OPTOMETRY EXAMINING BOARD OF CANADA

BUREAU DES EXAMINATEURS EN OPTOMÉTRIE DU CANADA

OEBC EXAM BLUEPRINT

Entry-to-Practice Exam

2026

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OEBC Entry-to-Practice Exam Blueprint

The competency model outlines the essential knowledge, skills, and behaviours for optometrists. Exam components assess entry-level abilities needed for optometry practice.

The exam blueprint:

- ensures the entry-to-practice exam covers key aspects of safe, effective patient care in Canada as required by the Provincial Optometry Regulatory Authorities
- outlines the exam structure by domain and practice area (see Table 1)
- details in the Topic Areas section
- informs candidates on what is tested and area weightings
- helps OEBC create consistent exams over time
- ensures every candidate can show the skills required for safe and effective optometry practice

Table 1 – Case Selection by Prime Practice Area

National Competency Model Domains and *Practice Areas*		Written Cases	OSCE Stations
1.0	**Clinical Expertise**	**88%**	**78%**
	Assessment (1.1-1.3)	*31%*	*22%*
	Diagnosis & Planning (1.4-1.6)	*28%*	*13%*
	Patient Management (1.7-1.11)	*29%*	*22%*
	Technical Skills & Procedures (1.12-1.17)	-	*24%*
2.0	**Communication**	-	*
3.0	**Collaboration**	5%	5%
4.0	**Patient-centered Care**	3%	12%
5.0	**Professionalism**	-	*
6.0	**Scholarship**	2%	-
7.0	**Practice Management**	2%	-
8.0	**Cultural Competence**	-	-

Note: cases and stations are selected based on the primary practice area; additional competencies may be assessed within a single case or station.
* competencies measured as part of the cases

Examination design involves sampling activities that are representative of the relevant competencies. OEBC selects written exam cases and OSCE stations in accordance with Blueprint requirements, emphasizing major case areas and the Topic Matrix. Cases encompass competencies from several domains, so not every blueprint item appears on each exam. OEBC structures each exam to maintain balance in the conditions and skills assessed.

Examination Design and Scoring Framework

The **OEBC Entry-to-practice Examination** is designed to assess whether candidates demonstrate **safe, independent entry-to-practice performance** consistent with national standards for optometric practice.

Examination content, case selection, and scoring are grounded in the **National Competency Model**, which defines the essential knowledge, skills, and behaviours required for professional optometric practice in Canada. The Blueprint outlines how competencies are **sampled across written cases and OSCE stations** to support balanced, reliable, and defensible assessment.

Performance on the OSCE is evaluated using **multiple complementary scoring tools**, each mapped to the National Competency Model and serving a distinct purpose:

- **Checklist items** assess completion of required and safety-critical actions
- **Rubric domains** assess the quality of observable professional behaviours

- **Global Rating Scale (GRS) judgments** provide an overall, station-level determination of readiness for independent practice

These tools are applied independently and together to ensure that examination decisions reflect both **what candidates do** and **how well they perform**, in alignment with entry-to-practice expectations.

National Competency Model

OEBC maintains the National Competency Model on behalf of the Provincial Optometry Regulatory Authorities. The Model serves as a foundational framework for optometry in Canada, outlining the essential knowledge, skills, and behaviours required for effective professional practice. By defining clear domains, key competencies, enabling competencies, and entry-to-practice indicators, the model ensures that both academic programs and assessment tools are aligned with the realities of contemporary optometric care. This structured approach supports the development, evaluation, and maintenance of high standards across the profession, promoting consistent, high-quality patient outcomes nationwide.

Competencies for Optometry

The competency model encompasses all competencies required for professional optometric practice and is structured across three primary levels. At the domain level, it defines broad areas of practice, while key competencies highlight how optometrists apply their knowledge and skills within these domains. Enabling competencies serve as specific sub-competencies that support key competencies through targeted knowledge, skills, and actions. Together, these levels provide a comprehensive foundation for academic programs, quality assurance, and professional assessments. For examination purposes, OEBC introduces a fourth level—entry-to-practice indicators—which are measurable activities or behaviours that demonstrate entry-level competence and are used to assess candidates during exams.

Relationship Between the Blueprint, Competencies, and Scoring Tools

The **National Competency Model** is the foundational framework for the **OEBC Entry-to-practice Examination**. All Blueprint elements—including exam structure, case selection, scoring tools, and standard-setting—are aligned with this Model.

Candidates are **not scored directly on competencies**. Instead, the National Competency Model informs how competence is assessed through **observable behaviours and actions** demonstrated during the examination:

- **Blueprint domains and practice areas** guide case and station selection
- **Checklist items** map to competencies requiring reliable demonstration of essential actions
- **Rubric domains** represent stable, observable areas of professional practice derived from enabling competencies
- **Global Rating Scale (GRS) judgments** reflect integrated, station-level determinations of entry-to-practice readiness

This approach ensures that the examination reflects **real-world professional practice**, maintains **national consistency**, and supports **transparent, defensible pass/fail decisions**.

Topic Matrix

In addition to selecting exam content based on the listed domains, a topic matrix helps ensure that key topics are appropriately covered in each exam part.

OSCE stations might combine multiple topics and can be counted in multiple topic categories.

Table 2 - Exam Topic Matrix Targets

Topics	Written	OSCE
1. Refractive	-	5%
2. Accommodative	5%	7%
3. Oculomotor	12%	12%
4. Sensory Integrative	12%	7%
5. Ocular Disorders	15%	15%
6. Systemic Disorders	17%	7%
7. Technical Skills and Procedures	20%	22%
8. Laser Procedures	-	-
9. Other	up to 9%	up to 14%
Target Range Within Each Topic	**± 3%**	**± 7%**

Table 3 - Exam Subtopic Details

Subtopics

1. Refractive
1.0 General
1.1 Optics
  1.1.1 Dioptric Defects
1.2 Myopia
1.3 Hyperopia
1.4 Astigmatism
1.5 Surgery/Orthokeratology
1.6 Keratoconus
1.7 Low Vision

2. Accommodative
2.1 Presbyopia
2.2 Insufficiency
2.3 Infacility
2.4 Spasm

3. Oculomotor
3.1 Ocular Motility
3.2 Strabismus
  3.2.1 Esotropia
  3.2.2 Excess
3.3 Convergence
3.4 Divergence
3.5 Hyperphoria/ Alternating Vertical
3.6 Extraocular movement Palsy
  3.6.1 6th Nerve Palsy
3.7 Nystagmus
  3.7.1 Albinism

4. Sensory Integrative
4.0 General
4.1 Light Sensation
4.2 Perception
  4.2.1 Motion
  4.2.2 Form/Motion
  4.2.3 Form/Motion/Temporal
  4.2.4 Form/Motion/Aging
  4.2.5 Space/Form/Motion
4.3 Amblyopia
4.4 Adapt/ Aniseikonia
4.5 Near Vision Path/CVA/visual field
4.6 Headache
4.7 Colour Vision
4.8 Directions of Gaze: Superior/Eccentric/Fixation/Arcuate
4.8.1 Monofixation

5. Ocular Disorders

5.1 Optic Nerve
- 5.1.1 Glaucoma
- 5.1.2 Optic Neuritis
- 5.1.3 Papilledema
- 5.1.4 Toxic Optic Neuropathy

5.2 Posterior Pole Atrophy
- 5.2.1 Coats Disease
- 5.2.2 Drusen
- 5.2.3 Macular degeneration
- 5.2.4 Albinism
- 5.2.5 Retinitis Pigmentosa
- 5.2.6 Retinal Pigment Epithelial Detachment

5.3 Conjunctiva
- 5.3.1 Pterygium

5.4 Cornea
- 5.4.1 Abrasion
- 5.4.2 Keratitis
- 5.4.3 Pterygium

5.5 Anterior Chamber /Angle/Intraocular Pressure
- 5.5.1 Glaucoma

5.6 Lens
- 5.6.1 Cataract

5.7 Pupils

5.8 Lacrimal
- 5.8.1 Lacrimal Duct

5.9 Anterior Uvea
- 5.9.1 Albinism
- 5.9.2 Uveitis

5.10 Peripheral Vision / Full Vision
- 5.10.1 Atrophy
- 5.10.2 Retinitis Pigmentosa

5.11 Sclera/Episclera

5.12 Adnexa/Orbit/Extraocular Muscles

6. Systemic Disorders

6.0 General

6.1 Circulation
- 6.1.1 Hypertension
- 6.1.2 Atherosclerosis
- 6.1.3 Carotid Artery
- 6.1.4 Central Retinal Vein Occlusion
- 6.1.5 Other

6.3 Brain/Nerve

6.6 Endocrine
- 6.6.1 Diabetes
- 6.6.2 Metabolic S
- 6.6.3 Thyroid
- 6.6.4 Pituitary

6.7 Immune
- 6.7.1 Lupus
- 6.7.2 Temporal Artery
- 6.7.3 Ankylosing spondylitis
- 6.7.4 Myasthenia Gravis
- 6.7.5 Multiple Sclerosis
- 6.7.5 Acquired Retinoschisis
- 6.7.5 Sarcoidosis
- 6.7.5 Sjogren

6.8 Urinary

6.9 Respiration

6.14 Infectious

6.15 Congenital/ Hereditary
- 6.15.1 Down Syndrome

6.16 Oncology

7. Technical Skills and Procedures

7.1 Tonometry

7.2 Gonioscopy

7.3 Retinoscopy

7.4 Slit Lamp Fundus Biomicroscopy

7.5 Binocular Indirect Ophthalmoscopy (BIO)

8. Laser Procedures

8.1 Yttrium Aluminum Garnet Laser Posterior Capsulotomy

8.2 Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty

8.3 Laser Peripheral Iridotomy

9. Other

9.1 Ethics

9.2 Contact Lens

9.3 Adaptation to glasses

9.4 Radiation
- 9.4.1 Kidney

9.5 Artificial Intelligence

Note: Technical skills and procedures referenced in the OEBC Entry-to-Practice Examination are drawn from the broader set of diagnostic, therapeutic, laser, injection, and minor surgical procedures defined in the National Competency Model.

In the written examination, candidates may be assessed on their knowledge of indications, contraindications, risks, interpretation, and clinical application of a wide range of tests and procedures as reflected in the National Competency Model.

In the OSCE, technical skills and procedures are sampled from this broader set for direct performance assessment, using stations designed to support reliable, defensible evaluation.

The Blueprint identifies which procedures may be assessed through performance-based OSCE stations. At the same time, the OEBC Examination Scoring Tools guide explains how OSCE performance is evaluated using checklist items, rubric domains, and Global Rating Scale judgments, all of which are aligned with national competencies.

The absence of a specific technical skill or procedure from the OSCE section of the Blueprint does not imply that it falls outside the national scope of optometric practice or that it may not be referenced in the written examination.

Candidate Guidance and Supporting Documents

This section highlights key OEBC documents that provide additional context on how examination content is structured and how candidate performance is evaluated.

This Blueprint outlines what is assessed on the OEBC Entry-to-Practice Examination and how content is weighted across domains and practice areas. It is intended to support transparency, consistency, and understanding of examination design.

Candidates are encouraged to consult the OEBC Preparing for the Exam webpage for up-to-date guidance on exam format, preparation resources, and study tools for both the Written Exam and the OSCE.

In particular:

- The OEBC Examination Scoring Tools guide explains how checklist items, rubric domains, and the Global Rating Scale are used together to evaluate OSCE performance.
- The National Competency Model provides the national framework that underpins examination design, scoring tools, and entry-to-practice expectations.

Reviewing these documents together can help candidates:

- Understand how daily clinical behaviours align with national standards
- Use clinical placements more effectively for preparation
- Interpret examination expectations in the context of professional practice rather than isolated tasks