

Careers in optometry



Often referred to as opticians, optometrists are trained to examine the eyes, detecting abnormalities, defects in vision and ocular diseases. They can also identify signs of injury and problems with a person's general health such as diabetes.

What do optometrists do?

Optometrists perform assessments on patients of all ages, checking their optical prescription (standard of vision) and eye health. As part of their role they can provide clinical advice, prescribe spectacles or contact lenses, and where necessary refer patients to other professionals. Optometrists are expected to have a high level of expertise in ocular anatomy, and diseases and maintain a life-long up-to-date knowledge of best current practices.

Where do optometrists work?

Optometrists work across a range of settings:

- community - optical practice
- hospitals
- home visits
- carrying out research
- education.

What skills do I need to be a good optometrist?

- excellent communication and decision-making skills
- good teamwork skills as well as the ability to work independently
- patient, friendly, and enjoy helping people
- have a keen interest in problem-solving
- an attention to detail and hold an interest in science.

How do I become an optometrist?

Step one: to become an optometrist you need to have a degree in (BSC) Optometry, which is available at [Cardiff University](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk). Information on other degree programmes can be found on the [General Optical Council \(GOC\)](https://www.goc.org.uk) website.

Step two: once graduated you are then required to undertake a pre-registration placement (typically 12 months) which involves a period of supervised practice to test your competencies. On successful completion of both the placement and the assessments, you are then able to register as a qualified optometrist with the GOC.

How much do optometrists earn?

Depending on the employer and location the starting salary for a newly qualified optometrist is typically around £25,000. With experience this can range from £28,000 to in excess of £65,000. [Prospects \(2022\)](https://www.prospects.ac.uk).

Want to find out more? Visit:

Careersville: <https://careersville.heiw.wales>

NHS Wales Careers: www.nhswalescareers.com



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