

## Application for low income retention fee

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To apply for the lower rate, please complete and return this form to us. Before completing the form, please read the **guidance notes** attached.

You must return the form to us no later than **1 February 2012** for us to process your application.

Once we have processed your application, we will notify you of the outcome. You can then complete your application for retention online at **www.optical.org**.

**Please do not complete your application for retention before we have informed you of the outcome of your application for the low income fee. If you do, you will be charged the full retention fee.**

If you have any questions about the low income fee and your eligibility, please contact us at **registration@optical.org** or on **020 7580 3898 (option 1)**.

Please complete the following sections	
Full name	
GOC Number	
Contact email address	
Gross Personal income, from all sources (£)	
Please read the statement below, and tick the box to indicate you agree:	
<p><i>I am applying for retention in the Register of Optometrists or Dispensing Opticians, and I hereby declare that my gross annual income from all sources in the forthcoming retention year (1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013) will be less than £12,000. I agree that if there are any changes in my financial circumstances that result in my gross annual income reaching £12,000 or more, I will immediately inform the GOC Registration department.</i></p> <p><i>I agree to provide the Registrar with evidence of my gross annual income upon request, including during or after the end of the retention year for which I am applying for the low income fee. If my gross annual income is equal to or more than £12,000, or I do not submit evidence on request, I agree to immediately pay upon demand the balance of £100.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
Signed:	
Date:	

## **Low income reduced fee: guidance notes**

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The 2012/13 low income fee category is for individual profession registrants whose gross personal annual income from all sources is less than £12,000.

### **How much is the low income fee?**

For 2012/13 the low income fee rate will be £160.

### **What constitutes gross personal annual income?**

Gross personal income covers all income from all sources worldwide. It does not purely relate to income from optometry or dispensing optics-related activities. It includes, for example, pensions, investments, maternity pay, sick pay, and any kind of benefit.

### **Who is entitled to pay the low income fee?**

An optometrist or dispensing optician whose gross personal income is less than £12,000 is entitled to apply to pay the low income registration/retention fee. The low income rate is not available to bodies corporate or students.

### **How do I apply for the low income fee?**

Optometrists and dispensing opticians wishing to apply for the lower income fee for the 2012/13 year will be required to complete and send by post a paper application form.

Applications for the lower income fee are not able to be made online this year. We hope to be able to offer this option in the future.

The low income fee application form is available to be downloaded and printed from the GOC website, here: [\[link to be added\]](#)

### **Important note:**

Any current GOC registrants wishing to apply to pay the low income fee for the 2012/13 retention year should complete their application for the low income fee before beginning their application for annual retention on the registers. This will ensure that the correct low income fee level is applied during the retention process, and avoid the need for a refund to be issued.

After your application for the low income retention fee has been received by the GOC by post, we will contact you to confirm whether your application has been accepted. After you have been accepted for the low income fee, the correct retention fee level will be applied on the online retention system. You will then be able to complete your application for retention online, via the MyGOC online registrants area.

**Registrants wishing to pay the low income fee are encouraged to submit their application as soon as possible.**

Applications for the low income retention fee should be received by the GOC by 1 February 2012. It is important that applications for the low income fee are submitted early, so that there are no delays to your retention application.

### **Will I be required to make an additional declaration?**

Yes. When applying to pay the low income fee, you will be required to make a declaration as follows:

*I am applying for retention in the Register of Optometrists or Dispensing Opticians, and I hereby declare that my gross annual income from all sources in the forthcoming retention year (1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013) will be less than £12,000. I agree that if there are any changes in my financial circumstances that result in my gross annual income reaching £12,000 or more, I will immediately inform the GOC Registration Department.*

*I agree to provide the Registrar with evidence of my gross annual income upon request, including during or after the end of the retention year for which I am applying for the low income fee. If my actual gross annual income is equal to or more than £12,000, or I do not submit evidence on request, I agree to immediately pay upon demand the balance of £100.*

### **If I pay the low income fee and my income subsequently exceeds £12,000 what should I do?**

You will need to contact the Registration Department immediately and pay the difference between the low income and standard registration/retention fee (£100).

### **How do I show that my income is below £12,000?**

If you elect to pay the low income fee you must, upon request, provide the GOC with copies of your payslips, bank statements or any other document related to your gross personal income. If your income is assessed at being greater than £12,000 or you do not supply evidence, you must immediately pay the difference between the low income and standard registration/retention fee (£100). We may request this information during the retention year for which you have claimed the lower fee, or at any point afterwards.

It is important that any information you provide on your eligibility for the lower fee is complete and accurate. The GOC Code of Conduct includes requirements around honesty, trustworthiness and professionalism. Making a false declaration or failing to inform us of changes in your financial circumstances may call into question your fitness to practise.

### **Can I apply for the low income fee during the retention year? i.e. if I pay the full registration or retention fee and my income for the year subsequently turns out to be less than £12,000, can I apply to have £100 of my full fee refunded?**

No, we are not able to retrospectively apply the low income fee rate to applicants who subsequently earn below the £12,000 threshold. If you will earn less than £12,000 in 2012/13 and wish to pay the lower registration/retention fee, you will need to submit an application to receive the lower fee rate before completing your application for registration or retention