



WHAT IS AN OPTICAL DISPENSER?

Optical Dispensers are responsible for interpreting and dispensing prescriptions for eye glasses and other optical appliances. The optical dispenser must have knowledge of the various elements of a prescription and an understanding of the uses of the single vision and multifocal lens types available. Frame selection, measurement, adjustment, fashion advice and occupational requirements are all the function of an optical dispenser. Client contact forms a large part of the daily work, though a thorough grounding in workshop techniques is also required.

Prospective students should have an interest in science, and a desire for a professional career dealing with the public. An interest in sales and an awareness of fashion are also desirable.

SUBJECT OUTLINES

Optical Theory:	Basic understanding of light, geometrical optics, lens behaviour, image formation, lens systems, mirrors and optical instruments
Ophthalmic Lenses I & II:	Spectacle lenses, prisms, optics of the eye, ametropia, spectacle lens design, protective lenses, and tinted lenses.
Optical Workshop:	Manufacture of lenses, glazing plastic and metal frames, plastic lenses, frame repairs, tinting, toughening, machinery management, checking.
Mathematics for Optical Dispensing:	Basic arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and trigonometry with emphasis on solving problems found in the theory subjects of this course.
Optical Dispensing Practice:	Thorough investigation of properties of lens and frame materials and designs, applications of lenses, facial measurements, bifocal and multifocal measurements, lens analysis, frame fitting and adjusting, cosmetic aspects, ordering and checking procedures.
Visual Physiology:	Basic anatomy and physiology of the body structure and function of the eye, visual acuity, colour vision, dark adaptation, disorders and diseases of the eye, to a depth sufficient to help the dispenser understand the contribution his/her work makes to the patient.
Contact Lens Practice:	History and development of contact lenses, materials in use today, handling, cleaning and sterilising lenses, insertion and removal, legal aspects of contact lens practice by dispensers.
Introduction to Ophthalmic Optics:	An intense familiarising course on trade jargon, lens and frame types, prescription ordering, telephone procedure. Designed to help the new recruit feel at home in the optical industry
Vocational Communication:	Interpersonal communication, group interaction, addressing small groups, use of telephones, letter writing, business communication, interviewing, job application.
Practice Management:	An introduction to retailing, merchandising, advertising, personnel management, introduction to book keeping, personal presentation and patient management.