

# **A Guide to Continuing Professional Education (CPE) For Optometrists & Opticians**

(Revised Oct 2020)

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## A. About CPE

The Optometrists and Opticians Board (OOB) has launched its Continuing Professional Education (CPE) framework since 2009. It consists of structured educational activities that serve to maintain, develop or increase the knowledge, skills and professional practice of optometrists and opticians. To ensure this, the OOB oversees a CPE framework to help practitioners continue their professional learning and continue to upgrade their professional competence to stay conversant.

CPE activities will also help the optometrists and opticians to keep abreast of new developments in their field of practice, so to serve the public more effectively and hence increase their confidence in the practitioners' professionalism.

This guide provides relevant information on CPE programme with aim to help optometrists and opticians to achieve the required CPE points.

## B. CPE Requirements

1. If you are a fully registered optometrist or optician, you are expected to achieve minimum CPE credits required within the qualifying period.
2. If you are a fully registered optometrist or optician whose practising certificates have lapsed and who desire to return to practise are also required to obtain the requisite CPE points in the 24 months preceding with application for PC with the Board.
3. Practitioners who are newly registered will have their CPE points pro-rated for the first qualifying period. The number of CPE points required will depend on the date of issue of his/her practising certificate (PC).

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### Qualifying Period and Points Requirements

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4. Each qualifying period (QP) is a two-year cycle starting from 1st October to 30th September. A fully registered Optician is required to meet 40 points, and Optometrists 50 points within each two-year QP cycle.
5. All practitioners are expected to plan and spread out their learning over the two-year QP. Practitioners shall aim to obtain at least 2 points per month to fulfil minimum requirement points by end of QP.

Registration Category	Minimum Points per QP
Optometrist	50
Optician (Contact Lens Practitioner)	40
Optician (Refraction & Dispensing)	40
Optician (Dispensing)	40

6. Practitioners may choose to achieve the required points by participating in variety of activities under the five activity categories.
7. Failure to achieve the necessary CPE points as determined by the Board could amount to professional misconduct and make you liable for disciplinary action by the Board.
8. *Any excess CPE points will not be carried forward to the following QP to meet the objectives of continuing professional education.*

## C. Approved Providers

### Local Accredited Providers

1. The OOB works with list of accredited providers to plan for activities which would help meet objectives of the OOB CPE framework. Below is the list of local accredited providers:

	Institutions/Organization	Acronym
1.	Changi General Hospital	CGH
2.	Eye Max Centre	EMC
3.	International Eye Cataract Retina Centre	IEREC
4.	Institute of Technical Education	ITE
5.	Khoo Teck Phuat Hospital	KTPH
6.	National University Hospital	NUH
7.	Ng Teng Fong General Hospital	NTFGH
8.	Ngee Ann Polytechnic	NP
9.	Singapore Eye Research Institute	SERI
10.	Singapore National Eye Centre	SNEC
11.	Singapore Optometry Association	SOA
12.	Singapore Polytechnic	SP
13.	Society of Opticianry Practitioners (Singapore)	SOP
14.	Tan Tock Seng Hospital	TTSH

2. Practitioners may refer to [Events Calendar](#) on OOB's website for list of upcoming events by the local providers and contact them directly for enquires on events/programmes.

### Recognised Overseas Agencies

3. CPE activities that have been awarded by the recognised overseas agencies shall be accepted as meeting the quality guidelines prescribed by the OOB. These include accredited agencies of developed countries where CPE is well established (e.g. UK, USA, New Zealand, Australia etc.).
4. You may refer to [OOB's website](#) for list of recognised overseas agencies under the "CPE" tab. The list will be reviewed and updated periodically.

## D. CPE Activity Categories

1. There are five **categories** of CPE activities. All optometrists and opticians are encouraged to participate in CPE activities from the different categories to have a more meaningful learning experience. Please refer to **Table 1** for more details on points awarded for each category.
2. Please note that the following activities would not be recognised for CPE points:
  - a. Induction programmes, job orientation, in-house training or non-practice related training.
  - b. Speaker for talks organised primarily to medical/optometry students, nurses, allied health and the public.
  - c. Product launch or orientation conducted by the commercial/ pharmaceutical companies.
3. You should maintain your own record of events attended and individual claims submitted. **Any duplication of claims would be rejected.**

**Table 1 – CPE Activities Categories**

Category	Types of Event	Participation Role	CPE Points allocated per hour/ submission	Cap per QP (2-yr cycle)
<b>Category 1A</b> Local Events  <u>Key criteria</u> - Local event - Face to face - Interactive/ real time	a. Lectures/ Talks	Participant	1 point	No cap
	b. Seminars/ Conferences/ Symposiums	Facilitator/ Speaker	3 points	
	c. Workshops/ Practical sessions			
d. Local interactive webinars				
e. Journal clubs				Capped at 5 points per QP
f. Non-core events as approved by OOB				
<b>Category 1B</b> Overseas Events*  <u>Key criteria</u> - Held overseas - Face to face	a. Lectures/ Talks	Participant	Half day event (4 hrs or less) = 3 points	40 points
	b. Seminars/ Conferences/ Symposiums		Full day event (5 hrs or more) = 6 points	
	c. Workshops/ Practical sessions	Facilitator/ Speaker	3 points	
<b>Category 2</b> Publications  <u>Key criteria</u> - Producing or reviewing of original papers/ publication	a. Publication of papers/ reports	Author/Co-author	Per paper= 5 points	30 points
	b. Editorial work		Per Poster = 2 points (including presentation)	
	c. Peer reviews	Reviewer	Per paper = 2 points	
	d. Posters	Editor/Co-editor	1 paper = 5 points	
<b>Category 3*</b> Reading & Online Programmes  <u>Key criteria</u> - Individual activity - Self-directed - No direct interaction with peers	a. Reading of journal articles/ research papers from recommended online sites	Participant	1 point	30 points
b. Online quiz/ Pre-recorded (local or overseas) webinar				
c. e-Learning with assessment				
<b>Category 4</b> Certification Courses & Professional Diplomas	Certification courses as approved by OOB	Participant	1 completed module = 4 CPE point	40 points (Per course)

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<u>Key criteria</u> - Post-registration - Formal/ structure course related to practice - Verifiable assessment	Postgraduate degrees/ formal programme as approved by OOB*.		Eligible for one-time exemption of CPE points based on course duration.	Required points for practitioners
<b>Category 5</b> Supervisory Framework (Supervisor Role)  <u>Key criteria</u> - Supervisors appointed under Board's Supervisory Framework	Provided supervision of not less than 12 months to provisional practitioners and have completed due reports and supervisee successfully obtained full registration.	Supervisor	5 points per supervisee	30 points

*\* Please refer to OOB's website for updated list of approved/ recognised programmes*

### Category 1A – Local Events

1. Local CPE activities refer to talks, seminars, conferences or workshops conducted in Singapore. You may refer to the approved upcoming events on OOB's [CPE Event Calendar](#).
2. In addition, OOB also award CPE points to interactive (live) webinars and non-clinical events organised by local accredited providers. Non-core topics must be related to practice and improvement of patient management, for example,
  - Health-related education, occupational health and safety
  - Disease prevention and nutrition to main ocular health
3. If you have attended local CPE events which are organised by local accredited CPE providers, your attendance will be submitted to the Board within 14 days from the date of the activity, and the CPE points will be credited to you accordingly.
4. If you have attended CPE events that are not organised by a local accredited provider, you may submit an application for review. Please note that the activity must be related to optometry/opticianry practice and take place within the qualifying period. Please submit the required supporting documents with your application for CPE claims online via PRS. You may refer to the PRS User Manual for details.
5. Please note that CPE points would only be awarded to participants who have met minimum 75% attendance for the activity; and completed the quiz and poll for local interactive webinar. You should maintain your own record of events attended and monitor status the CPE claims. In the event of any discrepancies in attendance, please clarify with the provider directly before contacting the OOB.

### Category 1B – Overseas Events

1. Overseas CPE activities refer to talks, seminars, conferences or workshops attended outside of Singapore. You may refer to the [OOB website](#) under the "CPE" tab for list of accepted "Overseas Accredited Agencies and Conferences".
2. CPE activities that have been awarded by the recognised overseas agencies shall be accepted as meeting the quality guidelines prescribed by the OOB. However, the OOB reserves the right to allocate the appropriate number of CPE points according to the CPE points system under category 1B.
3. Overseas CPE activities which were not on the recognised list would be reviewed periodically. You are strongly advised to submit the necessary documents to the OOB for review before attending the event.
4. Submission of claims should be done promptly within 2 months after the event. Please note that the activities must take place within the qualifying period.
5. Please submit the required supporting documents for CPE claims online via PRS. You may refer to the PRS User Manual for details.

### Category 2 – Publications

1. Practitioners can claim CPE points for being the author and editor for optometry or opticianry articles that are published in professional/ scientific journal and book/textbook.
2. For author/editor, the article must be published at the point of submission for claims and your name is reflected clearly on the publication.
3. For reviewer, you may submit claims for reviewing published or unpublished journal to be supported with the confirmation letter by the publisher and reviewed article(s).
4. For author and presentation of poster, you may submit claims to be supported with poster presented with your name reflected clearly on the poster.
5. Each publication/review is only eligible for one claim within the qualifying period. Duplicate claims (under same or different categories) will be rejected.
6. Please note that submissions of editorial or advertorial, opinion columns, newsletter is not acceptable.
7. Please submit the required supporting documents for CPE claims online via PRS. You may refer to the PRS User Manual for details.

### Category 3 – Reading and Online

1. Category 3 consist of reading and online programmes. CPE points will be awarded for reading optometry or opticianry-related articles from recommended journals or websites. You may refer to the [OOB website](#) for list of recommended journals and websites.
2. Before you start, please note the following list of articles/ submissions are not accepted:
  - a. Extractions from social media, editorial, advertorial, newsletter or newspaper articles intended for general public's information are not acceptable as readings.
  - b. Mismatch titles and content of summary and articles submitted
  - c. Partial submission of journal article (incomplete article)
  - d. Claims with incomplete supporting document (e.g. no articles or summary attached, no certificate of completion etc)
  - e. Repeat submissions of learning journal/online quizzes/webinars
  - f. Learning journals which are overly short
  - g. Submission of identical summary with peer
  - h. Direct extraction of paragraph/sentences from articles
3. To be eligible for the claim under **online quiz**, you must achieve a pass. For **local webinar**, you are required to fulfil minimum 75% attendance and completed the quiz/poll.
4. You may also submit claims for **e-Learning** which are conducted by recognised agencies. Practitioners may want to check the eligibility of CPE points with OOB if it is not stated in the list **before** enrolling to the online programme. Submission of claims should be done within 2 months upon receiving result slips or certificate of completion.
5. Please submit the required supporting documents for CPE claims online via PRS. You may refer to the PRS User Manual for details.



## Category 4 - Formal Certification

### **Certification Courses & Professional Diploma**

1. Short certification courses or professional diploma related optometry or opticianry can be considered for CPE points under this category.
2. The course/ programme must comprise of structured learning and measurable outcome offered by established institutions as approved by OOB.
3. Any course attended for the purpose of registration cannot be considered as a CPE activity. Any optometry/opticianry related certificates from a non-recognized institution (overseas/ local) would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
4. Course or module must be completed during the qualifying period. Submission of claims should be done within 2 months upon receiving result slips/ certificate of completion.
5. All claims submitted must be within your qualifying period. Each practitioner can claim up to 40 points per course. If the course duration is less than 2 years, may be prorated accordingly.
6. The OOB reserves the rights to allocate the appropriate number of CPE points according to the OOB CPE points system.
6. Please submit the required supporting documents for CPE claims online via PRS. You may refer to the PRS User Manual for details.

### **Postgraduate Degrees**

There are two ways to claim points under this category.

#### **A. Exemption of Required CPE Points During Programme**

1. Practitioners enrolled in postgraduate degrees in relation to optometry can be considered for one-time exemption from fulfilling required CPE points based on duration of course.
2. The programme must comprise of structured learning and verifiable assessment offered by established institutions. Please refer to OOB's website under the "CPE" tab for updated list of approved /recognized programmes.
3. Exemption of points may be prorated based on the duration of course. For example, an optometrist who enrolled in an 18-month course would be eligible for exemption of 38 CPE points, or 30 points for opticians.
4. Applications for exemptions by practitioners undergoing studies would be reviewed in conjunction to previous submissions, if any.
5. Please submit the required supporting documents for CPE claims online via PRS. You may refer to the PRS User Manual for details.

### Category 5 – Supervisory Framework

1. Practitioners appointed as supervisor under OOB's Supervisory Framework are eligible for CPE points under this category.
2. Points will be awarded to Supervisors if they have met the following criteria:
  - a. Assess and sign-off cases for logbook submission.
  - b. Supervision of not less than 12 months (*from date of appointment as supervisor*).
  - c. The supervisee must have successfully obtained full registration (*you may search online if he/she has successful obtained full registration*).
3. Supervisor must submit the claim(s) **within 6 months** from supervisee's registration date.
4. Supervisors are required to complete 'CPE Claim for Category 5' form that is available at the [OOB's website](#) under the "CPE" tab. Please upload the completed claim form with your application for CPE claim online via PRS. You may refer to the PRS User Manual for details.

### E. Submission and Monitoring of CPE Claims

1. Except for activities under Category 1A, practitioners are required to login using your Singpass/ Google Authenticator to the Professional Registration System ([PRS](#)) to submit claims for CPE points for all other categories.
2. Please ensure to submit all necessary documents for review; incomplete supporting document or documents that do not match the claims will be rejected.
3. You are strongly encouraged to submit your claims as early as possible for processing and review. Practitioners may monitor status of CPE claims and records after logging in to the PRS.

### H. Lowering of CPE Requirement

1. All practitioners are expected to participate in CPE to ensure that your optometry and opticianry knowledge and skills remain current and relevant, and to maintain a reasonable level of competence.
2. Exceptions for lowering of CPE requirements would only consider for the following circumstances.
  - a. **Maternity Leave**
    - i. Working mothers would be eligible for lowering of 8 CPE points with submission of mandatory documents.
    - ii. Please submit a copy of birth certificate of your new born together with your application online for "Lowering of CPE" before end of qualifying period.
  - b. **Health Conditions**
    - i. Practitioners who are suffering from severe health conditions or conditions affecting performance of activities of daily living (ADL) or fitness to practice during the qualifying period may be considered for lowering of CPE.
    - ii. Please submit the following documents together with your application online for "Lowering of CPE".
      - a. Original copy of medical report or doctor's memo on the conditions.;
      - b. Any other supporting document for consideration (e.g. medical certificate).
    - iii. Lowering of CPE requirements would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**c. Not in practice**

- i. If you are currently not practicing and wish to renew your practising certificate, you are still required fulfil the CPE requirements.
- ii. Please also note that the Board may cancel your registration if you do not renew your PC for a continuous period of 5 years or have no address in Singapore where you can be reached.

**d. Resuming Practice**

For practitioners who want to resuming practice after practising certificate has expired, you are required to complete the required CPE points within 24 months before your application for PC renewal. Disciplinary proceedings may still apply if practitioners are not able to fulfil this condition.

**e. Residing Overseas**

You are still required to fulfill CPE points. OOB also recognised major overseas conferences and local activities accredited by the respective authorities. If you have attended any of those activities in your residing country, you may submit your claims under Category 1B to OOB for review to achieve your CPE points. Do note that maximum claim for Category 1B is 40. Hence, you may complete the remaining CPE points through online reading/programme under Category 3.

## **I. Step-by-Step User Manual**

For guidance on submission of claims, you may download a step-by-step [user manual](#) on how to submit your claims online on [OOB's website](#).

Alternatively, you may contact OOB Secretariat at [OOB@spb.gov.sg](mailto:OOB@spb.gov.sg) if you need any specific clarifications.

## **J. Feedback about CPE Events or Providers**

If you have any feedback on the CPE event attended, including quality of event, speakers or relevancy of content, you may feedback to OOB directly via email at [OOB@spb.gov.sg](mailto:OOB@spb.gov.sg). Please specify the name of CPE provider, date and title of CPE event in your feedback. Your feedback will remain anonymous to the provider.

**. End .**