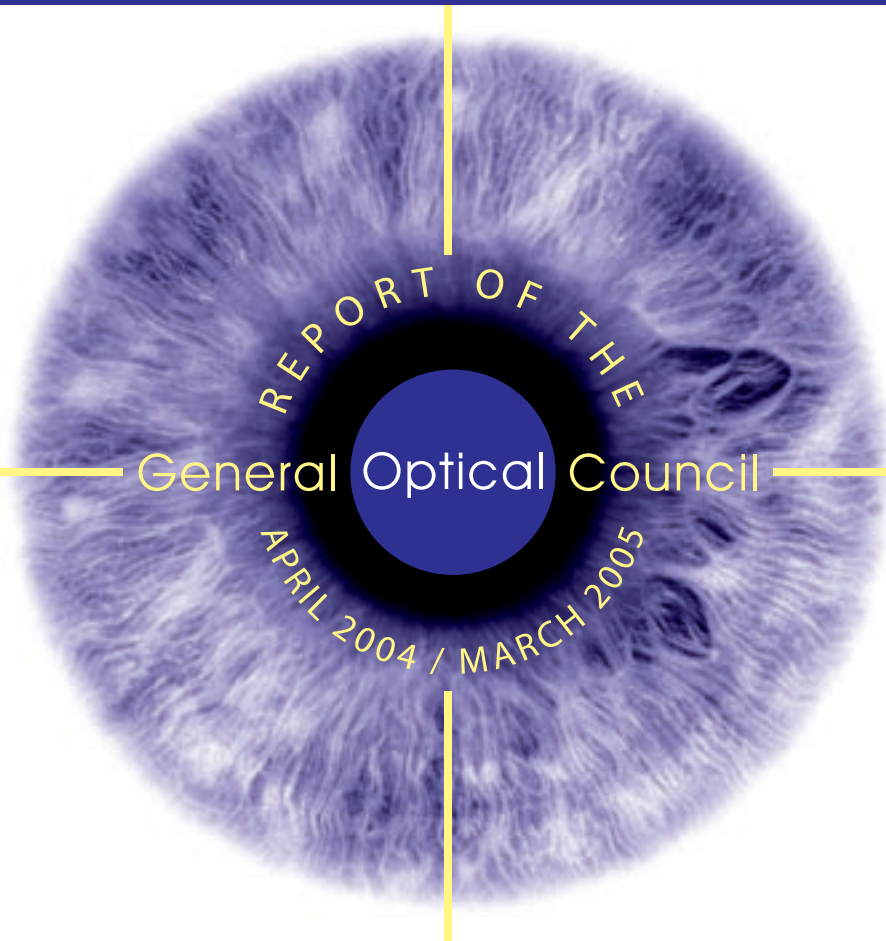


GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL



General Optical Council

REPORT OF THE

APRIL 2004 / MARCH 2005

THE REGULATORY BODY FOR OPTOMETRISTS AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INDIVIDUAL REGISTRANTS

Patients* must be able to trust Dispensing Opticians and Optometrists with their wellbeing. To justify that trust you, as a professional, have a duty to maintain a good standard of practice and care and to show respect for all aspects of human life. In particular as a Dispensing Optician or Optometrist you must:

1. Make the care of your patient your first and continuing concern;
2. Treat every patient politely and considerately;
3. Respect patients' dignity and privacy;
4. Listen to patients and respect their views;
5. Give patients information in a way they can understand and make them aware of the options available;
6. Maintain adequate patients' records;
7. Respect the rights of patients to be fully involved in decisions about their care;
8. Keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date;
9. Recognise the limits of your professional competence;
10. Be honest and trustworthy;
11. Ensure that your financial and commercial dealings do not compromise the interests of the patient;
12. Respect and protect confidential information;
13. Make sure that your personal beliefs do not prejudice your patients' care;
14. Act quickly to protect patients from risk if you have good reason to believe that you or a colleague may not be fit to practise;
15. Avoid abusing your position as a Dispensing Optician or Optometrist;
16. Work with colleagues in the ways that best serve patients' interests;
17. Register with and maintain your registration with the GOC.

In all these matters you must never discriminate unfairly against your patients or colleagues and you must always be prepared to justify your actions to them.

* The use of the word "patient" includes reference to a customer.

*This report covers the period
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005*

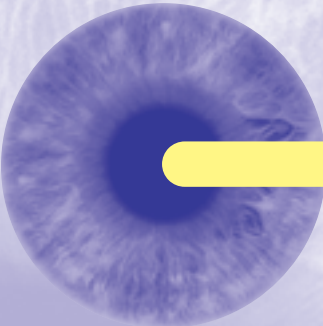


41 Harley Street London W1G 8DJ

tel: 020 7580 3898 Fax: 020 7436 3525

email: goc@optical.org website: www.optical.org

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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

by Rosie Varley, Chairman of Council

The year documented in this Annual Report has been enormously significant in the history of the General Optical Council. It culminated in the passing of the Opticians Act 1989 (Amendment) Order 2005 on 22 March. This brought the GOC's statutory powers up to date and made them consistent with modern clinical care and the environments in which the optical professions and businesses now operate. The passing of this Order and the making of the supporting Rules complete many years of work and represent a considerable achievement for the Council and its staff. Each section and sub-section is the result of many hours of drafting, consultation, re-drafting and further consultation. I am very grateful to the registrants and our colleague optical bodies for their contribution and forbearance in this protracted and exacting process.

Ours was the first of a series of Orders which will modernise the powers of the bodies which regulate the different health professions. Our success was only made possible by the full support of the other optical bodies and assistance from the Department of Health, and we extend our thanks to them.

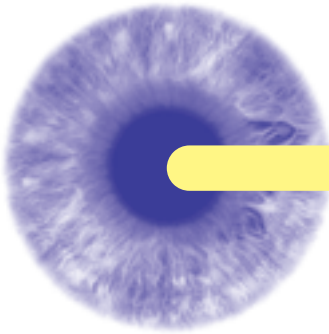
The arena within which the GOC operates is constantly changing. The work of the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence is certain to lead to a convergence of fitness to practise procedures among the different regulatory bodies, and the recommendations of the Shipman Report will undoubtedly have far reaching consequences for standards of public protection.

Against this background, the GOC's new legislation has several main purposes. It is designed to achieve more stringent registration requirements,

continuing education and training (CET) for all registrants throughout their careers, a separation from the Council of the hearings functions in fitness to practise enquiries, and regulatory support for specialist practice, such as prescribing of medicines by optometrists and contact lens fitting by dispensing opticians.

The delays in the legislative process have been frustrating for all concerned and they have made it very difficult for us to keep registrants clearly informed about the precise nature and timing of changing requirements, particularly in relation to CET. We have striven to communicate through our regular bulletin and by briefing the professional and representative bodies. We do, however, need to do better. Over the coming year we will be reviewing our processes and seeking feedback from our stakeholders in order to improve our communication.

The past year has not been entirely taken up with legislative matters. The GOC has made robust representations to the Department of Health for the recognition of dispensing opticians. Ten visits were made to educational establishments to assess courses, including the first to an e-learning business. The Disciplinary Committee heard 23 cases. The GOC staff responded to hundreds of varied enquiries from the general public. All of these activities are important aspects of the overarching goal of the Council: to promote high standards of professional education, conduct and performance among registrants.



I N T R O D U C T I O N

by Peter Coe, Registrar and Chief Executive

In November 2000 I watched the Council debate the recommendations for legislative change. I did not realise, at that time, the enormity of the workload that would be required to make these recommendations become reality.

In the first three months of 2005 alone, the GOC has had to re-read and edit the draft Section 60 Order some twenty times. The Rules have been revised and re-edited some thirty times to include valuable comment from members, registrants and optical bodies. We are greatly indebted to the former Director of Standards, who left in June 2004, and her colleagues for their steadfast and immediate support.

The amended Act will stand until it is changed by a future Section 60 Order or primary legislation. The Rules, however, will require further changes to be made in 2006:

- Change will be required to introduce the CET scheme which will be operational from 1 January 2007.
- The amended Act and Rules empower the GOC to request information for registration and renewal. It is hoped that self-declaration will avoid the elaborate administration that would be required to check copies of insurance certificates, etc. However the GOC is aware of the NHS and other bodies' determination that front line workers should be CRB-checked before they can commence working with the public.

The GOC now awaits the views of the Government on the Shipman and Bichard reports. Such reports might well require regulatory bodies to ensure CRB checks are a prerequisite for registration.

- The most successful debate on the introduction of exemption level 2 and supplementary prescribing of medicines leads on to the issue of independent prescribing. The GOC intends to consult on such independent prescribing by the end of 2005. Any subsequent changes to the Medicines Acts will need the introduction of specialty competency and the establishment of the specialty as set out in the Rules governing registration.

Finally I wish to pay tribute to those forty people who were appointed in 2004 as Hearings Panel members. They have all now diligently undertaken induction training and have all observed a disciplinary committee case being heard. They will be formally appointed to the Panel on 30 June 2005 and will then sit on the new Fitness to Practise hearings as soon as cases are referred. Despite such a long period of waiting, all are still on board and interested in supporting the GOC as it establishes hearings where panel members have not contributed to policy.

Peter C Coe MIHM
Registrar

CONTINUING EDUCATION & TRAINING

All registrants to undertake CET, the first phase being both voluntary (Jan 04 – June 05) and statutory (July 05 – Dec 06).

General points: people on the Register on 30 June 2005 need to earn 36 general points by 31 December 2006; people joining the register after 30 June 2005 need to earn an average of 2 general points per whole month of registration by 31 December 2006.

Specialist points: as above, but 18 points to be gained in a 3-year period

FITNESS TO PRACTISE

- management of hearings separated from presentation of fitness to practise cases
- 40 hearings panellists appointed from whom members for meetings of the Fitness to Practise Committee and Registration Appeals Committee are selected.
- Codes of Conduct for both individual and business registrants

CONSUMER COMPLAINTS

- Funding a consumer complaints service

OPTICIANS ACT 1989 AS AMENDED 2005 + RULES: MAJOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

REGISTRATION

- Registration of students
- Declarations of fitness to practise — health, criminal records
- Insurance requirement
- One register only for businesses

REGISTRATION OF SPECIALTIES

- DOs qualified to fit contact lenses
- Optometrists qualified for additional supply of Prescription Only Medicines (POMS)
- Optometrists qualified for supplementary prescribing of POMS
- Other specialties as approved by Council in new Rules in the future

PLANO CONTACT LENSES

- May only be sold by or under the supervision or general direction of a registered medical practitioner, an optometrist or a suitably qualified dispensing optician



A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR OPTICAL PRACTICE

2004-2005 saw the final phase of a five-year process to create a new legislative framework for optical practice in the UK which will meet the rising expectations of the public, registrants and the government. The GOC consulted on the changes needed with patient and consumer groups, representative and professional bodies within the optical profession and other organisations. These legislative changes have been welcomed by the government as consistent with its overall aim of setting up a modern, comprehensive regulatory framework.

The main objective remains to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public. In accordance with the Government's aim of modernising health professional regulation, GOC procedures and requirements should be open and transparent, decision-making processes should be fair and fast and accountability to the public should be increased. These objectives will be met by tightening up on registration, ensuring the continuing competence of registrants and restructuring the fitness to practise hearings function. The changes made by the Opticians Act 1989 (Amendment) Order 2005 and its supporting Rules, which come into effect on 30 June/1 July 2005, will affect GOC registrants, if not from cradle to grave, then certainly from training to retirement.

REGISTRATION

Student registration

Up to now students have not been registered with the Council so if a member of the public experienced a problem during a student's practical training, there was no way for the Council to take remedial action.

After 30 June 2005:

- All students will need to register with the GOC before they start their college or distance learning courses

- They will be required to make the same declarations as full registrants
- They will be subject to the same sanctions as full registrants.

New registration requirements

In order to be entered on the relevant register, dispensing opticians and optometrists up to now have been required -

- To prove that they were adequately qualified
- To pay the registration or renewal fee
- Not to be subject to an erasure order following a disciplinary hearing.

After 30 June 2005:

Registrants will be required -

- To have adequate and appropriate insurance
- To declare annually that they have no criminal convictions, nor are they the subject of an investigation or proceedings which might lead to a criminal conviction
- To declare details of any adverse physical or mental health which may impair their fitness to practise
- To submit a photograph
- To work within the Code of Conduct.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Registration of Specialties

The new legislation empowers the GOC to register specialty entries against the names of optometrists or dispensing opticians who have achieved a specific competency additional to the basic entry-level requirements. Up to now the only recognised specialty register has been of dispensing opticians who are qualified to fit contact lenses.

After 30 June 2005:

- In addition to the dispensing opticians' Contact Lens specialty there will be two specialties for optometrists relating to Prescription Only Medicines
- Additional supply: for the signing of orders for the sale or supply of certain prescription only medicines;
- Supplementary prescribing: for the prescribing, administration or giving of directions for the administration of a specific list of medicinal products;
- In order to remain so registered optometrists and DOs will need to gain specialist CET points.

Continuing Education and Training (CET)

Competence at entry to a profession is no longer enough for a lifetime's career; to maintain public confidence, optometrists and dispensing opticians need to be able to show that their knowledge and skills are kept up-to-date. Both the Association of British Dispensing Opticians (ABDO) and the College of Optometrists have run voluntary schemes through which registrants gain CET points.

After 1 July 2005:

- CET will be mandatory
- The first 3-year cycle will run to 31 December 2006, half in a voluntary period and half in the statutory period

- By 31 December 2006 registrants will need to gain 36 general points (or a proportion, if registering after 30 June 2005)
- Registrants with registered specialties will need to gain specialist points
- The scheme will be managed by Vantage Technologies as the GOC's contracted administrator
- In order to minimise the cost to registrants and for security and accuracy of records, the scheme will be administered via the internet (www.cetoptics.com).

FITNESS TO PRACTISE

Hearings Panel

Hopefully all the above, together with the underlying ethos of service to the public outlined in the Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants, will result in dispensing opticians and optometrists pursuing fulfilling and praiseworthy careers. However for those about whom concerns are reported, the new legislation changes the nature of the panels which hear cases. Up to now the Disciplinary Committee has been made up of GOC Council Members.

After 30 June 2005:

- A panel of 40 people, both lay and professional, unconnected to the Council, will be established from which members of meetings of the Committee to hear cases will be drawn
- In preparation, 40 people have been selected and given induction and training in readiness for when the Hearings Panel goes live
- Ongoing cases will continue to be heard by the old Disciplinary Committee but new ones will come before the new Fitness to Practise Committee
- Appeals by registrants who have been taken off the Register for certain reasons will be heard by the new Registration Appeals Committee
- Restoration, following erasure, will also be heard by the Registration Appeals Committee.

FITNESS TO PRACTISE PANEL MEMBERS

Lay Members

Dr Dozie Azubike, Reading
Mr Alan Baldwin, Hampton, Middlesex
Prof Helga Drummond, Todmorden, Lancashire
Sir Alistair Graham, Belford, Northumberland
Ms Madeline Hallendorf, London
Dr Vicki Harris, London
Mr Robert Holdsworth, Worcester
Mrs Geraldine Huka, London
Ms Mercy Jeyasingham, Morden, Surrey
Ms Francesca Jones, Bristol
Mrs Corinna Kershaw, Godalming, Surrey
Mr Arif Khan, Richmond, Surrey
Mr Peter North, Melton Constable, Norfolk
Mr Rodney Varley, Birmingham
Lady Margaret Wall, London

Optometrists

Mr Peter Charlesworth, Thornhill, Dumfriesshire
Prof Nizar Hirji, Birmingham
Ms Alison Hudson, Motherwell
Mr Gordon Ilett, Tonbridge, Kent
Mr Rakesh Kapoor, Ickenham, Middlesex
Mr Mark Lomas, Ashby de la Zouch, Leics
Miss Janice McCrudden, Banbridge, County Down
Mrs Yvonne Norgett, Cambridge
Ms Elizabeth O'Donoghue, Londonderry
Mr Paul Reeves, Norwich
Mr Stephen Reily, Guisborough, Cleveland
Mr Geoff Roberson, Saffron Walden, Essex
Dr Ronald Stevenson, Fenwick, Ayrshire
Prof Stephen Taylor, Ferndown, Dorset
Mrs Helen Tilley, Llandenny, Monmouthshire
Ms Catherine Viner, Altrincham, Cheshire

Dispensing Opticians

Mr Timothy Bowden, Shorne, Kent
Mr Andrew Cripps, Cambridge
Miss Abilene Grute, Basingstoke, Hampshire
Mr Anthony Harvey, Nottingham
Mr Richard Hensley, Croydon, Surrey
Mr Hilary King, Camberley, Surrey
Miss Ravinder Plahay, Wakefield, W Yorkshire
Mr Nigel Roberts, Fareham, Hampshire
Ms Susan Southgate, Cambridge

PUBLIC PROTECTION

Plano Contact Lenses

At present plano contact lenses can be sold by anyone – no qualifications in fitting lenses or giving aftercare are needed. However there is mounting evidence that they can cause serious damage to users' eyes, including corneal infections, visual impairment and even blindness.

After 30 June 2005:

Plano contact lenses will only be able to be sold by or under the supervision or general direction of a registered medical practitioner, an optometrist or a qualified dispensing optician.

Consumer Complaints

The Optical Consumer Complaints Service (OCCS) was set up in 1992 by several optical bodies to deal with disputes between registrants and patients about such things as charges or the sale of optical appliances which seemed incorrect.

After 30 June 2005:

- The GOC has the power to fund such a service
- Negotiations are under way for such funding to go to the OCCS for 2005-06.

Preparatory work for all these changes has been undertaken so that when the legislation comes into force the transition to the new systems and requirements is as smooth as possible.

Work has been done by the **Education Committee** over the past five years on agreeing core competencies and assessing curricula created against these competencies. Handbooks have been created to guide both GOC Visitors and the educational establishments whose courses they accredit.

Following the approval of the draft Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants, work continued in the **Standards** and **Companies Committees** on a code

for business registrants. Considerable progress has also been made on the revalidation of registrants, but the GOC now awaits developments arising from the Shipman Report.

The basic remit of the General Optical Council has not changed since its inception in 1959: to promote "high standards of professional education and professional conduct among opticians". The world in which it operates, however, has seen huge changes which necessitate periodic updating of our regulatory framework. The amended Opticians Act and the changes that flow from it will provide a platform for maintaining high standards and increasing public protection. It is however, just one legislative staging post: changes arising from the Shipman Report and the increasingly important role played by the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence are just two reasons why attention is now turning to the next round of legislation.

COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS 2004-2005

Audit Committee	Disciplinary Committee
CET Working Group	Finance and Procedure Committee
Companies Committee	Investigating Committee
Education Committee	Shadow Registration Committee
CET Audit Group	Remuneration Committee
Core Competencies WG	Standards Committee
Entry Standards (Dispensing Optics) WG	Contact Lens WG
PQE/PQE 2 Working Group	Revalidation Working Group
Therapeutic Prescribing: Training and Approval WG	Therapeutics Working Group

UK OPTOMETRISTS

BY COUNTRY AND SEX AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2004

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
ENGLAND	M	3,887	3,959	4,038	4,136	4,285
	F	3,195	3,384	3,603	3,818	4,060
SCOTLAND	M	415	425	422	429	444
	F	405	431	455	469	500
WALES	M	263	269	278	263	271
	F	184	188	203	218	234
N. IRELAND	M	149	160	165	167	173
	F	148	167	185	210	230
TOTALS	M	4,714	4,813	4,903	4,995	5,173
	F	3,932	4,170	4,446	4,715	5,024
GRAND TOTALS		8,646	8,983	9,349	9710	10,197

UK DISPENSING OPTICIANS

BY COUNTRY AND SEX AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2004

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
ENGLAND	M	2,195	2,092	2,256	2,262	2,261
	F	1,938	2,205	2,249	2,345	2,419
SCOTLAND	M	123	126	133	131	134
	F	110	135	146	149	159
WALES	M	78	66	85	80	81
	F	61	80	79	87	92
N IRELAND	M	10	12	15	18	20
	F	9	9	10	12	17
TOTALS	M	2,370	2,423	2,489	2,491	2,496
	F	2,118	2,302	2,484	2,593	2,687
GRAND TOTALS		4,488	4,725	4,973	5,084	5,183

INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE REVIEW

Progress of allegations received

During the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005, 182 matters were notified to the Council for the attention of the Investigating Committee. Further details are set out in the table below.

	To other agency	Evidence being gathered	Awaiting consideration by Investigating Committee	No further Council action	Performance review	Disciplinary Committee	Total
Misconduct	-	5	17	30	-	3	55
Deficient Performance	-	11	27	30	11	2	81
Misconduct / Deficient Performance	-	5	7	11	3	1	27
Criminal Conviction	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Consumer complaint	16	-	-	-	-	-	16
Total	16	21	51	71	14	9	182

Restoration applications

During the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005, the Disciplinary Committee heard 2 applications for restoration (over the course of 2 days). Further details are set out in the table below.

Applicant	Nature of original allegations	Committee decision
Penrose, Stephen	Criminal conviction	Registration restored
Tailor, Narendrakumar	Criminal conviction	Registration restored

Disciplinary cases

During the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005, the Disciplinary Committee heard 24 disciplinary cases (over the course of 31 days). Further details are set out in the table below.

Registered optician	Nature of allegation	Committee decision
Pirbhai, Mohsin	Serious professional misconduct	Proven - Suspension order (3 months) and Financial Penalty order (£1600.00) imposed
Maxwell, Stuart	Serious professional misconduct	Not proven
Fox, John	Serious professional misconduct	Not proven
Threlfall, Nicole	Serious professional misconduct	Not proven (on appeal)
Asili, Zahra	Serious professional misconduct	Proven - Financial Penalty order (£1000.00) imposed
McAteer, Michael	Serious professional misconduct	Proven - Suspension order (6 months) and Financial Penalty order (£500.00) imposed
Best, Gemma	Serious professional misconduct	Not proven
Walsby-Tickle, John	Criminal conviction	Proven - Suspension order (3 months) imposed
Turner, Arthur	Serious professional misconduct	Not proven
Hale, George	Serious professional misconduct	Basis of allegation not proven
Chohan, Harin	Criminal conviction	Proven - Erasure order imposed
Macalister, Graham	Serious professional misconduct	Basis of allegation not proven
Khan, Razia	Criminal conviction	Proven - Erasure order imposed
Dick, Wendy	Serious professional misconduct	Not proven
Berrington, Gary	Serious professional misconduct	Proven - Suspension order (3 months) imposed
Boots Opticians Ltd	Breach of Rules on Publicity	Proven - Financial Penalty order (£1600.00) imposed
Gardiner, Catriona	Serious professional misconduct	Not proven
Morelli, Simon	Serious professional misconduct	Not proven
Semmens, David	Criminal conviction	Proven - Erasure order imposed
Thompson, Robert	Criminal conviction	Proven - Erasure order imposed
Marshall, Stephen	Serious professional misconduct	Proven - Suspension order (3 months) and Financial Penalty order (£1600.00) imposed
Lamont, Rob	Serious professional misconduct	Basis of allegation proven - Case adjourned
Beaumont, Sarah	Serious professional misconduct	Proven - No order imposed

EDUCATION VISITS

Anglia Polytechnic University –
Foundation Degree in Ophthalmic
Dispensing

ABDO – Distance Learning
Ophthalmic Dispensing Programme,
Part Time

Aston University – BSc Optometry

Bradford University – Career
Progression Programme

City & Islington College –
E-Learning Programme in
Ophthalmic Dispensing

City University – Therapeutics;
Foundation Degree

OptNet e-Learning – Programme in
Ophthalmic Dispensing

Institute of Optometry –
Therapeutics; 8 other programmes

UMIST/University of Manchester –
MCOptom, MCOptom Examination
and Bsc Optometry Programme



MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL 2004 – 2005

MEMBER	COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP*	SCHEDULED MEETINGS	No. ATTENDED
<i>Members nominated by the Privy Council</i>			
Rosie Varley BA MA(Econ) Chairman	ex officio on all committees	16 (1)	16 (1)
Michael Salmon BA MEd PhD Deputy Chairman	E (chairman) F R (chairman)	15 (1)	15 (1)
Moira Black CBE MA FCA Treasurer	F (chairman) R	12 (1)	12 (1)
David Pyle BA BSc MSc DipEd Adviser on educational matters	E S	9	9
Geoffrey Harris JP BA BSc PhD	C E S	12	11
Alastair McFarlane CCIPD	I R	14 (1)	14 (1)
Shaheen Chaudhry MA JP	I	8	7
Heather Wilcox BA FCCA	A (chairman)	6	6
David Youngson	F S	9	7
<i>Members nominated by the College of Optometrists</i>			
Robert Chappell OBE MPhil DSc FCOptom	E R S	14	14
Kevin Lewis BSc FCOptom DipCLP	E	6	6

MEMBER	COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP*	SCHEDULED MEETINGS	No. ATTENDED
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Member nominated by optometric training institutions

Alan Tomlinson MSc PhD DSc FCOptom DipCLP DOrth FAAO	E F	9	8
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Members elected by registered ophthalmic opticians

Roger Anderson BSc MPhil PhD MCOptom FAAO	C E F	12	6
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Donald Cameron BSc FCOptom DipCLP	F	6	4
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Nathan Efron BScOptom PhD DSc MCOptom FAAO FVCO	A	5	5
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Judith Morris BSc MSc FCOptom	E S	9	5
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Richard Roberts OBE BSc FCOptom	F I (chairman) S	14	14
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Nicholas Rumney MscOptom FCOptom FAAO	I S	11	9
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Member appointed by ophthalmic dispensing training institutions

Joan Underwood MSc FBDO(Hons)CL (Hons)SLD CertEd	A E	8	5
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**excludes Disciplinary Committee, whose pattern of meetings is different*

All members are on Council which meets 3 times a year. Figures in brackets are for telephone meetings

A = Audit Committee C = Companies Committee E = Education Committee F = Finance and Procedure Committee

I = Investigating Committee R = Remuneration Committee S = Standards Committee

Members have attended additional meetings and working groups where required on behalf of the GOC over 2004 – 2005

MEMBER	COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP*	SCHEDULED MEETINGS	No. ATTENDED
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Members elected by registered dispensing opticians

Rosemary Bailey FBDO(Hons)CL	E S	9	9
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John Baker FBDO	E F	9	9
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Jennifer Brower FBDO(Hons) LVA CertEd	E S	9	9
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Kim Devlin FBDO(Hons)CL	F I	11	6
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Joram Fried FBDO	C F I R	19(1)	16(1)
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Members nominated by the Royal College of Ophthalmologists

Roger Buckley MA BM BCh FRCS FRCOphth HonFCOptom	S (chairman)	6(1)	6
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James Dunne FRCS FRCOphth DO	I	8	7
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Simon Keightley FRCS FRCOphth (to 30 June 2004)	C	2	0
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Peter Kyle FRCS FRCOphth	E	6	6
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Stuart Roxburgh FRCS FRCOphth (from 1 July 2004)	C E	7	3
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Chief Executive and Registrar of the Council

Peter C Coe BA MIHM

March 2005

to the Members of The General Optical Council

We have audited the financial statements.

This report is made solely to the General Optical Council's Members, as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Council's Members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Council and the Council's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

The Members of the Council are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards. The Opticians Act 1989 requires the Council to keep accounts of all sums received or paid by them under the Act.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and United Kingdom Auditing Standards.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Opticians Act 1989. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Report of the Council is not consistent with the financial statements, if the Council has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding Members' remuneration and transactions with the Council is not disclosed.

We read other information contained in the Annual Report, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other

information comprises only the Report of the Council. We consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Members of the Council in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Council's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Council's affairs at 31 March 2005 and of its surplus for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Opticians Act 1989.

BAKER TILLY
Registered Auditor, Chartered Accountants
2 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3ST

B A L A N C E

S H E E T

as at 31 MARCH 2005

	2005	2004
	£	£
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	91,088	112,821
CURRENT ASSETS		
Other debtors	7,032	10,661
Prepayments and accrued income	46,027	30,427
Building Society deposits	1,089, 828	1,054,879
Cash at bank (deposit and current accounts) and in hand	2,705,952	1,837,193
	3,848,839	2,933,160
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	(2,742,401)	(2,055,769)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	1,106,438	877,391
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,197,526	990,212
RESERVES AND FUNDS		
Optical Education, Research and Public Purposes Fund	100,000	100,000
Legal Costs Contingency Reserve	600,000	600,000
Income and Expenditure Account	497,526	290,212
TOTAL FUNDS EMPLOYED	1,197,526	990,212

The financial statements were approved by the Council on 30 June 2005 and were signed on its behalf by:

M E Black

Moira Black
Honorary Treasurer

Peter C. Coe

Peter C Coe
Registrar and Chief Executive

I N C O M E A N D

E X P E N D I T U R E

ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005

	2005	2004		2005	2004
	£	£		£	£
TURNOVER			OPERATING SURPLUS	114,191	37,618
Fees	2,359,631	1,901,314	Interest receivable and other income	115,896	83,188
<u>Other Operating Income</u>			Interest payable	(85)	(340)
Opticians register	18,632	23,839			
Sale of computer services	9,008	10,605	SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES	230,002	120,466
	<hr/> 2,387,271 <hr/>	<hr/> 1,935,758 <hr/>	BEFORE TAXATION	(22,688)	(13,872)
			Corporation tax		
OPERATING EXPENDITURE			SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES	207,314	106,594
Printing of Opticians Register	10,910	7,060	AFTER TAXATION		
Members' fees and expenses	345,969	294,481	Transfers:		
Staff employment costs	891,455	778,134	Legal Costs Contingency Reserve	—	(250,000)
Office expenses	181,534	165,404	Optical Education, Research and Public		
Legal expenses	373,394	349,623	Purposes Fund	—	(5,000)
Miscellaneous expenses	127,902	124,645			
Depreciation	39,483	34,164	Retained Surplus (deficit) for year	207,314	(148,406)
Legislative change (Consultancy)	96,207	12,561	Retained surplus at beginning of year	290,212	438,618
Revalidation consultancy	920	1,653			
Hearing Panels	96,446	96,677	Retained Surplus at end of year	497,526	290,212
Code of Conduct	207	10,578			
Therapeutics	22,046	9,519	STATEMENT OF TOTAL RECOGNISED		
CET Programme and set up costs	13,056	13,641	GAINS AND LOSSES		
CET Programme development costs	73,551	—	Surplus on ordinary activities		
	<hr/> 2,273,080 <hr/>	<hr/> 1,898,140 <hr/>	after taxation	207,314	106,594



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BUSINESS REGISTRANTS

Business registrants play an integral part in the provision of optical services and products to the public. Patients, consumers and professionals must be able to trust business registrants to maintain and support a good standard of clinical practice and care.

To justify that trust, a business registrant will take reasonable and proportionate steps to:

1. Ensure that each person who undertakes activities regulated by the Opticians Act does so in accordance with the Act;
2. Require as a condition of employment or engagement that those individual registrants currently employed or otherwise engaged to provide optical services comply with the GOC's Code for Individual Registrants;
3. Not knowingly act in a way which might contribute to or cause a breach of the Code for Individual Registrants by any individual registrant employed or otherwise engaged by it to provide optical services;
4. Ensure that individual registrants are always able freely to exercise their professional judgement in the best interests of patients;
5. Provide a system for the proper maintenance of patient records;
6. Respect and protect confidential information for both patients and employees in accordance with current legislation;
7. Ensure that any advertising or publicity complies with appropriate advertising codes of practice;
8. Provide mechanisms to enable those that work for or are otherwise engaged by the business registrant to raise concerns about risks to patients;
9. Protect patients if it has good reason to believe that an individual registrant may not be fit to practise;
10. Ensure that the criteria enshrined in this code are applied as may be appropriate to registered medical practitioners in relation to the GMC and any other relevant codes and guidance.

GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL OFFICERS AND STAFF

NAME	JOB TITLE	RESPONSIBILITIES	TELEPHONE NO. / E-MAIL
Peter Coe	Registrar/Chief Executive	Executive management of the GOC	020 7580 3898 reg@optical.org
Allison Hughes	Executive Assistant to Registrar/ Chief Executive and Chairman	Secretarial and administrative support to Registrar and Chairman	020 7307 3468 ahughes@optical.org
Dian Taylor	Director of Education/ Deputy Registrar	GOC Visits, EU and non-EEA applications for registration. Education and Audit Committees and associated working groups and sub-committees	020 7307 3458 dtaylor@optical.org
Lesa Oakley	Assistant Director of Education	GOC Visits, Education Committee and associated working groups and sub-committees	020 7307 3450 loakley@optical.org
Hayley Robinson	PA to Director of Education	Administrative, secretarial and clerical support to the Director of Education	020 7307 3462 hrobinson@optical.org
Roderick Clarkson	Director of Legal Services	Fitness to practise investigations and Criminal investigations	020 7307 3455 rclarkson@optical.org
Caroline Withall (from 5.9.05)	Investigations Manager	Fitness to practise investigations and Criminal investigations	020 7307 3455 cwithall@optical.org
Nirupar Uddin	Legal Assistant	Fitness to practise investigations and Criminal investigations	020 7307 3455 nuddin@optical.org
Philip Ireland	Director of Corporate Resources	Management of administration, finance, human resources, registration and IT Finance and Procedure, Companies and Registration Committees	020 7307 3464 pireland@optical.org
Kate Fielding	Communications Manager	All aspects of the GOC's external and internal communications	020 7307 3472 kfielding@optical.org
Joan Burrow	PA to Director of Corporate Resources	Secretarial and administrative support to the Director of Corporate Resources and for work on standards	020 7307 3451 jburrow@optical.org
Carol Ayton	Finance Officer	All aspects of the GOC's financial operations	020 7307 3457 cayton@optical.org
David Henley	Hearings Manager	Management of Fitness to Practise Committee and Registration Appeals Committee	020 7307 3453 dhenley@optical.org
Elizabeth Chambers	Administration Officer	Administration of meetings; booking accommodation and travel; processing expense claims. Provides support to Office Manager, Finance Officer and Hearings Manager	020 7307 3456 echambers@optical.org
Catharine Perry	Office Manager	Office systems and services; health & safety; oversees admin of meetings; GOC files and archives; enquiries	020 7307 3463 cperry@optical.org
Alan Currie	Information Supervisor	Registration management and IT support services	020 7307 3459 superinfo@optical.org
Jane Bailey	Registration Assistant	Registration customer service and administration	020 7307 3467 jbailey@optical.org
Michelle Barker	Registration Assistant	Registration customer service and administration	020 7307 3469 mbarker@optical.org
Debra Leauanae	Registration Assistant	Registration customer service and administration	020 7307 3460 dleauanae@optical.org