ideas start here®
school of optometry and vision science
Doctor of Optometry (OD) Program
Optometrists provide primary vision care

The scope of optometric practice is expanding in areas such as advanced diagnostics and pharmaceutical therapeutics. Add changing demographics and the high costs of vision loss, and the demand for highly trained optometrists has never been greater.

With a Doctor of Optometry degree from Waterloo, you'll have an internationally recognized degree and the skills and knowledge to enjoy a successful optometric career. As a graduate, you'll have the opportunity to start your own practice or join or buy an existing practice. Our alumni have gone on to distinguished careers in health care, industry, and university environments.

The Waterloo Optometry advantage

Clinical training – Get hands-on training and exposure to different patient populations, allowing you to apply your classroom and lab learning, and gain insight into many aspects of optometric practice.

State-of-the-art facilities – Access unique facilities and the latest technologies in our clinics (e.g., ocular disease, pediatrics, and sports vision clinics) and research centres (e.g., contact lens and sight enhancement).

Evidence-based teaching – Learn biomedical, vision, and clinical sciences from teachers who bring current and new knowledge into the classroom and clinic. Graduate knowing you’ve been trained in clinical decision-making that’s based on evidence and best practice.

Top talent – Canada’s most innovative university attracts award-winning instructors and researchers, along with some of the best and brightest students from across the country.

Affordable learning – Pay less than $75,000 in total tuition.

Is Optometry right for you?

Successful optometrists are
» effective communicators,
» natural leaders,
» detail-oriented,
» dedicated to improving people’s visual health and to serving the community and,
» ethical, responsible, and accountable.
Doctor of Optometry (OD) program

An OD degree prepares you to become a registered optometrist. You must complete a specific set of courses at the university level to qualify for admission into the program. This typically requires you to have been enrolled in a university Bachelor of Science program (BSc) of your choice for a minimum of 3 years with a full course load (5 courses per term). Our OD program is a 4-year, professional program leading to a Doctor of Optometry (OD) degree.

Choose your pathway to Optometry

WATERLOO SCIENCE

Choose from the programs in the chart below and apply to Optometry before entering your third year. Other Waterloo Science programs can serve as pathways, but keep in mind it will take more than 3 years to meet the requirements. See uwwaterloo.ca/science/programs.

OTHER UNIVERSITIES

You can choose to meet the Optometry admission requirements at a university other than Waterloo and your application will be given equal consideration. To ensure the courses you take meet our requirements, we encourage you to contact opt-admissions@uwaterloo.ca.

Recommended Waterloo Science programs for admission to Optometry

See uwwaterloo.ca/science/programs for programs details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>ADMISSION AVERAGE*</th>
<th>APPROXIMATE TIME TO MEET OPTOMETRY REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>REQUIRED – SIX GRADE 12 U OR M COURSES, INCLUDING THESE SPECIFIC COURSES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED – GRADE 12 U COURSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>REGULAR STREAM</td>
<td>CO-OP STREAM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours Science</td>
<td>Low 80s</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Advanced Functions*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Sciences – Biology</td>
<td>Low 80s</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Calculus and Vectors*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Sciences – Biomedical Sciences</td>
<td>Low 80s</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Grade 12 U English (ENG4U)*</td>
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<td>Any 2 of the following: Biology, Chemistry, Earth and Space Science, Mathematics of Data Management, Physics</td>
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<td>One additional U or M course</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* These averages are based on previous years’ entering classes.

* A minimum of 70% is required in this course.

Patient examinations are performed by third- and fourth-year Doctor of Optometry interns under the direct supervision of registered optometrists.
HOW TO PREPARE

Are you eligible for the Doctor of Optometry program?

» You have demonstrated direct work or volunteer experience and job-shadowing in an optometry setting.
» You are able to arrange letters of reference from an optometrist and a character reference.
» You can show evidence of your ability to handle a demanding academic load of at least 5 courses per term (possibly with additional labs) for 6 terms with a minimum overall average of 75%.
» You have completed, or are taking, the required university courses noted below.

Tip: Students who submit competitive applications in both academic and non-academic portions tend to be the most successful in receiving an Offer of Admission.

Required courses

The specific course requirements listed below will normally require a minimum of 3 full years of university-level science. These are subject to change. Check uwaterloo.ca/optometry for updates.

You can complete the course requirements at any accredited university.

Introductory Biology† (2 terms)
Introductory Chemistry† (1 term)
Physics† (2 terms)
Calculus (1 term)
Introductory Psychology (1 term)
English (writing) (1 term)
Physiology (human/mammalian) (2 terms)
Introductory Ethics (1 term)
Organic Chemistry (1 term)
Microbiology (1 term)
Biochemistry (1 term)
Statistics (1 term)

† Courses must include a lab component.

Note: One term is equal to 4 months.

Typical application process

July - Online applications open
August - Deadline for completing Optometry Admission Test (OAT)
October - Online applications due
November - Supporting documents due (e.g., Admission Information Form, Confidential Assessment Forms)
Late November - Interview invitations sent by email
January - Interview day (multiple mini-interviews, tours, meet current students)
March - Admission decisions communicated
April - Deadline to accept Offer of Admission
September - Lectures begin

Optometry Admission Test

The Optometry Admission Test (OAT) is a standardized test. It's based upon having completed at least 1 year of university science, including organic chemistry. The OAT must be written by all applicants. For September 2018 admission, scores from August 2015 to August 2017 are acceptable. You can apply online to write the OAT at opted.org.

Application deadlines

Early July - mid-September 2017
Applications will be available for September 2018 admission at uwaterloo.ca/optometry/apply.

August 31, 2017
Deadline by which the OAT must be written for applications for September 2018.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT SUPPORT
AND SUCCESS – MORE THAN 99% OF STUDENTS GRADUATE

VIEW 360 DEGREE PHOTOS OF OUR FACILITIES AT uwaterloo.ca/optometry/photospheres

CONTACT US

Waterloo Science programs: science@uwaterloo.ca, 519-888-4567, ext. 36243
Non-Waterloo university courses that may meet Optometry requirements: opt-admissions@uwaterloo.ca, 519-888-4567, ext. 33178