



Optometrists & Opticians Board

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# **SUPERVISORY FRAMEWORK**

## **For Provisionally Registered Optometrists**

(Revised October 2016)

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**A. INTRODUCTION**

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The Optometrists & Opticians Act was passed in Parliament in July 2007 to regulate the practice of Optometry and Opticianry in Singapore. All optometrists and opticians providing eye care services will need to be registered with the Optometrists & Opticians Board to continue practising or to start working as an optician or optometrist from 1 Jan 2008.

In 2009, the Board implemented the new Supervisory Framework for new graduates who are registered as provisional optometrists and opticians to apply and build on competencies gained during the course of optometry education and training.

Under the new framework, candidates are required to maintain a portfolio of cases that cover the core competency areas in their practice. Supervisors under this framework are required to assess and provide guidance to the provisional registrants. All provisionally registered optometrists and opticians are required to fulfill the requirements of the Supervisory Framework before they are eligible for full registration.

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**B. OBJECTIVE**

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The Supervisory Framework aims to help provisionally registered optometrists and opticians further improve and apply their optometry and opticianry knowledge and skills independently in a working environment with the guidance and mentorship of more experienced practitioners.

All provisional optometrists and opticians are required to read and fully understand the requirements the Supervisory Framework.

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**C. CONDITIONS FOR PROVISIONALLY REGISTERED OPTOMETRISTS (SUPERVISEES)**

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1. Under the Supervisory Framework, all provisional registered optometrists are required to:
  - a. Complete 12 months of supervised optometry practice under a full-time<sup>1</sup> employment/practice;
  - b. Practise under direct supervision of an approved primary supervisor from same workplace (same company and same outlet);
  - c. Practise only at one primary workplace; no secondary workplace(s) is/are allowed;
  - d. Provisional registration granted is in relation to principal place of practice. With the change of workplace, the provisional registration may no longer valid. Therefore any change in principal place of practice/employment (including within same company) needs to be updated and is subjected to Board's approval. Cases that are logged under previous workplace will not be accepted if there is a change in workplace;
  - e. Maintain and submit a portfolio of cases as required by the framework during your provisional registration period;
  - f. Stop practising optometry immediately upon change of appointment for new supervisor, until the Board has approved the appointment;
  - g. Adhere to Professional Practice Guidelines on the optometry practice that needs to be performed for every patient; and
  - h. Attend relevant CPE activities as required by the Board.

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<sup>1</sup> Full time employment: Not less than 35 hours per week

2. The Board reserves the right to audit the practice or any submitted log cases throughout the provisional registration period. All provisional registered optometrists are expected to maintain a good standard of care, conduct and behaviour as a professional as stated in the Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Guidelines for Optometrists and Opticians.

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**D. ROLE OF SUPERVISOR**

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1. During the period of provisional registration, all provisional registered optometrists (supervisees) are required to appoint a supervisor. The choice of supervisor must:
  - a. Be a fully registered optometrist;
  - b. Possess a minimum of 3 years' optometric working experience;
  - c. Working at the same workplace as the supervisee (same company and same outlet)
2. The appointed supervisor is responsible for:
  - a. Providing adequate supervision and guidance to the supervisee's during the period of his/her provisional registration;
  - b. Review supervisee's cases logged under the Supervisory Framework;
  - c. Ensuring that supervisee's conduct and practice is befitting of the profession and adhere to Board's "Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Guidelines for Optometrists and Opticians";
  - d. Conducting a progress review with supervisee and complete the Quarterly Supervisor's Report on his/her performance once every 3 months.
3. The appointed supervisor can only accept **up to a maximum of 3 supervisees<sup>2</sup> in total at any one time.** In the event that the appointed supervisor is away from work for a period of more than a month (e.g. taking long leave), resigns or is unable to continue his/her supervisory duties, he/she shall be responsible to:
  - a. Appoint another covering supervisor;
  - b. Inform the Board immediately of the changes in supervisor for the supervisees under his/her charge.
  - c. Ensure that his/her supervisory duties is handed over to the newly appointed supervisor; and
  - d. Supervisee should stop practising optometry immediately if the appointment of the new supervisor is not completed/ choice of supervisor is not approved by the board.
4. Appointed supervisor are expected to co-manage supervisee's patients professionally as his/her own.

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**E. CASE REQUIREMENTS**

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1. The supervisee (provisional optometrist) must compile a portfolio of cases which comprise 10 genuine cases that are actually seen by him/her. Cases shall include 10 eye conditions/diseases listed in any 5 out of 6 category types listed in Table 1. There shall be no more than 1 case with similar condition(s)/disease(s).

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<sup>2</sup> Inclusive of supervision of optometrists and opticians on temporary, conditional and provisional registration. Example: Two optometrists supervisees and one optician supervisee.

Table 1: Case Category

S/N	Case Category	Conditions/Diseases
1	Contact Lens Complication	E.g. giant papillary conjunctivitis, corneal ulcer, corneal neovascularization, contact lens-induced superior limbic keratoconjunctivitis, etc
2	Contact Lens Fitting and Management (follow up)	Toric lens fitting, RGP fitting and presbyopia management fitting <b>only</b> .
3	Anterior Ocular Disease	Exclude pinguecula, naevus, arcus
4	Posterior Ocular Disease	Excluding glaucoma
5	Glaucoma Suspect	Exclude pre-diagnosed glaucoma. Must have at least <b>2 signs</b> to be considered as glaucoma suspect case. E.g.: family history <b>and</b> high CD ratio
6	Paediatric (<16 years old)	E.g. Strabismus, decompensated heterophoria, amblyopia, accommodative disorders, vergence disorders, etc

**Example of Case Record Summary Log:**

You may submit the following mix of case write-ups (total 10 cases) to meet the requirements of the supervisory framework:

Case No.	Branch/ Patient Code No.	Conditions/Diseases	Category
1	Br01/1234	Giant papillary conjunctivitis complication	Contact Lens Complications
2	Br02/1234	Corneal ulcer complication	Contact Lens Complications
3	Br02/1235	RGP Fitting	Contact lens fitting and management (follow-up)
4	Br03/1220	Soft Toric Lens Fitting	Contact lens fitting and management (follow-up)
5	Br03/1223	Corneal abrasion	Anterior ocular diseases
6	Br03/1234	Nuclear sclerosis	Anterior ocular diseases
7	Br01/1235	Diabetic retinopathy	Posterior ocular diseases
8	Br01/1236	Hypertensive retinopathy	Posterior ocular diseases
9	Br01/1237	Strabismus for a child < 16 yrs old	Paediatrics (< 16 years)
10	Br01/1238	Amblyopia for a child < 16 yrs old	Paediatrics (<16 years)

2. Supervisee is to record the abovementioned cases accurately in the *Case Record Templates* provided in Board’s website (at [www.oob.gov.sg](http://www.oob.gov.sg)). All log cases should be printed either single-sided or double-sided.

3. The following information must be included clearly in each case record:
- Patient history taken. NIL/NA/Negative/(-) will not be accepted. “No known conditions” should be recorded instead.
  - Types of eye examination conducted and findings from these examinations;
  - Provisional and differential diagnoses arising from eye examinations conducted;
  - Follow up actions and plans for managing the patient’s conditions (including referral to ophthalmologist if needed);

- e. Follow up with the ophthalmologist (if the case was referred) for patient's diagnosis and treatments; and
  - f. Follow up visits managing your patient that lead to a closure of case.
4. All cases submitted must be hand-written. Type-written cases will not be accepted. No correction tape/ fluid are to be used. Errors made should be strike out, counter-signed and rewritten.
  5. If unsure of use of notation and abbreviation, it is encouraged to write out in full. For eg. VA < 6/12 can be recorded as "Visual acuity is worse than 6/12".
  6. All case write-ups submitted to the Board must be **genuine** cases and will only be considered adequate if they adhere to the practice requirements stipulated under the professional practice guidelines.
  7. Findings could be recorded in a separate sheet if the space provided in the case note record template is not sufficient. Supervisee should file and attach case notes on the same case together in the portfolio. Please ensure that all recordings of cases are legible.
  8. All the cases submitted must be supported by original patient records. Cases will be rejected if supervisee could not provide original patient records when requested by the Credential Committee.
  9. Supervisee is required to present evidence of follow-up actions and management for each of the 10 cases. This includes official referral letters and/or documents of correspondences with the institutions or clinics and all post-referral diagnosis, treatment and management. Recordings of phone calls follow ups/email correspondence/SMS with the patients are also considered as evidence presented for case closures.
  10. All the cases submitted must show evidence of supervisee's competency in optometry practice and decision making. Supervisee will need to **resubmit all** the cases if portfolio submitted does not fulfill the Supervisory Framework requirements, or does not demonstrate adequately that he/she is competent or could not make sound decision in his/her practice.

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**F. SUBMISSION OF LOG CASES FOR SUPERVISEE**

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1. Supervisee is encouraged to submit portfolio of cases early for assessment. Supervisee can arrange for submission **9 months** from the registration date.
2. All portfolios must include:
  - a. A completed case log record listing all the cases in the portfolio;
  - b. Cases submitted for portfolio managed by supervisee during the provisional registration period; and
  - c. The required supervisor reports.
3. Once the supervisee completed required cases, the supervisee is required to:
  - a. Cases are filed according to Case Record Log;
  - b. Log cases are printed either single-sided or double-sided;
  - c. All referral letters and doctor's reports (if any) are attached with the case records for each case;
  - d. All cases and supporting documents should be neatly ring-bind or compile in an A4 size ring-file folder.

4. Supervisee could submit cases by registered mail to:

**Optometrists and Opticians Board  
16 College Road, #01-01,  
College of Medicine Building  
Singapore 169854**

5. Submission by hand is strictly by appointment. Please contact the Board's Secretariat at 6355 2533 to arrange an appointment.

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**G. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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**1. The case categories do not include dispensing. Do I still need to record dispensing activities when recording my cases?**

Yes. If an optical appliance was dispensed in the case, you are requirement to include/state it in your management.

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**2. Can I submit two cases of similar conditions/diseases in the same case category? For example, 2 cases of toric lens fitting.**

No. You are allowed to submit no more than one record for one type of condition.

You may include more than one condition from each case category (e.g. one case of corneal ulcer, one case of giant papillary conjunctivitis for category of contact lens complication), so long as your 10 case records have included cases from 5 out of the 6 categories.

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**3. Can I use the same patient for two or more case records?**

No, there must be only one case record for one patient, even if the patient has more than one type of condition.

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**4. Can I include a case or condition in my portfolio that does not require any optometric management or referral on my part?**

No, even though it is important to recognize such 'conditions', such cases should not be submitted as a case since the learning value is minimal. For example, you should not include compensated heterophoria as one of your 10 cases as it does not require any further follow up or clinical management on your part.

Besides, conditions like pterygium/mild cataract etc. that does not require surgery also cannot be accepted as it does not require any referral or further follow up on your part.

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**5. If I suspect that a patient has a particular condition but I am unable to confirm it, can I include the case in my portfolio?**

Yes, you may include such a case. In your case record, you must include the following:

- a) Grounds for suspecting such a condition (i.e. based on patient's history and eye examination findings);
  - b) Referral to the ophthalmologist as part of the management plan;
  - c) Follow up with the ophthalmologist on subsequent clinical management of the patient;
  - d) Indication of how you would monitor the patient if he/she continues to visit you.
  - e) Referral letters, replies from ophthalmologists, written records of your tele-communications with the patient and/or ophthalmologists on your case record.
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**6. Under the Contact Lens Fitting and Management cases, can I submit a spherical lens fitting case?**

No, you are not allowed to submit a spherical fitting case, be it unilaterally or bilaterally fitted. You can submit toric lens fitting, RGP fitting and presbyopia management fitting cases only for this category.

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**7. When must I conduct and document binocular vision assessment?**

Binocular assessment is compulsory for all paediatric cases. Please refer to the Professional Practice Guidelines on the type(s) of eye examination that need to be performed for such patients.

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**8. Can I submit a pre-diagnosed glaucoma case as one of my case record?**

No, a known or pre-diagnosed disease/condition is not acceptable as a case (for all categories) to be included in your portfolio.

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**9. I am working in an eye clinic. I do not write referral memos to ophthalmologists as my patients are here to see them. How can I provide evidence of referral in this case?**

In this situation, you only need to indicate in the write-up that the patient would be seeing an in-house ophthalmologist for further assessment and treatment. No referral letter is required.

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**10. Do I need to submit 2 supervisor reports if I have 2 supervisors?**

No, you would only have one primary supervisor responsible for all the cases you submitted. The primary supervisor need to counter check on all the cases before the cases are submitted. Therefore, only one supervisor report needs to be submitted. Your primary supervisor may seek additional inputs from your other supervisor on your performance.

Please note that if your primary supervisor is an ophthalmologist, your supervisor report and cases will be signed off by your optometrist supervisor (who is your secondary supervisor).

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**11. Can I have a primary supervisor who is not working in the same organisation as me?**

No, your supervisor(s) has/have to be person(s) who is/are working at the same organisation as you are.

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**12. Can I have an ophthalmologist to be my supervisor?**

No, only fully registered optometrists can be the supervisors for provisionally registered optometrists.

The exception applies when you are the only optometrist working for an ophthalmologist. Under those circumstances, you are to identify another senior optometrist as a secondary supervisor to

check and sign your case write-ups and sign the supervisor's report. Ophthalmologist would be responsible to ensure your daily practice is safe and is within your scope of practice.

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**13. Can I change employment or workplace within my provisional registration?**

Provisional registration granted is in relation to principal place of practice. With the change of practice place, the provisional registration may no longer valid, and re-registration will be required. All your cases obtained from previous workplace will not be accepted once you change your workplace.

If you have valid reasons to change employment/workplace, you may send your request in writing to for Board's approval. *Please note that changing of employment without obtaining Board's approval may be deemed as contravening Regulations for not complying with the conditions to which your registration is subjected to.*

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**14. Can I work under a part-time employment during my provisional registration?**

Yes. However your portfolio will not be accepted by the Board if you are working under a part-time employment during your provisional registration. In the event that you work more than 35 hours per week but under a part-time contract(s), you may write in to the Board requesting for Board's recognition on your fulfillment of provisional registration requirements.

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**15. Can I practice optometry if I am going for further study/National Service?**

Yes. However, you are required to inform the Board's secretariat at the point when you are applying for provisional registration. Please note that the cases you managed during this period will not be acceptable for your portfolio and you will not be eligible for full registration upon your provisional registration expiry.

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**16. When do I need to submit my cases?**

You can submit your cases after you have completed a minimum of 9 months of full time and supervised practice. Submissions of your cases must reach the Board at least 120 days before the expiry date of the provisional registration.

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**17. When does my supervisor need to submit the supervisor report?**

Please make sure that your supervisor(s) assesses your performance on a quarterly basis and fill in the Quarterly Supervisor Report. Your supervisor should submit all the reports on a yearly basis or when you submit your portfolio.

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**18. What if I fail to fulfil the requirements for the portfolio?**

You are required to re-submit new cases again should you not fulfill the requirements of portfolio. No clarification/explanation/appeal to the outcome will be accepted.

**19. Currently I have my provisional registration extended (completed a 12 months of supervised optometry practice), can I practice part-time to complete the remaining requirement under the supervisory framework?**

Such requests will be reviewed by the Board's committee on a case-by-case basis. Please write in to the Board with your request.

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**20. What will happen to my registration if I fail to fulfil the requirements for the portfolio?**

If your registration is expiring, you would need to submit new application for registration with the Board, and you may be granted another provisional registration.

If your registration is not expiring, you may continue to practice and collect cases for resubmission within your registration. Please submit your cases as early as you can.

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**21. What do I do if my registration is expiring in one month time?**

Prior to this, you are to make sure that your portfolio has been submitted for review 120 days from your registration's end date. Should you wish to continue your registration with the Board, you are required to submit a new application for registration 30 days before your registration expiry.

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**22. My primary on-site supervisor is unable to provide me with adequate guidance. Can I appoint a secondary off-site supervisor?**

You are encouraged to engage your on-site supervisor as much as possible. However, if you feel that you are not provided with adequate guidance, you may send your request to the Board for consideration on a case-by-case.

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