and that all case logs and case reports provided are true and correct. At the discretion of Optometry Australia, any component of the application can be checked for plagiarism.

Application and Assessment Process – Overview

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- Application**
 - Submit your application to become an Optometry Australia Credentialed Advanced Practitioner – Glaucoma (OACAP-G).
 - Admission**
 - We maintain a registry of applications and will admit up to 20 candidates per application round.
 - There are typically two intake rounds per year; you will be notified when each application round will be.
 - Intake Round 1: Usually starts in March, ends in June
 - Intake Round 2: Usually starts in August, ends in November
 - Get your submissions ready**
 - Once you have been accepted into an intake round, you will submit Steps 2 through to 4 for assessment by the Advanced Practice Recognition Assessor Teams. Please be sure to use all relevant templates provided for each element of Steps 2 to 4.
 - Attend your interview**
 - Upon successful completion of Steps 2 through 4 you will be notified and allocated a time slot to attend your Clinical Discussion Interview (Step 5).
 - Become credentialed**
 - If you have successfully completed Steps 2 through to 5 you can now use the title Optometry Australia Credentialed Advanced Practitioner – Glaucoma. You can now also use OACAP-G in your post-nominal title.
 - Maintain your title**
 - To maintain OACAP-G status, credentialed professionals must:
 - attend the annual APR Program Symposium or review the recording and join a one-hour drop-in session, both requiring a small attendance fee
 - maintain their membership to Optometry Australia and registration with the Optometry Board of Australia
 - manage at least 20 glaucoma patients per year, and provide evidence of this if requested by Optometry Australia

Steps to become Credentialed

Pre-requisites for Admission

Applicants must hold a recognised optometry qualification (with therapeutic endorsement) and demonstrate a **minimum of five years of clinical experience** in optometry. This experience must be gained within Australia, New Zealand, or a comparable jurisdiction.

While Optometry Australia expects that a minimum of five years' experience is generally required to build the necessary clinical expertise, exceptions may be considered for applicants who can demonstrate substantial glaucoma experience in a shorter timeframe. Applicants with career interruptions may also be considered and are encouraged to contact apr@optometry.org.au to discuss their circumstances.

Step 1. Application and Admission

To ensure a transparent and consistent approach, Optometry Australia has established a clear process for evaluating Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for the Advanced Practice Recognition (APR) Program. All candidates will apply using the same process, but recognition will be given for different types of optometry practice including clinicians, clinical educators and academia (for further information see Recognition of Prior Experience below).

1. Application Requirements

Each applicant must submit:

- A completed [application form](#).
- A current **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** detailing relevant clinical experience in glaucoma. Applicants may be asked to provide one or two professional referees who can verify their glaucoma-related clinical experience and referee reports may be requested as part of the EOI process.
- A **cover letter** outlining their clinical background and interest in the program.
- Evidence of registration with therapeutic endorsement and CPD records from the last CPD year.

2. Evaluation Method

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and in the order they are received against defined eligibility and experience criteria to ensure fairness and consistency (see table below) which includes verification of qualifications, clinical experience and glaucoma expertise. All applications are assessed by the

Advanced Practice Recognition (APR) Team, which consists of the APR Coordinator, the APR Manager, the Director of Education and Research and a subject matter expert in the area of APR credentialling.

Evaluation (Prerequisite) Criteria	Evidence Required
Optometry qualification which allows registration with Ahpra with therapeutic endorsement	Degree or academic transcript
Minimum 5 years' experience as a practicing optometrist (or equivalent)	CV and professional references, on request
Demonstrated advanced experience in glaucoma care	CV and cover letter
Active member of Optometry Australia	Optometry Australia membership number noted in the cover letter
Commitment to professional conduct and continuing professional development	Copy of current Ahpra registration and CPD records
Committed to completing the program over a 4-month period (part-time study options are available on a case-by-case basis)	Statement in cover letter

All supporting documentation (e.g., transcripts, registration, CPD certificates) must be submitted in PDF format and may be subject to verification with the issuing institution or registration authority, if required.

Applications meeting the prerequisite eligibility criteria are progressed to the next stage of the APR process.

3. Selection Process and Timing

Applicants are encouraged to apply early, as places in each intake round are limited. Eligible candidates not accepted for the current round will be placed on a waitlist and may be contacted if a place becomes available or automatically considered in future application rounds.

4. Governance and Oversight

The **APR Team** is responsible for managing the EOI and selection processes, ensuring alignment with the program's objectives. Oversight is maintained through internal review and continuous quality improvement processes to ensure the program remains contemporary and fair. Team members must declare any potential conflicts of interest in relation to applicants before assessment.

5. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Optometry Australia is committed to equitable access to the APR Program and to culturally safe and accessible eye care. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander optometrists, applicants from rural and remote areas and other minority and historically excluded backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to support applicants with non-traditional career pathways or career interruptions.

6. Privacy and Data Storage

The APR Team will handle and store information and documents provided by candidates according to [Optometry Australia's Privacy Policy](#) and Optometry Australia's *IT Digital Policy*

Documents provided by candidates throughout the APR assessment process will be stored:

- for as long as credentialling is maintained, OR.
- for up to 5 years in the event credentialling ceases.

Recordings of the Clinical Discussion Interviews will be saved and stored for 12 months from the date of the interview / from the closing date of the corresponding assessment round.

For additional information on candidates' obligations in relations to privacy, please refer to the APR in Glaucoma Terms and Conditions, clause 7 on page 9, as well as the instructions included in the document titled *Privacy and Patient Confidentiality, Academic Integrity and Use of Artificial Intelligence Policy*.

7. Feedback, Grievances and Appeals on Application Process

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the EOI via email. Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback and, where appropriate, reapply in subsequent rounds.

Grievances and Appeals regarding eligibility or process will be reviewed using the processes set out in the *Grievance and Appeals Policy*.

Step 2. Recognition of Prior Experience and Case Log Submission

Each applicant will need to submit evidence to demonstrate that they have the necessary clinical experience working with glaucoma patients. A points system has been put in place to allow candidates various options for demonstrating their prior experience in managing glaucoma patients to meet the requirements of APR Glaucoma. Each candidate must achieve 60 points (see table below for details).

Option	Points
Case Logs* (all candidates must submit a case log of at least 20 glaucoma patients)	
Case log	Minimum of 20 points, up to a maximum of 60 points 1 point per patient case submitted as part of the case log. A minimum of 20 cases must be submitted. Twenty percent (rounded to the nearest whole number) of cases submitted must include full details, while the remaining cases can be completed using the abbreviated form. Specific instructions are included in the Case Log Assessment Instructions.
Other	
Advanced Certificate in Glaucoma: Australian College of Optometry Advanced Certificate in Glaucoma	20 points *Must have been completed within the last 10 years.
Author of a peer-reviewed publication in the field of Glaucoma	5 points *Must have been completed within the last 10 years. *Applicants can claim up to a maximum of 20 points in this category
Presenter for a presentation at a conference in the field of glaucoma	5 points *Must have been completed within the last 10 years *Applicants can claim up to a maximum of 20 points
Author of a poster in the field of glaucoma	5 points *Must have been completed within the last 10 years. *Applicants can claim up to a maximum of 20 points
Optometric educator in glaucoma The educator will need to provide a synopsis of the course objectives, lessons planned, and relevant literature incorporated into the course that relate to glaucoma.	Variable points. Please contact the Optometry Australia APR Team for individual point allocation.

Candidates must submit a **minimum of 20 glaucoma cases as part of the case log**, up to a maximum of 60 cases (for 60 points). The candidate can also provide additional evidence (see 'Other' section in the table above) to demonstrate prior experience in glaucoma diagnosis and management which will be considered as part of the assessment process. The prior experience options have been weighted according to their contribution to the development of clinical expertise.

Further instructions for the case log

Each candidate must complete and submit their case log using the designated template and according to the instructions provided. Each case must clearly indicate that the candidate was the primary clinician responsible for the patient's management.

When completing the case log, candidates should:

1. Demonstrate **active involvement in clinical decision-making** throughout each case, showing evidence of management reasoning and outcomes.
2. Include the **diagnosis and disease severity** where appropriate.
3. Provide details of **baseline (BL) and target intraocular pressure (IOP)**, including justification for treatment decisions when commencing or modifying therapy.
4. In **co-management cases**, clearly distinguish the candidate's own role and decisions from those of any ophthalmologist(s) or other healthcare professionals involved.

Assessment of case logs should prioritise the quality of submissions, including depth of reflection, clarity of clinical reasoning, and demonstrated ability to manage complex cases.

Applicants will be expected to submit a Statutory Declaration stating that the case log represents a true representation of their recent clinical practice. Random audits may be performed to ensure that the case logs presented comprises real patients treated by the candidate.

Candidates are asked to refer to the *Case Log Instructions and Marking Rubric* document for further detail about how to complete this assessment and for an outline of the marking rubric.

Step 3. Clinical Case Reports

Each candidate must submit two case reports of up to 3,000 words each, with each case report based on a different glaucoma phenotype. Case reports should demonstrate long-term follow-up care and not just a single visit.

These detailed case reports are the primary way in which candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge and experience across the competencies outlined in the Advanced Competency Standards in Glaucoma document. Candidates are expected to refer to both the *Clinical Case Report Instructions and Marking Rubric*

document and Advanced Competency Standards documents when completing their two case reports to ensure that they are addressing all areas of the Advanced Competency Standards for glaucoma.

Where the case reports do not sufficiently address the competency requirements, candidates may be asked to supply additional information or submit another case study.

A template has been developed showing the structure to follow and suggesting word limits for each section.

Step 4. Leadership Competencies

This assessment has two components – candidates must complete both parts to successfully complete this assessment. Detailed instructions can be found in the *Leadership Assessment Instructions and Marking Rubric* document.

Part A

Candidates should submit a portfolio that demonstrates their development of professional identity as a leader in optometry-led glaucoma care. This portfolio will form an organised record of their experience in glaucoma leadership activities via a collection of documents which demonstrate the emerging leadership actions they have undertaken.

A template has been developed to support candidates in gathering information and recording their reflection supported by appropriate references.

Part B

As part of the Clinical Discussion Interview (see below) candidates will be asked to provide a short (no more than 5 minutes) presentation summarising their leadership contribution and model-of-care outcomes. This will be followed by a Q&A session with the assessors (no more than 5 minutes). All candidates will be required to participate in a clinical discussion interview with two assessors.

Step 5. Clinical Discussion Interview

The purpose of the clinical discussion is to verify the information provided in application steps 1 through 4, address any gaps or areas where the assessor may require further clarification, and facilitate discussion of a glaucoma case that reflects advanced-level clinical practice.

The interview structure will consist of

- the candidate's leadership presentation (10min),
- general questions about the candidate's experience in glaucoma care (10min),
- specific questions to address any gaps arising from the application information (20min), and

- a case-based discussion (30min), during which candidates will be expected to draw on relevant evidence-based literature and demonstrate the ability to make clear, best-practice management decisions.

The clinical discussion interview will take approximately 75 minutes and be conducted virtually, via Zoom or Microsoft TEAMS.

The session will be recorded. Recordings will be kept for 12 months from the date of the interview to allow for moderation of this assessment if required.

Please refer to the *Clinical Discussion Interview Instructions and Marking Rubric* document for further information on how to prepare for the Interview and an outline of the marking rubric.

Academic Integrity

Optometry Australia is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity across its community. Behaviours that undermine academic integrity include:

- Plagiarism: Submitting work that is not your own without appropriately acknowledging, citing or referencing the original source of the work.
- Recycling or resubmitting work: If you wish to resubmit work that has already been recognised through the Recognition of Prior Experience points system, you should contact the APR team to discuss.
- Fabricating information
- Collusion: involves engaging in illegitimate cooperation with one or more other students to complete assessable work.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

“Artificial Intelligence” is an umbrella term that encompasses a spectrum of technologies, from spelling and grammar checkers to sophisticated, specialist-use systems including large language models such as ChatGPT.

As an Advanced Practitioner in glaucoma, there is a need to understand and evidence what candidates are capable of without the use of AI and obtain assurance that optometrists who have been awarded the OACAP-G credential have achieved the program outcomes. Therefore, assessment tasks for Advanced Practice Recognition require candidates to demonstrate their own learning, and it is not permissible to present AI-generated work as their own or to try and disguise the use of AI.

Permitted use of AI in Advanced Practice Recognition

In APR, candidates may use AI to the extent of:

- standard editing and referencing functions in the software you use to complete your assessment, for example spell-checking and grammar functions (e.g. in Word and Grammarly) and reference management software (e.g. Endnote, RefWorks or Zotero).
- for brainstorming and creating structures.

If you have used an AI tool or technology while completing any assessment item for APR glaucoma, an acknowledgement of how you have used AI tools or technologies is required. This declaration should include:

- the specific AI tools or technologies used
- what you used the AI tools or technologies for in the process of completing your assessment
- the prompts and outputs you used in the AI tools or technologies (included as an appendix in your assessment)
- an explanation of how the output from the AI tools or technologies was used in your work.

Moderation

Moderation is fundamental to high-quality assessment practice. It ensures that assessors apply standards consistently, make comparable judgements across candidates, and uphold the integrity of the Advanced Practice Recognition (APR) program. Moderation processes for all APR assessment items include:

- Pre-assessment moderation, where assessment tasks, criteria, and rubrics are reviewed to ensure clarity, validity, and alignment with competency standards.
- Point-of-assessment (summative) moderation, where assessors' application of the rubric is checked to ensure consistent interpretation and use of the performance standards.

All assessments in which a candidate has *not met* the required standard will undergo secondary moderation through blind marking, where a second assessor independently reviews the submission without access to the original assessor's comments or decision.

If the original assessor and the second examiner reach different judgements, the following process will apply the APR Manager will review both sets of comments and scores and their judgement will be used to determine the final assessment outcome. All moderation decisions, including reasons for any changes to the original outcome, will be documented to support transparency and continuous improvement of the assessment system.

Re-attempts for failed assessment items

In the event of a failed assessment item, the candidate will have one re-attempt (re-submission) and will be provided with detailed feedback to consider before the re-attempt. If the candidate is not successful on the second attempt, they will need to re-apply at the next intake round.

Grievances and Appeals

The *Grievance and Appeals Policy and Processes* document outlines Optometry Australia's framework for resolving grievances and appeals within the Advanced Practice Recognition (APR) program. Candidates may raise concerns related to assessment outcomes, programme administration, communication, procedural issues, bias, or staff conduct. Grievances can be addressed informally through discussion with the APR team, or formally by submitting a written complaint. All matters are handled according to the principles of procedural fairness, confidentiality, timeliness, impartiality, and transparency, with candidates reassured that they will not experience disadvantage for raising a concern.

If a grievance is not resolved through the formal process, candidates may lodge an appeal with the CEO of Optometry Australia (or a delegated Director if conflict of interest arises). Appeals must demonstrate valid grounds, such as procedural error, material mistake of fact, new evidence, or lack of procedural fairness. All grievances and appeals are reviewed by individuals who were not involved in the original decision, and written outcomes, including the reasons for decisions, are provided within specified timeframes.

Flexible Study Option

To support diverse learner needs, the program allows for flexible study to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Participants may apply in one intake round and, by negotiation, complete some assessments at a later date, within a maximum time frame of 24 months. This flexible approach is intended to accommodate practising professionals and others balancing work, family, or community commitments. Offering a part-time option reflects a learner-centred and inclusive approach consistent with principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, ensuring the program remains accessible and supportive of continued workforce participation and development.

Ongoing Requirements to Maintain Credentialling

To retain the status and title of Optometry Australia Credentialed Advanced Practitioner – Glaucoma (OACAP-G), credentialed professionals must participate in an annual symposium day (optional during the year of credentialling; registration fee applies). This involves up to six hours of lectures or grand rounds, emphasising case-based learning and literature reviews. These sessions will be facilitated by credentialed practitioners and may also include ophthalmologists. The event will be recorded for those unable to attend, with the requirement that practitioners review the recording and participate in a separate one-hour facilitated drop-in discussion session.

In addition, credentialed optometrists must maintain their membership to Optometry Australia and registration with the Optometry Board of Australia.

All optometrists are expected to maintain their 30 hours of CPD (including 10T hours) to ensure compliance with Ahpra requirements. OACAP-G optometrists are not required to complete any additional CPD to maintain their credentialling, although they must see a **minimum of 20 glaucoma patients per calendar year** and provide evidence of this if requested by Optometry Australia.

Credentialed optometrists on a year-long leave of absence may apply for exemptions from some of the requirements for maintaining their credentialling by seeking a formal exemption from the APR team and these requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Should practitioners fail to meet any of the above requirements, the APR team will work with the individual practitioner to agree on an appropriate course of action. If the agreed upon steps are not undertaken and completed in a timely manner, OACAP-G credentialling may be suspended, revoked or cancelled. For more information, please see the OACAP-G *Terms and Conditions*, section 4.4 (page 5-6) and section 8 (pages 10-11).

Program Alignment with Emerging Professional and Workforce Needs

To ensure the Advanced Practice Recognition (APR) program remains informed and responsive to emerging professional developments and workforce needs, Optometry Australia maintains a continuous quality improvement framework. An internal APR team oversees governance of the program, with a designated team member monitoring alerts across key optometry and ophthalmology journals to identify new evidence and publications in areas of advanced practice. These developments are reviewed and, where relevant, incorporated into the APR framework to maintain alignment with current best practice.

The program was designed to benefit both the profession and the public by supporting safe, high-quality, and advanced clinical care. It also acknowledges the importance of career trajectory planning within the optometry

workforce, enabling practitioners to evolve in step with Australia’s changing eye care model and future workforce needs.

Acknowledgments

Optometry Australia would like to acknowledge the contributions of all individuals, groups and organisations who have played a critical role in the development of the Advanced Practice Recognition Program, including members of the Advanced Practice Oversight Committee and the Glaucoma Clinical Advisory Committee for their strategic guidance and valuable feedback.

Optometry Australia - The influential voice for Optometry

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Updated December 2025 | ©2025 Optometry Australia (17 004 622 431)

