General Optical Council
Annual Report 2011-12
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Presented to Parliament Pursuant to Section 32A(2)
of the Opticians Act 1989 as amended by Schedule
2 paragraph 3 of the Health Care and Associated
Professions (Miscellaneous Amendments) Order
2008
Welcome to the GOC Annual Report

This is the Annual Report of the General Optical Council for 2011-12.

Following feedback from registrants and the wider public, we publish our Annual Report online. This is part of our strategy to modernise our processes, and an ongoing commitment to reduce costs.

This is the third year we have published the Report online, and you are reading a print version. The online version is available at http://annualreport11-12.optical.org/

We would like to know what you think of our Report, and welcome your comments and feedback via the form on page 43.
The GOC at a glance

Approximately

20,000,000 sight tests

181,786.5 CET points awarded

25,461 registrants

320,190 visits to the website

215 complaints received

37 complaints referred to FTP Committee*

16 visits to educational establishments

8 registrants removed from the register

*Outcomes decided by the Investigation Committee for the period 1 April 2011-31 March 2012 for all cases considered in this period (including those where cases were opened before 1 April 2011)
Chair’s view

2011/12 was the first year of our three-year Strategic Plan; it has been one of opportunity and achievement.

The opportunity with greatest strategic significance arises from the Law Commissions’ review of healthcare regulation. The Commissions’ notion of a single overarching legislative framework for health regulators has the potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the GOC and our eight fellow healthcare regulators.

The legislation envisaged from the review could enable more expeditious rule changes which in turn should assist us in keeping pace with changes shaped by patient expectations, new technology and a growing, if overdue, emphasis upon eyecare as a component of public health.

However we acknowledge the importance attached to an appropriate balance between flexibility and consistency in the more independent rule making scenario envisaged across the nine healthcare regulators. We continue to engage closely with the Law Commissions to ensure that whatever new proposals emerge will leave us best placed to protect the public.

The past year also saw us develop new organisation-wide values. The identification and, more importantly, the embedding of these values is key to progressing our internal programme of improvement. We have committed to being a responsible, forward-thinking and principled regulator.

Being ‘responsible’ means making decisions on a sound evidence base when faced with the demands and expectations of our stakeholders; ‘forward-thinking’ refers to working with others to continuously improve our organisational performance; and being ‘principled’ implies regulating in a fair, effective and proportionate way.

We also recently said farewell to Anna Bradley, who, having given us three years dedicated service as Chair of Council, has been appointed as founding Chair of HealthWatch England. We are pleased that Anna will head this new independent consumer champion organisation for health and social care. Anna’s combination of strong leadership, strategic insight and consumer awareness will be greatly missed. We look forward to building upon her achievements at GOC.

At the close of the year we are delighted to welcome Josie Lloyd and Alistair Bridge, two new directors, to the GOC. Together with chief executive Samantha Peters and Mandie Lavin they bring great strength to our new Senior Management Team. They will enhance leadership of our staff team of whom we are justly proud, and to whom we express our thanks for good progress at the GOC throughout the year.

Brian Coulter OBE, Chair (interim)
Chief Executive and Registrar’s introduction

The regulation of healthcare professionals is taking place against a backdrop of significant change in health policy and public expectation.

Embracing these changes, our focus is on protecting the public by regulating optometrists and dispensing opticians in a manner which is both innovative and exemplary.

This year we continued to make solid progress on these ambitions.

Once again, we performed well against the standards set by the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE), which oversees all healthcare professional regulators. As well as commending our overall performance, their annual review highlighted some key initiatives, including our leadership in initiating collaborative projects with other regulators, and enhancements we made to improve our online registers’ accessibility, user friendliness and transparency.

We have also made steady progress on our goal to deliver effective, proportionate and fair public protection. After a number of years of sustained effort and stakeholder engagement, our enhanced Continued Education and Training (CET) scheme is on the verge of completion. This will modernise our work to ensure the continued competence, performance and conduct of registrants.

Ensuring our systems and processes are efficient and cost effective is another important goal. With that in mind, we continue to make solid progress on our programme of Fitness to Practise reform. Having consulted widely on this in the past this year we have worked with the Department of Health to develop the necessary rules to make the changes happen. We have cut registration fees by up to 27.5% since March 2010.

Now at the end of a busy year, it is clear that these achievements could not have happened without the hard work and diligence of our team, and the support and engagement of our stakeholders. Their commitment helps us look back on this year with pride, and forward to next year with confidence.

Samantha Peters, Chief Executive and Registrar
What patients can expect

In order to protect the public, we set standards required of our registrants in respect of their competence, and their conduct and performance. Registrants must demonstrate these standards in order to enter and remain on the register.

We publish two sets of standards:

**Standards of competence** - the knowledge and skills which registrants must demonstrate in order to gain entry on to the register. Once qualified this knowledge and skill must be maintained and demonstrated through continuing education and training in order to remain on the register.

**Standards of conduct and performance** - professional, honest behaviour. These standards are captured within the GOC ‘Code of Conduct’. The Code details how opticians must behave professionally and respectfully in all parts of their work and personal life.

Over the past year we have worked closely with optical professional bodies to ensure that our standards have been kept up-to-date. We have also promoted our standards to patients and the public through a variety of conferences and events.

What’s coming up?

In the forthcoming year we will be reviewing how we set, review and publish our standards. We will engage with patients and public to further understand what they expect of their optician; with registrants and stakeholders to ensure our standards are clear and well understood; and with other healthcare regulators to explore the development of common standards of conduct and ethics expected of all registered healthcare professionals.

What to expect from your optician

To help you understand more about the standards we expected from our registrants, we have published a number of patient information leaflets that you can download from our website.
The work of the Standards Committee is central to the GOC remit of ensuring patient safety, and assuring the health and protection of the public who use optometric and dispensing services. Patients need to trust in high standards of professional competence and personal integrity and the GOC Standards are set so every optical professional knows what is expected of them. The Standards Committee gives guidance on the Codes of Conduct, standards and competencies and reviews the guidance issued by the other professional bodies.

The Standards Committee comprises optometrists, dispensing opticians, a contact lens optician and an ophthalmologist with a wide variety of practical experience in independent and multiple practices, hospital, research and education, as well as our lay members who reflect wide real world experience in other disciplines. We strive to produce thoughtful, considered and realistic advice as the Standards are interpreted, examined, refined and updated, allowing consideration of the changing modes of practice, specialisation and independent prescribing, continuing to keep patient safety and wellbeing core to our developing profession.

The new cycle of CET with the introduction of peer review heralds an opportunity for the profession to show it is responsive to the needs of our 21st Century patients.
Our role in education

Optometrists and dispensing opticians need comprehensive and relevant training so that they can deliver good standards of eye care.

One of our main functions is to assess and approve the quality and content of education provided for those training to practise optometry and dispensing optics in the UK. We do this in three ways:

- Set criteria for all higher education courses and qualifications in optics that lead to full registration with the GOC
- Approve courses and qualifications that meet these standards
- Carry out quality-assurance visits to check that education and examination bodies are maintaining and improving standards.

The term ‘core competencies’ is used to describe the knowledge and skills an optometrist or dispensing optician must demonstrate, in order to qualify and register with us and practise in the UK.

There are core competencies in four areas of practice:

- optometry
- dispensing optics
- contact lenses (for dispensing opticians)
- therapeutic prescribing (for optometrists).

To gain a qualification in optometry, dispensing optics, contact lenses or therapeutic prescribing, trainees have to demonstrate that they are proficient in the associated core competencies.
Enhanced CET from 2013

It is essential that all registrants keep their skills up-to-date. Continuing Education and Training (CET) provides the life-long learning that will help them to practice safely and effectively throughout their careers.

During the past year, we have developed changes to our CET scheme which will come into effect from January 2013.

You can read more about the changes on our website:

In developing our proposals to enhance the CET requirements, we commissioned research into the risks associated with optical practice and obtained public/patient feedback. We held consultation events across the country as part of our research.

Patient and public representatives expressed a clear expectation that healthcare professionals should not only be required to keep their knowledge and skills up to date, but also to participate in discussion with peers that allows them to improve their own awareness of good practice and risks. It was felt this interaction was fundamental to maintaining and raising standards across the professions.

Preparing registrants for the new requirements they will face next year has been an important priority for us in recent months. We have attended a number of optical conferences and events, worked closely with the trade press and published a number of articles to make sure all optometrists and dispensing opticians are ready for enhanced CET.
The registers explained

It is essential that patients and the public have the assurance that their eyecare professional is adequately trained, qualified and meets certain standards of behaviour, performance and conduct.

Optometrists and dispensing opticians must be registered with us to practise in the UK. We are responsible for publishing and maintaining the registers of all optometrists, dispensing opticians, student opticians, and optical businesses that are qualified and fit to practise, train or carry on business.

It's important to know your optician is registered because only then can you be confident that the person looking after your eyes is properly trained and fit to practise. Our registrants must meet certain competence, and standards of conduct and performance.

Registrants have to provide us with the following:

- a health declaration
- details of any criminal convictions, cautions or investigations, or disciplinary proceedings which have been taken against them or are currently pending
- proof of professional indemnity insurance

Practitioners must also complete the minimum required amount of Continuing Education and Training (CET).

This section of our annual report tells you all about our registers and the opticians who register with us.

What’s coming up

Over the course of the next twelve months, the Registration team will continue to improve the service we provide to both the public and our registrants. This work will include a review of the way in which we check the insurance arrangements of those on our registers, and also work to ensure that the information we provide relating to applicants for registration who need to make a declaration about their fitness to practise is as clear as possible. This work forms part of our ongoing commitment to review and update all of our policies and processes.
Our registrants

The tables below show a breakdown of registrant numbers across the UK for 2011-2012, measured at January 2012. We also currently have 1548 registered optical businesses.

### Optometrists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>4589</td>
<td>5468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Ireland</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>5946</td>
<td>7256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total:** 13202

### Dispensing opticians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>2122</td>
<td>3030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Ireland</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>2494</td>
<td>3524</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total:** 6018
Maintaining the registers

The table below shows a breakdown of student registrant numbers at each of the institutions offering GOC-approved courses in optometry and dispensing optics. Measured at January 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglia Ruskin University</td>
<td>594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford College</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff University</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Optometrists</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow Caledonian University</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute of Optometry</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Association of British Dispensing Opticians</td>
<td>664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The City and Islington College</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The City University London</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Aston</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Bradford</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Manchester of Science and Technology</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Plymouth</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Ulster</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total** | 4693
Regulating optometrists and dispensing opticians

### Age of Optometrists

- **Under 25**: 780
- **25-39**: 6,334
- **40-54**: 4,118
- **55+**: 1,970
- **Total**: 100%

### Age of Dispensing Opticians

- **Under 25**: 156
- **25-39**: 2,511
- **40-54**: 2,536
- **55+**: 815
- **Total**: 100%

### Gender of Optometrists

- **Male**: 5,946
- **Female**: 7,256

### Gender of Dispensing Opticians

- **Male**: 2,494
- **Female**: 3,524

[Source: annualreport11-12.optical.org]
Maintaining the registers

Improving our systems

Improving our online registers

It’s vital that patients use GOC-registered optometrists and dispensing opticians. This year, we made it easier than ever to check your optician is registered.

We consulted with patients, the public and our registrants on changes to our online register, in order to ensure that it is clear and easy to access. Following this consultation we have made improvements to the register, which include:

• Adding a ‘sounds like’ function to help find a registrant when you are unsure of their name
• Providing more information about what different terms on the register mean
• The ability to search for a registrant with a particular registered specialty, for example independent prescribing or contact lens dispensing

We continue to request and act upon feedback relating to the online register, which helps us make sure that it is as helpful as possible.

You can check an optician’s registration now on the GOC website: http://www.optical.org/en/utilities/online-registers.cfm

Equality and diversity

We are committed to promoting and developing equality and diversity in all our work.

We want to be sure that our policies, procedures and ways of working are fair to all individuals and groups, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership or pregnancy and maternity.

Throughout this year, we have ensured this by continuing to work in line with our Equality and Diversity Scheme. In particular, we believe that we have a critical role to play in ensuring that the following are free from discrimination:

• access to optometry and dispensing optics training in the UK
• registration as an optometrist or dispensing optician in the UK
• access to our registers, public meetings and information
• our complaints and Fitness to Practise processes
• employment with or appointment to the GOC, its Council and committees

Our website meets Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (Level AA) accessibility standards and we make publications available in large text and languages other than English on request. We conduct equality and diversity monitoring of registrants, staff and fitness to practise complainants to ensure our processes are free from discrimination.

To help improve access to the profession, this year we produced guidance for students with disabilities and other health conditions. You can read about this on the next page.
Welsh Language Scheme

We have also maintained our Welsh Language Scheme this year and made more content available in Welsh. This includes our three year strategic plan and the leaflet Buying cosmetic contact lenses.

These are available along with our other public-facing publications in the Welsh-language section of our website: http://www.optical.org/en/utilities/cymraeg/index.cfm.

We believe that bilingual provision is important as a quality of service issue not just as a legal requirement.

To this end, when providing services to the public in Wales, we will treat the English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality.

Guidance for students with disabilities

Guidance for students and others with disabilities and health conditions

In July 2011 we published new guidance for students, and potential students, with disabilities who wish to become an optician, Becoming an optometrist or dispensing optician: A guide for students and others with disabilities and health conditions.

The guidance document was developed partly in response to CHRE recommendations that regulators should improve the information available to registrants, applicants, students and others considering a career in the profession over the role of health in regulatory processes.

Our guidance includes information on what students can expect during their application and studies, the role and responsibilities of their training institution and our role. The guidance stresses that disabilities and health conditions should not prevent people from considering careers in optics, and that adjustments can often be made to help people with disabilities, both in education and the workplace.

In developing the guidance, we took account of the work of other regulators and also consulted with our Stakeholder Reference Groups to ensure that the document met the needs of students and professionals. The final guidance document was sent to GOC-approved training institutions, as well as disability charities, and is also available on our website.
How we deal with complaints

As part of our role in protecting the public, it is our job to investigate complaints that one of our registrants may not be fit to practise.

Anyone can complain to us if they think a GOC registrant is not fit to practise (or train or run a GOC-registered business). We receive complaints from members of the public, patients, carers, employers, the police and other GOC registrants.

A complaint that a GOC registrant may not be fit to practise can be as a result of one or more of a number of different factors including:

- Poor professional performance
- Physical or mental health problems affecting their work
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs at work
- Fraud or dishonesty
- A criminal conviction or caution
- A finding by another regulatory body

What happens to a complaint?

Our Fitness to Practise (FTP) team gathers all relevant information about the complaint to put before our Investigation Committee. This committee looks at every complaint received to determine whether the complaint should be referred to the FTP Committee.

The FTP Committee is a completely independent group of people, separate from our investigation and policy-making functions. This committee follows a four stage process which culminates in them deciding whether a registrant is currently impaired. They may impose one of these sanctions:

- erasure (or striking off)
- suspension for a fixed period of time
- conditional registration for a fixed period of time
- payment of a financial penalty
- if fitness to practise is not impaired, we may still issue a warning
- no action

Over the past year, we received 215 complaints, which represents a tiny proportion of our registrants – less than one per cent.
Breaches of the Opticians Act 1989

We can also investigate and prosecute alleged breaches of the Opticians Act 1989. The criminal offences established by the Act are:

- Testing of sight while unregistered (section 24)
- Fitting of contact lenses while unregistered (section 25)
- Sales of optical appliances (e.g., spectacles or contact lenses) which do not meet the requirements set out in the Opticians Act 1989 and/or the Sale of Optical Appliances Order of Council (section 27)
- Use of a protected title while unregistered (section 28)

If you suspect an individual or a company of carrying out an offence under the Act, you can find out more or report them to the GOC on our website.

Speeding up the complaints process

When we receive a complaint about a registrant's competence or conduct, it's important that we act quickly. If a registrant is not fit to practise then we must take action to protect the public.

That's why we're taking a number of measures to speed up the fitness to practise process – an efficient, fair process from us receiving a complaint to making a final decision protects the public and is fair to registrants.

This year we increased the frequency of our hearings, now holding them on ten days in each month. Other changes to improve the efficiency of the process will include a new electronic case management system, the introduction of case examiners and evaluation of our increased number of hearing days.

We have also taken steps to make the process more accessible for patients and registrants alike. We have reviewed how we communicate with people involved in the fitness to practise process, changing our communications to provide the information they need in a clear manner.

We have also revised the hearings section of our website so that patients, the public, employers and others can quickly identify whether a registrant has had a sanction imposed on them, and the reasons for that action.
Employers FTP guidance

Fitness to practise guidance for employers

It’s important that we work with employers, big and small, to help them understand their responsibilities in protecting the public.

This includes optical businesses, from the biggest chains on the high street to single individual practices, as well as employers in the NHS – for example Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) who contract optometrists to undertake primary eyecare.

We have published guidance to help employers understand what they should do if they have concerns about an optician’s fitness to practise. You can download it from our website: http://www.optical.org/en/news_publications/Publications/guidance-publications-for-the-professions-and-employers.cfm

It explains the sorts of complaints we can and can’t deal with, what happens if a fitness to practise complaint is made against a GOC-registered employee, and what information we can share with the employer about the allegation.

The investigation process is also set out in full, to ensure employers are informed about each step of the process.

Salvatore Cammileri, optometric advisor at Westminster PCT, found the new guidance useful:

The Fitness to Practise Guidance for Employers document issued by the GOC has been very useful for us as an NHS organisation. All the required information that ophthalmic contractors need to know about their ophthalmic performers can be found in one concise electronic document on the GOC website. In fact, our organisation, NHS Inner North West London, has sent out a copy of this document to all the ophthalmic contractors and performers in NHS Westminster, NHS Kensington and Chelsea and NHS Hammersmith and Fulham, for their information and guidance.
### Source of complaints made to the GOC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of complaint</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-declaration</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary care organisation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/educational body</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter fraud</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOC</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FTP complaints made against each GOC registrant category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of complaint</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optometrist</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispensing optician</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student optometrist</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dispensing optician</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business registrant</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Three complaints were withdrawn before the GOC could identify the registrant.
Outcomes decided by the Investigation Committee (for the period 1 April 2011-31 March 2012 for all cases considered in this period, including those where cases were opened before 1 April 2011)

NB Some cases will be considered more than once ie one case may trigger 2 to 3 outcomes which will all be recorded below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No further action</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No further action with advice</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance review</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minded to warn</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warning issued</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to FTP Committee</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction for a health assessment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction for a performance assessment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn by complainant</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further investigation required</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of decision not to refer to FTP</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termination of referral to FTP</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcomes decided by the FTP Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erasure</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial penalty</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warning</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No further action</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions to continue following review hearing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension to continue following review hearing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions changed to suspension following review hearing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension changed to erasure following review hearing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No impairment following review hearing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interim Orders:
Fourteen new applications made, 12 existing orders were reviewed (one order can be reviewed multiple times.)

* Fraud and/or dishonesty.
The Optical Consumer Complaints Service

The Optical Consumer Complaints Service (OCCS) is an independent body that attempts to settle consumer complaints when someone is dissatisfied with the service they received in an optical practice.

We do not have the power to deal with consumer complaints.

What consumer issues are dealt with by the OCCS?

Sources of Complaints

| A  | Eye test  | 6% |
| B  | Spectacle prescription | 19% |
| C  | Multifocals | 10% |
| D  | Dispensing | 12% |
| E  | Frame | 8% |
| F  | Contact Lenses | 8% |
| G  | Miscellaneous | 14% |
| H  | Fitness | 2% |
| P  | Poor service/practice | 17% |
| Y  | No prescription given | 1% |
| Z  | Prescription and dispensing separate | 5% |

**Total** 100%

| A  | Citizens Advice Bureaux | 3% |
| B  | Consumer Direct | 4% |
| C  | General Optical Council | 15% |
| D  | Via Internet | 43% |
| E  | Optical bodies | 3% |
| F  | NHS | 2% |
| G  | Practitioner | 17% |
| H  | PCT | 2% |
| P  | Trading Standards | 5% |
| Y  | Other | 7% |

**Total** 100%
Who we are, what we do

We are one of 13 organisations in the UK known as health and social care regulators. We oversee the health and social care professions by regulating individual professionals.

We are the regulator for the optical professions in the UK. We currently register around 24,000 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student opticians and optical businesses.

Our statutory duty is ‘to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety’ of members of the public. Our mission is to assure the health and protection of those who use the services of optometrists and dispensing opticians. To achieve this, we have four core functions:

- Setting standards for optical education and training, performance and conduct.
- Approving qualifications leading to registration.
- Maintaining a register of individuals who are qualified and fit to practise, train or carry on business as optometrists and dispensing opticians.
- Investigating and acting where registrants’ fitness to practise, train or carry on business is impaired.

This report covers the financial year 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012.

People

Our staff, Council members, committee members and panellists all work together to ensure we deliver high-quality regulation to patients and the public. Their expertise, dedication and commitment are highly valued, and they play an essential role in supporting the organisation’s aims and objectives.
Structure

The General Optical Council is constituted as a body corporate under the Opticians Act 1989, as updated by its section 60 Order which came into effect on 30 June 2005.

Governance

Public protection is at the heart of the role of Council members, Committee members, Hearings Panel members, advisors and visitors, and must at all times underpin their conduct and behaviour. The GOC’s Code of Conduct provides guidance for members, advisors and visitors to assist them in undertaking their duties in accordance with currently accepted standards of public service.

The Council endorses the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by the Nolan Committee (1996): Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership. In addition the Code of Conduct sets out guidance on the expected conduct of members, advisors and visitors in relation to: attendance, confidentiality, expression of views, corporate responsibility, financial or professional interests, conflicts of interest, equality and diversity, gifts and hospitality, and personal behaviour.
Statement of Council’s Responsibilities

The members of Council, together, take corporate responsibility for the governance of the organisation, its strategic direction and decisions. The key functions of the Council are:

- Policy and Strategic Direction
- Performance Monitoring
- Financial Stewardship
- Accountability, Communication, and Stakeholder Engagement

The Council is responsible for ensuring the preparation of the Annual Report of the Council and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The members are required to ensure that financial statements are prepared for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Council as at the end of the year and of its financial activities during the year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards).

In preparing these financial statements, the members are required to be satisfied that:

- suitable accounting policies are selected and applied consistently;
- judgments and accounting estimates are reasonable and prudent;
- applicable UK Accounting Standards are followed, disclosing and explaining any departures in the accounts;
- the financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Council will continue to operate.

Members are responsible for ensuring that adequate accounting records are maintained sufficient to show and explain the Council’s transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Council and to ensure the financial statements comply with the Opticians Act 1989. They are also responsible for ensuring the safeguarding of the assets of the Council and ensuring their proper use, and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Committees of Council

The Council is supported by nine committees. Each committee plays a crucial role in providing Council members and staff with advice and assistance on everyday work and specific projects.

The four advisory committees are: education, standards, registration and companies. The three decision-making committees are investigation, fitness to practise and registration appeals. The two non-statutory committees are audit and remuneration.

The Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is established under Section 6 of the Opticians Act 1989. The Audit Committee comprises of five Members from Council (excluding the Chair). The Members of the Audit Committee are:

- Peter Douglas (Chair)
- Morag Alexander
- Brian Coulter
- Nick Rumney
- James Russell

Morag Alexander and Brian Coulter joined the Committee as of 26 January 2012.

Peter Douglas is an independent lay member of Council and satisfies the requirement under the UK Corporate Governance Code that one Member of the Committee has relevant financial experience. Further, the additional requirements of the UK Corporate Governance Code are met to the extent that three Members of the Committee are independent Lay Members of Council.

The Chief Executive, Director of Resources and Head of Finance are invited to attend Committee meetings. The Chair of the Audit Committee reports the outcome of Committee meetings to Council.

The main duties of the Audit Committee are to:

- advise Council and their Committees as to the conduct of their work and their compliance with the following Council approved documents: Allocation of Roles and Responsibilities, Scheme of Delegation, Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions and Code of Conduct;
- review complaints received and dealt with by the Registrar under the Complaints Protocol;
- review the appointment and tenure of external auditors and advise the Council as to the appointment of external auditors;
- review the financial accounts of the Council and advise the Council as to the approval of annual accounts;
- review the risk management policies of the Council; and
- advise the Council on any other areas of its work which the Committee believes is part of the role of an audit committee.
The internal audit function was carried out independently of the GOC by PKF (UK) LLP. The Audit Committee considers it appropriate that the internal auditors also provide the GOC with specific advice on internal risks and risk management. The provision of any other services by PKF (UK) LLP is decided on a case by case basis. The external audit function was carried out by Crowe Clark Whitehill.

The Audit Committee met seven times during the year. The Committee's allocation of roles and responsibilities are available on the GOC website.

**The Remuneration Committee**

The Remuneration Committee is established under Section 6 of the Opticians Act 1989. The Remuneration Committee comprises of five Members from Council – the Chair, two lay members, one optometrist and one dispensing optician. The Members of the Remuneration Committee were:

- Anna Bradley (Chair)
- Brian Coulter
- Kevin Lewis
- Liam Kite
- Fiona Peel

The duties of the Remuneration Committee are to:

- advise the Council as to the payment of fees, allowances and expenses of Hearings Panel members, legal advisers and clinical and other advisers;
- advise the Council as to the payment of fees and travelling and subsistence allowances for visitors;
- advise the Council as to the payment of fees and travelling and subsistence allowances (including the payment of honoraria) of Council members;
- advise the Council as to the level of remuneration to be paid to the Registrar as well as pensions, gratuities or superannuation schemes.

No Council Member is involved in the setting of his or her own remuneration. The Remuneration Committee met once during the year. The Committee’s allocation of roles and responsibilities are available on the GOC website.
Law Commissions Review

During 2011-12, the UK Law Commissions began a comprehensive review of the legislative framework governing the healthcare professional regulators, including the GOC, at the request of the Government. We were closely engaged throughout the early stages of this work in 2011 and early 2012.

In March 2012, after initial engagement with regulators and other stakeholders, the Law Commissions published a major consultation document on reform of the regulators’ legislative framework.

The Law Commissions proposed a new single piece of overarching legislation that would replace the professional regulators’ existing individual statutes, including the Opticians Act. This would be intended to provide a more responsive and consistent regulatory framework, with increased flexibility to regulators to keep pace with developments in their sectors.

Following the publication of the Law Commissions’ consultation, we began work analysing the questions and proposals raised in the document. The GOC’s full response, which was published on 31 May 2012, expressed support for the Commissions’ key proposals.

When the GOC’s response was published, Chief Executive and Registrar Samantha Peters said, “the Law Commissions’ proposals have generally found an appropriate balance between flexibility and consistency. A simplified, modern and nimble legal framework will help us to respond faster and more effectively to developments in optics, regulation and wider healthcare.” – The full response can be read on our website.

The changes proposed by the Law Commissions, if agreed by the Government, will need to be passed by Parliament to take effect. This is currently planned to happen before the end of the current Parliamentary term in 2015.

The Law Commissions’ perspective, by Tim Spencer-Lane

The Law Commissions of England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are reviewing how the existing legal framework for health care professionals in the UK and social workers in England can be made clearer, simpler, more modern and more consistent.

The new system would establish a single statute which would govern all professional regulation – including the operation of the General Optical Council. It also aims to:

- give the regulators increased flexibility in the use of their powers while ensuring their public accountability
- enable the regulators to ensure proper standards of professional education, conduct and practice, and establish and maintain a register of professionals, and
- have at its heart a duty on the regulators to protect the public.

A public consultation on our proposals was carried out between March and May 2012 and we received 192 responses. We are currently analysing the views expressed at consultation and will be working towards the publication of a draft Bill and final report in early 2014.
Working with stakeholders

At the GOC we regard communication as being not only about how we disseminate information, but how we interact with stakeholders and seek feedback and input into our activities.

Consulting helps us keep in touch with and learn from our stakeholders, helping us to learn from their expertise in regulating effectively.

We consult on policy developments and changes to our practices. Over the past year this has included consultations on Fitness to Practise Rules changes and a consultation on the guidance we give registrants on making declarations.

We also speak and exhibit at conferences which enable us to connect with people and organisations whom we work with.

These have included Optometry Tomorrow, the National Optometric Conference, Trading Standards Institute Conference, Citizens Advice Conference and The Gathering. Every year we visit universities with a roadshow for first year students on GOC-approved courses in dispensing optics or optometry, helping them to understand our role, answer any questions and process their registration applications.

Stakeholder Reference Groups

This year saw continuing work from our Stakeholder Reference Groups (SRGs) to provide stakeholder input into our work.

Recruited in 2010, there is a group of optical stakeholders – including optometrists, dispensing opticians, students and an ophthalmologist – and one of patients and the public.

They provide stakeholder input into a wide variety of GOC projects and policies. Over the last year, this has included:

- considering drafts of our booklets Guidance for students with disabilities and Student registration guidance
- considering our draft protocol for criminal prosecutions and illegal practice complaint form
- feeding back on how we communicate with fitness to practise complainants
- considering how students and body corporates might be regulated
- considering some aspects of our enhanced CET scheme

We recruited the groups as part of our ongoing commitment to involve stakeholders in our work. They have contributed to a wide variety of work, from considering strategic policies such as how we regulate students or businesses, to more operational work such as user-testing online retention or considering our communications.
Our staff

We currently employ 40 members of staff at our offices in Harley Street, London.

Senior Management Team

Chief Executive Officer
Samantha Peters

Director of Resources
Josephine Lloyd (from 1 November 2012)

Director of Regulation
Mandie Lavin

Director of Policy and Communications
Alistair Bridge (from 5 November 2012)

Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer and Chair
Nicola Fozzard

CEO’s Office

Head of CEO’s Office
Grahame Tinsley

Communications
Communications Manager
Neil Drake

Communications Officer
Simon Grier

Council
Interim Governance Manager
Nicola Ebdon/Lisa Harmshaw

Council Officer
Joan Burrow

Policy
Policy Manager
Matthew Tait

Research Analyst
Angharad Jones

Corporate Services

Facilities
Facilities Manager
Jacob Sanchez

Office Assistant
Laura Cressey

Finance
Head of Finance
Michelle Jex-Brown

Accounts Assistant
Sofia Khan

Accounts Assistant
Heidi Woollams

HR
Interim Head of HR
Lindy Petts

Interim Recruitment Consultant
Matthew Crawford

HR Manager
Mandy Bainger

IT
Head of IT
Agnieszka Knapik

IT Officer
Jassen Payen

Regulation

Education
Head of Education & Standards
Linda Ford

PA to Head of Education
Chetna Malvi

Accreditation Policy and Project Officer
Lisa Sparkes

Education Policy and Project Officer
Paul Gavin

Fitness to Practise

PA to Director of Regulation
Helen Volichenko

Head of FTP
Kisha Puncheihewa

Senior Lawyer
Ayesha Benson

Investigations Manager
Sarita Khaira

Senior Investigations Caseworker
Georgina Devoy

Investigations Caseworkers
Enda Heslin
Katri Kajava

Legal Compliance

Head of Legal Compliance
Kiran Gill

Legal Compliance Manager
Angela Cooper

Registration

Head of Registration
Philip Hallam

Registration Operations Manager
Laura Hytti

Registration Officers
Ian Johnson
Terence Yates
Gina Baidoo

Registration Assistants
Mark Stanton
Sabina Begum

Staff correct as of 6 September 2012
Council members

Our Council members set the strategic direction of the organisation, and make key decisions about GOC policy.

There are 12 members of Council, all of whom are independently appointed by the Appointments Commission.

**Lay members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Appointed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morag Alexander OBE</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Bradley – Chair</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Coulter OBE</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Douglas FCA</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Peel OBE DL LLM SRN</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selina Ullah PG Dip</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sept 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Registrant members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Appointed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Carroll BSc (Hons)</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Hogan MCOptom PhD BSc</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Kite FBDO</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Lewis BSc FCOptom Dip CLP</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Rumney MScOptom FCOptom FAAO</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selina Ullah</td>
<td></td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correct as of 8 September 2012
Note that Anna Bradley stood down as Chair on 31 October 2012.

Morag Alexander, James Russell, Rob Hogan, Paul Carroll, Brian Coulter, Peter Douglas, Liam Kite and Fiona Peel are all eligible for reappointment in 2013.

Council Members are required to take part in the GOC’s appraisal process on an annual basis. Council also internally evaluates its performance on a routine basis.
Committee members

Committees are independent of Council, and appointments are made by the Appointments Commission. Committee members are appointed for a period of up to four years. They do not receive a salary but are offered a daily fee, plus expenses.

Decision-making Committees

Investigation Committee
Chris Burton
Keith Cavaye
Lisa Gerson
Kamlesh Gohil
Stuart Heatherington
Paul Hutchence
James Kellock (Chair)
Stuart Roxburgh
Michael Yates

Advisory Committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Committee</th>
<th>Companies Committee</th>
<th>Education Committee</th>
<th>Standards Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gary Ames</td>
<td>Roger Anderson</td>
<td>Brendan Barrett</td>
<td>Rosemary Bailey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Derbyshire</td>
<td>Michael Bateman</td>
<td>Rosemary Bailey</td>
<td>David Cartwright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Devlin</td>
<td>Jennifer Brower</td>
<td>Adrian Jennings</td>
<td>Christine Edwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Elsmore</td>
<td>Brian Carroll</td>
<td>Linda Ford (Chair)</td>
<td>Anne Grocock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Hallam (Chair)</td>
<td>Brian Collison</td>
<td>Peter Kyle</td>
<td>Stuart Heatherington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon Harle</td>
<td>Jim Gordon</td>
<td>David Pyle</td>
<td>Wojciech Karwatowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bina Patel</td>
<td>Mandie Lavin (Chair)</td>
<td>Susanne Roff</td>
<td>Linda Ford (Chair)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas Perkins</td>
<td>Nicholas Sheen</td>
<td>Margaret McMullan</td>
<td>Ian Pyzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S Ahmed Sadiq</td>
<td>Jo Underwood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Salmon</td>
<td>Michael Yates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire Slade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Thompson</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual Report 2011 - 2012
Hearings panel members

There are currently 36 hearings panel members.

If our Investigation Committee considers that an allegation made against a registrant is sufficiently serious, the complaint will be referred to our hearings panel.

The hearings panel is also sometimes referred to as the ‘Fitness to Practise Committee’. The panel carries out its work independently of the GOC, and it is their job to judge whether the registrant’s fitness to practise is impaired. If they find that it is, there are a range of sanctions they can impose against the registrant.

The panel currently comprises 14 lay members, 14 optometrists and eight dispensing opticians. Both lay and professional members are recruited through open advertisement in the national and optical press. Throughout their tenure, members undergo comprehensive training and are required to complete self assessments and appraisals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lay members</th>
<th>Optometrists</th>
<th>Dispensing opticians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dozie Azubike</td>
<td>Mark Lomas</td>
<td>Timothy Bowden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Baldwin</td>
<td>Nizar Hirji</td>
<td>Carrie Eva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helga Drummond</td>
<td>Alison Hudson</td>
<td>Andrew Cripps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alistair Graham</td>
<td>Gordon Ilett</td>
<td>Duncan Counter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Hallendorf</td>
<td>Rakesh Kapoor</td>
<td>Abilene Grute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicki Harris</td>
<td>Janice McCrudden</td>
<td>Richard Hensley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geraldine Huka</td>
<td>Yvonne Norgett</td>
<td>Hilary King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Jeyasingham</td>
<td>Elizabeth O’Donoghue</td>
<td>Nigel Roberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francesca Jones</td>
<td>Paul Reeves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corinna Kershaw</td>
<td>Stephen Reily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arif Khan</td>
<td>Ronald Stevenson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter North</td>
<td>Stephen Taylor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodney Varley</td>
<td>Helen Tilley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Wall</td>
<td>Catherine Viner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The panel currently comprises 14 lay members, 14 optometrists and eight dispensing opticians.
Education visitor panel members

Visitor panels attend training institutions and professional qualifying examinations to ensure high standards of education amongst dispensing opticians and optometrists. We currently have 16 members on our education visitor panel.

Panel members undergo comprehensive training throughout their tenure, including annual refresher sessions, self assessments and appraisals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dispensing opticians</th>
<th>Educationists</th>
<th>Optometrists</th>
<th>Ophthalmologists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Burton</td>
<td>Reginald Davis</td>
<td>Richard Broughton</td>
<td>Paul Baines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan Counter</td>
<td>Bernard Gilmartin</td>
<td>Angela Whitaker</td>
<td>Iain Bryce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Harm</td>
<td>Sally Powell</td>
<td>Robert Harper</td>
<td>Soupramanien Sandramouli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annette Latham-Jackson</td>
<td>David Whitaker</td>
<td>Martin Rubinstein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison Thomas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial review


Council prepares an annual Financial Report which identifies its financial position and which is submitted to Government for scrutiny.

The Report and Accounts have been drawn up in accordance with current company law disclosure requirements and applicable accounting practices in so far as these are appropriate to the Council’s circumstances. Section 32 (2) of the Opticians Act 1989 provides that “the accounts for each financial year of the Council shall be audited by auditors to be appointed by them and shall as soon as may be after they have been audited be published and laid before Parliament”.

Having undertaken a major restructuring in 2010/11 into three directorates, the Council feels better equipped to deliver its strategy and meet the challenges ahead.

The three directorates are Regulatory Services, Corporate Services and the Chief Executive’s Office.

The Council achieved a surplus of £0.497m in the year against a surplus of £1.308m in 2010/11.

The Council reduced fees in 2011/12 for optometrists from £325 (2010/11) to £270 and for dispensing opticians from £280 (2010/11) to £270.

Council fee income was higher than planned and produced more fee income in the year than budgeted, an additional £0.34m.

Expenditure was significantly lower than anticipated. In particular, a reduction in the level of fitness to practise activities, which are difficult to predict, meant that the cost of running legal services was £0.397m less than budgeted. This was caused by a number of factors: substantial savings from the management of High Court cases in house without need for external solicitors and the negotiation of lower fixed fees from our legal advisors more generally.

The Council and management have agreed a new corporate strategy and business plan which requires investment in the future. For this reason the Council has established a strategic reserve of £0.830m. This reserve will fund completion of a number of key projects, modernisation activities and ‘invest to save’ projects such as the integration of existing technology and the development of a new electronic case management system to provide a streamlined, speedier service for registrants and fitness to practise cases. As the notes to the accounts explain in more detail, the Council has put in place a new protocol for criminal prosecutions. The surplus added to the income and expenditure reserve this year was £0.497m.
The income of £5.80m in 2011/12 is made up predominantly of annual retention and registration, which amounted to £5.64m.

The Council also earned £35k in taxable income, of which the majority was earned from the investment of its reserves in low risk building society accounts. The Council pays Corporation Tax on its investment income at the prevailing rate.

The Council has robust cash resources and Council Members have a reasonable expectation that there are adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future as a going concern.

**Reserves policy**
The Council has a responsibility to ensure that there are prudent levels of reserves to provide for unexpected variations in spending or income patterns or to fund exceptional future spending. As can be seen from the notes to the accounts the total reserves at the year-end were £3.40m. The policy on total reserves set originally in 2004 provided for 50% of annual spend, to include a contingency for legal costs. This would have required reserves at the year-end of circa £2.69m. This policy was refined in 2008 to set a target of income & expenditure reserves (available to cope with spending or income variations) equivalent to three months expenditure. This would require a target reserve based upon the 2012/13 budget of about £1.39m. The actual income and expenditure reserve at the year-end is £1.48m. We have additional earmarked reserves for 'invest to save' projects commencing in 2012/13 and for legal costs.

**Investment policy**
The Council has a policy on investments, which limits investments to low risk options. Free cash flow is presently on short call (one year or less). Treasury management is presently under review.

Signed on behalf of the Council

Anna Bradley
Chair of the Council

Samantha Peters
Registrar and Chief Executive of the Council

41 Harley Street
London W1G 8DJ

Date 28.06.12
## Income and expenditure account

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-2012 £</th>
<th>2010-2011 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee income</td>
<td>5,638,102</td>
<td>6,365,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>26,914</td>
<td>7,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>52,616</td>
<td>69,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health Grant</td>
<td>88,072</td>
<td>35,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,805,704</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,479,350</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness to Practise</td>
<td>1,991,555</td>
<td>1,619,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>1,011,691</td>
<td>931,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Standards</td>
<td>1,135,736</td>
<td>1,223,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>303,610</td>
<td>423,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>854,645</td>
<td>959,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,297,237</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,156,909</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operating surplus / (deficit) before taxation</strong></td>
<td><strong>508,467</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,322,441</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation tax</td>
<td>(11,489)</td>
<td>(14,051)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus / (deficit) after tax</strong></td>
<td><strong>496,978</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,308,390</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities. There are no other gains or losses other than those stated in the income and expenditure account, and as such no separate Statement of Recognised Gains and Losses is included.
Financials

Balance sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-2012 £</th>
<th>2010-2011 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed assets:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangible fixed assets</td>
<td>224,707</td>
<td>380,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>224,707</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,380,688</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current assets:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debtors</td>
<td>120,828</td>
<td>174,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term deposits</td>
<td>909,278</td>
<td>1,516,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
<td>8,183,272</td>
<td>5,754,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,213,378</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,445,779</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current liabilities:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</td>
<td>(6,035,397)</td>
<td>(5,920,757)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets less current liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,402,688</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,905,710</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Represented by:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal costs contingency reserve</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic reserve</td>
<td>830,326</td>
<td>875,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income &amp; expenditure reserve</td>
<td>1,478,168</td>
<td>936,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optical education reserve</td>
<td>94,194</td>
<td>94,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net funds employed</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,402,688</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,905,710</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To view the accounting policies and notes that accompany these accounts, please refer to pages 14 to 25 of the full accounts document available from our website.

The financial statements were approved and authorised by the Council on 28.06.2012 and were signed on its behalf by:

Anna Bradley
Chair of the Council

Samantha Peters
Chief Executive and Registrar
Cash flow statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-2012 £</th>
<th>2010-2011 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash flow from operating activities</td>
<td>913,282</td>
<td>897,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returns on investments and servicing of finance</td>
<td>35,227</td>
<td>55,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxation</td>
<td>(14,051)</td>
<td>(17,135)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital expenditure and financial investment</td>
<td>(113,416)</td>
<td>(269,984)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of liquid resources</td>
<td>1,607,236</td>
<td>983,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net cash increase</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,428,278</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,650,022</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-2012 £</th>
<th>2010-2011 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOVEMENT IN NET FUNDS IN PERIOD</td>
<td>2,428,178</td>
<td>1,650,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET FUNDS AT 1 APRIL 2011</td>
<td>5,754,994</td>
<td>4,104,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2012</td>
<td>8,183,272</td>
<td>5,754,994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Attendance, remuneration and expenses

Members’ meeting attendance, remuneration and expenses: 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Member</th>
<th>Public Council</th>
<th>Council Seminars***</th>
<th>Audit Committee</th>
<th>Remuneration Committee</th>
<th>Total Remuneration</th>
<th>Total expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna Bradley</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>£42,000</td>
<td>£4,835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morag Alexander</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£4,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Carroll</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Coulter</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£4,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Douglas</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Hogan</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£2,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Kite</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£1,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Lewis</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Peel</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Rumney</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>£14,000</td>
<td>£1,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Russell</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selina Ullah *</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>£7,000</td>
<td>£1,681</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Started 1 September 2011
Auditors’ statement

Report by the trustees on the Summarised Financial Statements

The above summarised financial statements are extracted from the full statutory Report of the Council and financial statements which were approved by the Council and signed on their behalf on 28 June 2012. The full financial statements, on which the auditors Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP gave an unqualified audit report on 6 August 2012, have been laid before Parliament on 13 February 2013.

The auditors have confirmed to the trustees that, in their opinion, the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2012.

These summarised financial statements may not contain sufficient information to gain a complete understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. The full statutory report of the Council, financial statements and auditors’ report may be obtained from http://www.optical.org/en/news_publications/Publications/report-and-financial-statements.cfm and:

General Optical Council
41 Harley Street
London
W1G 8DJ

Signed on behalf of the trustees.

14 February 2013
Credits

Acknowledgements
Special thanks to Roger Pope & Partners, Marylebone, for allowing us to use their practice in our photography, and to all our contributors.

Words
Simon Grier, Neil Drake

Photography
Jan Chlebik and Elliott Franks

Design and online development
Tangerine UK Ltd
01622 623780
www.tangerine-uk.co.uk
Your feedback

We’re always looking for ways to improve our publications. To make sure you get the information that is relevant and interesting to you, we’d like your feedback and comments on this year’s Annual Report.

What is your relationship to the GOC?
- Registrant (optometrist/dispensing optician)
- Student registrant
- Optical employer/NHS Trust
- Partner organisation
- Other (please state)

What do you think of the online format? (please state)

How informative did you find the 2010-11 Annual Report?
- 1 – very informative
- 2 – quite informative
- 3 – not at all informative

Did you get a clearer understanding of our work from the Report?
- 1 – yes
- 2 – no
- 3 – no opinion

Which pages did you particularly like?

Were there any pages you particularly disliked?

Do you have any other comments or suggestions for next year’s Annual Report?

Thanks for your feedback.
This document is available to view online from the General Optical Council’s website, www.optical.org

It is also available from the Official Documents website, www.official-documents.gov.uk

Contact us

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41 Harley Street
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W1G 8DJ

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twitter: www.twitter.com/goc_uk