

**2022**

**ANNUAL REPORT**



**Optometrists & Opticians Board**



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## 1. Chairman's Message

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Dear fellow eyecare colleagues,

In the last few years, Singapore's optometrists and opticians have come together to take care of our patients despite the waves of COVID-19 infections. We have responded to the call for better infection prevention and control in our practice environment. We have continued to participate in online Continuing Professional Education (CPE) activities. Despite the pandemic, the number of optometrists and opticians completing their provisional registration and maintaining full registration, continue to rise.

As the COVID-19 pandemic enters the endemic phase, another challenge arises, threatening the health and well-being of our population – the epidemic of chronic metabolic conditions brought about by rapid aging and poor lifestyle.

The scourge of diabetes mellitus, smoking and metabolic conditions manifest in the eyes through diabetic retinopathy and age-related macular degeneration, both among the top causes of irreversible blindness in Singapore. Compounding these are the various complications of high myopia, as the first cohorts of highly myopic generation reaches late adulthood.

The projected burden of sight-threatening diseases could not be overcome merely by increasing secondary and tertiary care facilities. Primary eye care is key in providing primary and secondary prevention for our population and maintaining visual health at a sustainable level of resourcing.

Singapore had prevailed against the waves of COVID-19 infection. The key success factor is clarity in leadership and unity across the different professional groups, communities and agencies. The Ministry of Health has made the clarion call for a Healthier SG. Together, we could prevail against the epidemic of visual morbidity if we were to stand united in contributing towards better vision for Singaporeans.

**Prof Lim Tock Han**

Chairman

Optometrists and Opticians Board

## 2. Optometrists and Opticians Board

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Chairman	<b>Prof LIM Tock Han</b> Ophthalmologist, National Healthcare Group
Registrar	<b>Dr Harold TAN</b> Director, Home Recovery Task Group, Ministry of Health
Representative for Director-General of Education	<b>Ms Ruby TAN</b> Pedagogical Excellence Branch, Ministry of Education
Members	<b>Mr CHEONG Lip Keong</b> Optometrist, Ming Optique  <b>Ms CHNG Shih Yun Olivia</b> Optometrist, Eyecare People Pte Ltd  <b>Ms Vivien CHIANG Su Wun</b> Optometrist, Johnson & Johnson Pte Ltd  <b>Mr KOH Lian Buck</b> Optometrist, Pearl's Visioncare Pte Ltd (City Gate)  <b>Ms KWOK Siet Yuen, Shirley</b> Optician (Refraction and Dispensing), Eye Design Optics (Bedok 59)  <b>Dr KOH Liang Hwee</b> Optometrist, Pearl's Optical Co Pte Ltd (People's Park)  <b>Mr Simon NG Chin Kwee</b> Optician (Refraction and Dispensing), Yi Eyecare  <b>Dr SETHURAMAN Rama</b> Medical Devices Branch, Health Sciences Authority  <b>Ms TAN Choy Hong</b> Optometrist, Ngee Ann Polytechnic Optometry Centre

### 3. Committees of the Board

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#### **Accreditation Committee**

The Accreditation Committee is responsible for accrediting courses of instruction related to optometry and opticianry for the purpose of registration and recommending acceptable displayable higher qualifications.

#### **Assessment Committee**

The Assessment Committee is responsible for developing competencies for opticians and optometrists and determining the structure and content of qualifying examinations.

#### **Credentials Committee**

The Credentials Committee is responsible for conducting reviews and providing recommendations on all registration matters, including conditions for different types of registration.

#### **Continuing Education Committee**

The Continuing Education Committee is responsible for setting and reviewing policies and standards for continuing professional education (CPE), accrediting CPE programmes and approving applications for CPE claims.

#### **Practice, Ethics & Conduct Committee**

The Practice, Ethics and Conduct Committee is responsible for determining standards and guidelines for the professional conduct and practice of optometrists and opticians.

## 4. Introduction

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The Optometrists & Opticians Act (Chapter 213A) (the “Act”) was passed in Parliament in July 2007. The Act empowers the Optometrists and Opticians Board (the “Board”) to register and regulate all optometrists and opticians and their practices in Singapore.

The Board sets the standards required for registration, approves the registration, issues Practising Certificates (PCs) as well as regulates the conduct and practice of optometrists and opticians. These functions ensure that registered practitioners are qualified and properly trained so that members of the public receive safe and quality eye-care services.

As of 31 December 2022, the Board has in its Registers, a total of 2,739 registered optometrists and opticians.

**Table 1- No. of registrants in each category from 2018 to 2022**

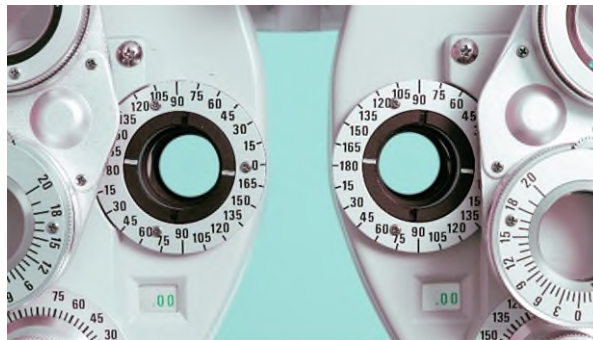
Register Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Optometrists	1,198	1,249	1,263	1,325	1,370
Opticians (Refraction & Dispensing/ R&D)	1,322	1,288	1,271	1,280	1,286
Opticians (Dispensing/D)	92	82	102	68	67
Opticians (Contact Lens Practitioner/CLP)	21	17	17	16	16
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,633</b>	<b>2,636</b>	<b>2,653</b>	<b>2,689</b>	<b>2,739</b>

## Who Are Optometrists?

Optometrists are primary eye-care providers who specialise in performing vision assessment and eye examinations. Through these examinations, optometrists can detect important eye conditions such as cataract and contact lens complications.

In general, optometrists are qualified to:

1. Perform refraction on adults, children or adolescents;
2. Prescribe optical appliances such as glasses and contact lenses to correct vision problems such as short-sightedness, long-sightedness and Astigmatism;
3. Perform eye examinations and refer patients to other healthcare practitioners such as ophthalmologists for further management if any eye conditions are detected; and
4. Provide other forms of eye-care which are part of opticianry (e.g. dispensing and fitting of glasses and contact lenses).



## Who Are Opticians?

Opticians are eye care providers equipped with the skills to dispense and fit glasses based on prescriptions from optometrists or ophthalmologists.

Opticians are registered in the following categories:

1. **Opticians (Dispensing only)** – these opticians are only qualified to dispense and fit glasses.
2. **Opticians (Refraction and Dispensing)** – these opticians are qualified to:
  - a. Perform refraction on patients who are 8 years of age or older; and
  - b. Dispense and fit glasses to correct vision problems such as short-sightedness, long-sightedness, and astigmatism.
3. **Opticians (Contact Lens Practice)** – these opticians are qualified to:
  - a. Perform refraction on patients who are 8 years of age or older;
  - b. Dispense and fit glasses and contact lenses to correct vision problems such as short-sightedness, long-sightedness and Astigmatism; and
  - c. Provide aftercare to patients, including monitoring to detect, prevent and manage problems or complications arising from the use of contact lenses.

## 5. Key Highlights

### 5.1 Continuing Professional Education (CPE)

Under the Board’s Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Guidelines (articles 5.4 and 6.4), all registered optometrists and opticians are expected to participate in CPE activities to ensure that their optometry and opticianry knowledge and skills remain current and relevant and a reasonable level of competence is maintained.

Each qualifying period (QP) begins from 1 October to 30 September in the following year; a fully registered practitioner will go through a two-year cycle. The targeted number of points within the QP of two years is 40 points for opticians and 50 points for optometrists.

For QP ending September 2022, 90% of the practitioners achieved the minimum CPE points required.

	QP ending 2018	QP ending 2019	QP ending 2020	QP ending 2021	QP ending 2022
Percentage of practitioners who met min. CPE points	87%	96%	92%	40%	90%

#### CPE Events

As physical events and seminars were not possible during the pandemic period, the Board started recognising virtual events organised by local providers as part of CPE activities. In 2022, there was a total of 144 events accredited under Category 1A (Local events) while 90% were conducted virtually.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Category 1A	145	126	74	144	144

### 5.2 Supervisory Framework

Under the OOB’s Supervisory Framework, all provisionally and conditionally registered optometrists and opticians (“Supervisees”) are required to practise under the guidance of qualified fully registered optometrists and opticians (“Supervisors”) and fulfil the Supervisory Framework and/or prescribed conditions during the entire period of their provisional or conditional registration.



To ensure that supervisors carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively, the OOB has been conducting Supervisory Framework briefings for supervisors annually since 2014. The OOB requires each supervisor to attend at least one briefing session before or during the period of undertaking. Selected practitioners on provisional registration are also invited to attend.

Each session is normally conducted over two half-days, with the first session for supervisors of provisionally-registered optometrists and the second for supervisors of provisionally-registered opticians.

The supervisors were briefed on the requirements of the Supervisory Framework and the prescribed conditions for case submissions. To enable supervisors to better understand and apply the case review criteria, attendees were separated into workgroups for discussions using real case records from past logbook submissions by supervisees. The feedback received from the supervisors had thus far been positive and encouraging.

In 2022, OOB conducted two rounds of briefing in March and October respectively. A total of 114 supervisors attended the briefings.

Since 2020, OOB also delivers talk to the optometry graduates at Singapore Polytechnic and Ngee Ann Polytechnic during their annual career sharing day to better prepare them for registration and fulfilment of supervisory framework requirements when they are ready to join the industry.

### 5.3 Complaints and Disciplinary Cases

The Board had received a total of seven complaints since 2017 and one case was pending investigation as of 31 December 2022.

Complaints received	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
<b>Opticians (D)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Opticians (R&amp;D)</b>	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
<b>Optometrists</b>	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

## 6. Registration Data

The data in this section is based on practitioners who are on register with valid Practising Certificates.

### 6.1 New Registrations

Since the Board started regulating the professions in 2008, there has been a steady increase in the number of optometrists and opticians. The figures provided in the table below represent new registrants each year for all registration types (full, provisional, conditional and temporary registration).

Register Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Opticians (D)	21	27	22	19	0
Opticians (R&D)	50	64	41	63	30
Optometrists	141	162	126	165	143
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>173</b>

### 6.2 Practising Certificate Renewal 2021

A total of 1,770 registered optometrists and opticians were required to renew their PCs which were valid till 31 December 2022. Among these, 1,670 (94.2%) practitioners submitted their applications and successfully renewed their PCs for two years from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2024.

#### Number of PCs renewed

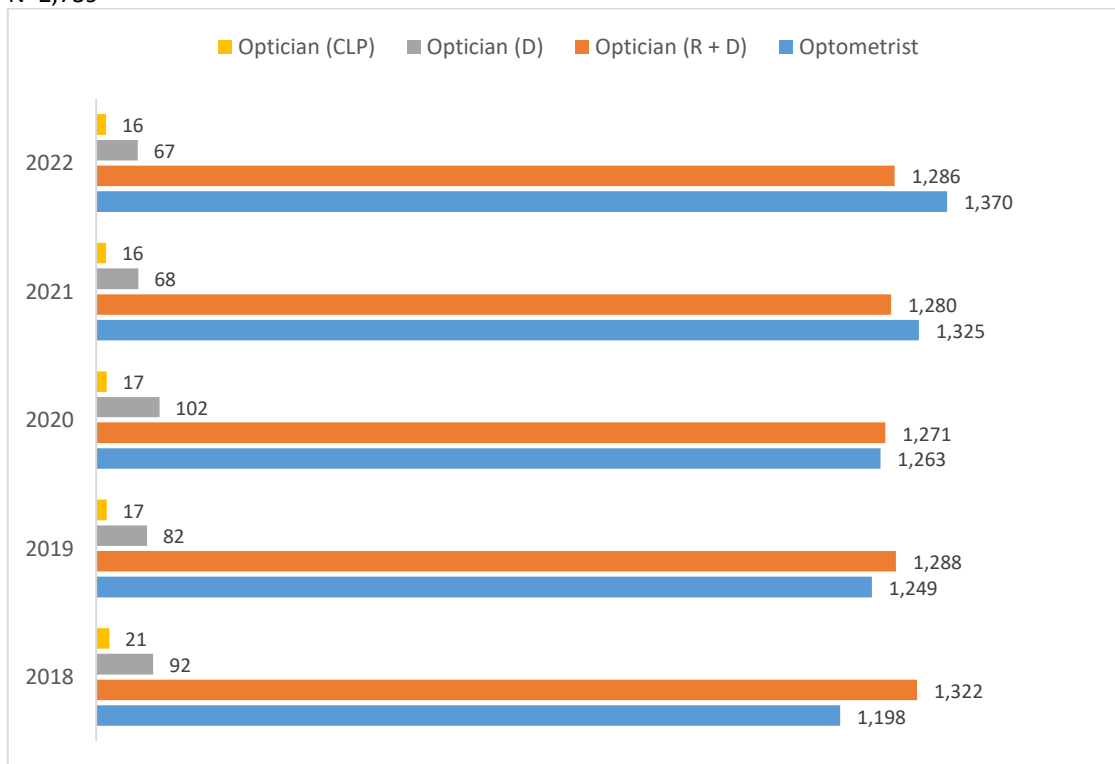
Register Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Opticians (D)	70	5	61	5	50
Opticians (R&D)	1,004	113	997	154	971
Opticians (CLP)	15	2	14	2	12
Optometrists	535	386	594	441	637
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>1,624</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>1,666</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>1,670</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category



### 6.3 Registration by Categories

N=2,739



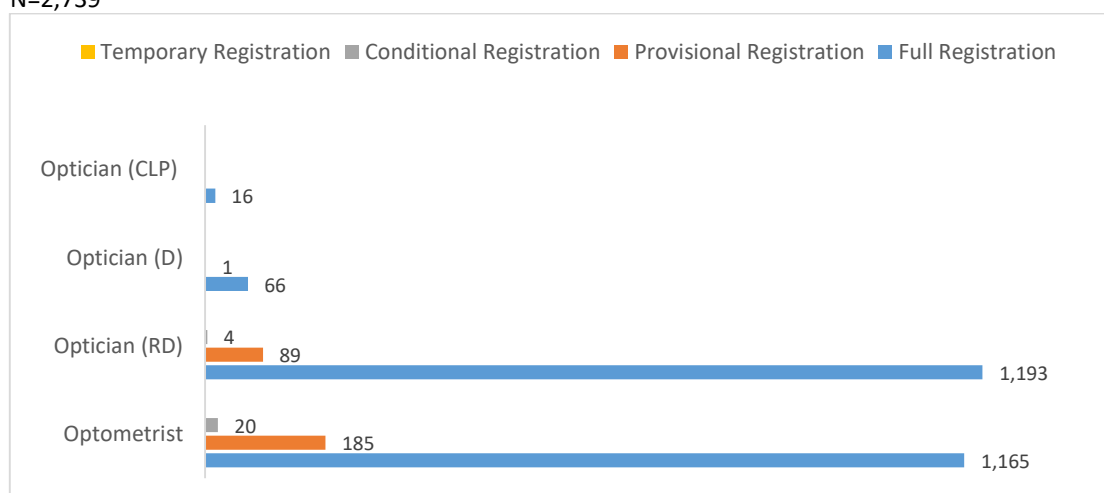
Register Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Optometrists</b>	1,198	1,249	1,263	1,325	1,370
<b>Opticians (R&amp;D)</b>	1,322	1,288	1,271	1,280	1,286
<b>Opticians (D)</b>	92	82	102	68	67
<b>Opticians (CLP)</b>	21	17	17	16	16
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,633</b>	<b>2,636</b>	<b>2,653</b>	<b>2,689</b>	<b>2,739</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category



## 6.4 Registration by Type

N=2,739

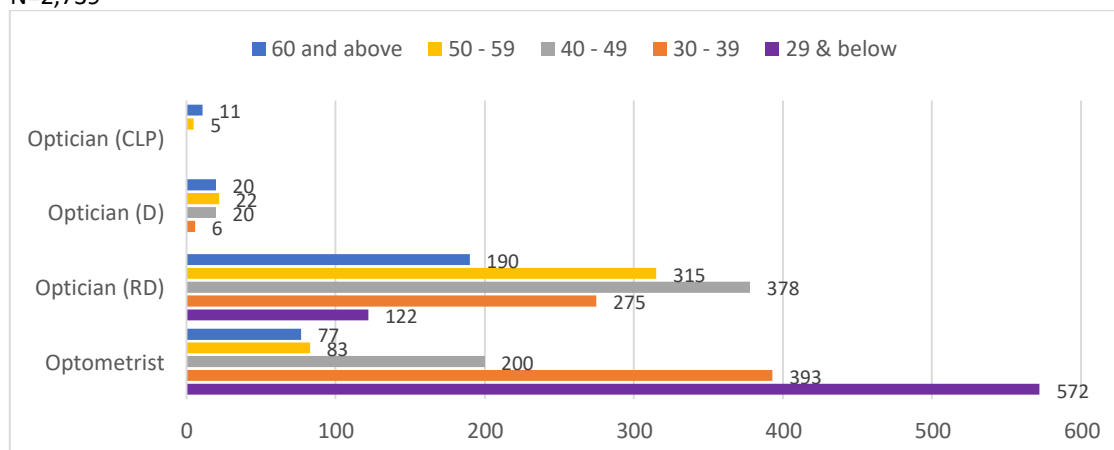


Register Type	Optometrist	Optician (RD)	Optician (D)	Optician (CLP)
<b>Full Registration</b>	1,165	1,193	66	16
<b>Provisional Registration</b>	185	89	1	0
<b>Conditional Registration</b>	20	4	0	0
<b>Temporary Registration</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>16</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category

## 6.5 Practitioners by Age Group

N=2,739

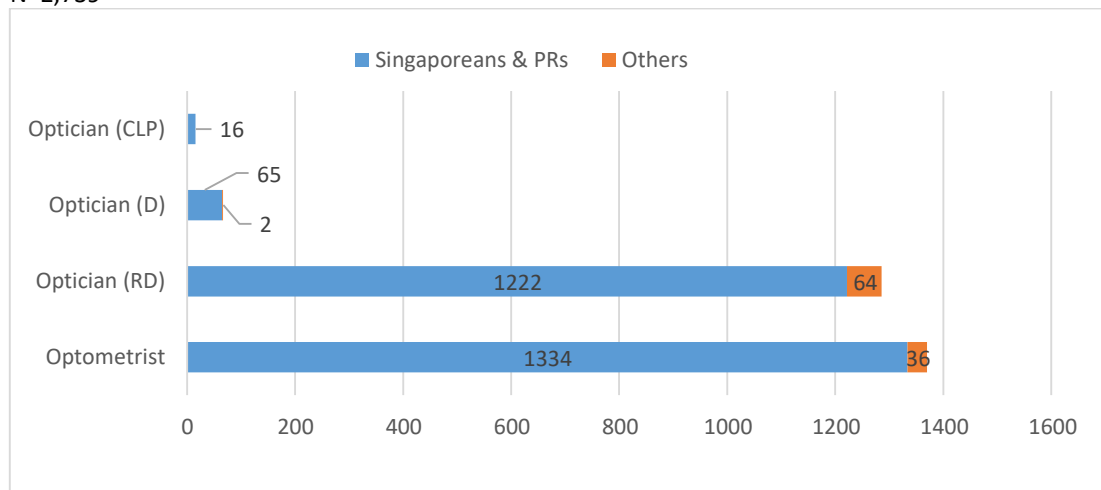


Age Group	Optometrist	Optician (RD)	Optician (D)	Optician (CLP)*
<b>29 &amp; below</b>	552	111	0	0
<b>30 - 39</b>	430	249	5	0
<b>40 - 49</b>	222	387	18	0
<b>50 - 59</b>	85	325	23	4
<b>60 and above</b>	81	214	21	12
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>16</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category

## 6.6 Practitioners by Nationality

N=2,739



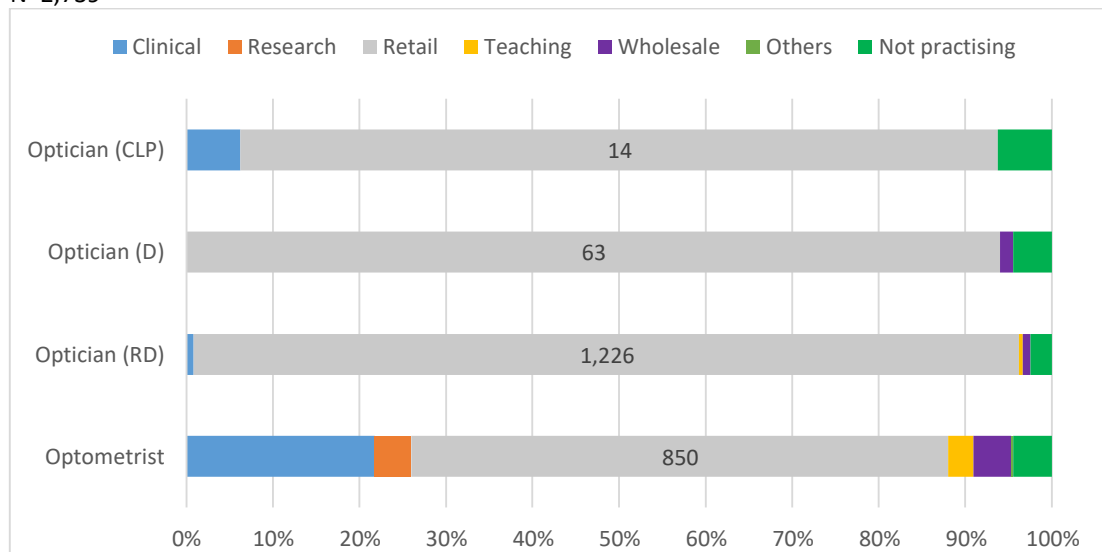
Nationality	Optometrist	Optician (RD)	Optician (D)	Optician (CLP)*
<b>Singaporeans &amp; PRs</b>	1,334	1,222	65	16
<b>Others</b>	36	64	2	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>16</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category



## 6.7 Practitioners by Fields of Employment

N=2,739



Employment Type	Optometrist	Optician (RD)	Optician (D)	Optician (CLP)*
Clinical	298	11	0	1
Research	58	0	0	0
Retail	850	1,226	63	14
Teaching	40	6	0	0
Wholesale	60	11	0	0
Others	3	0	0	0
Not practising	61	32	3	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>16</b>

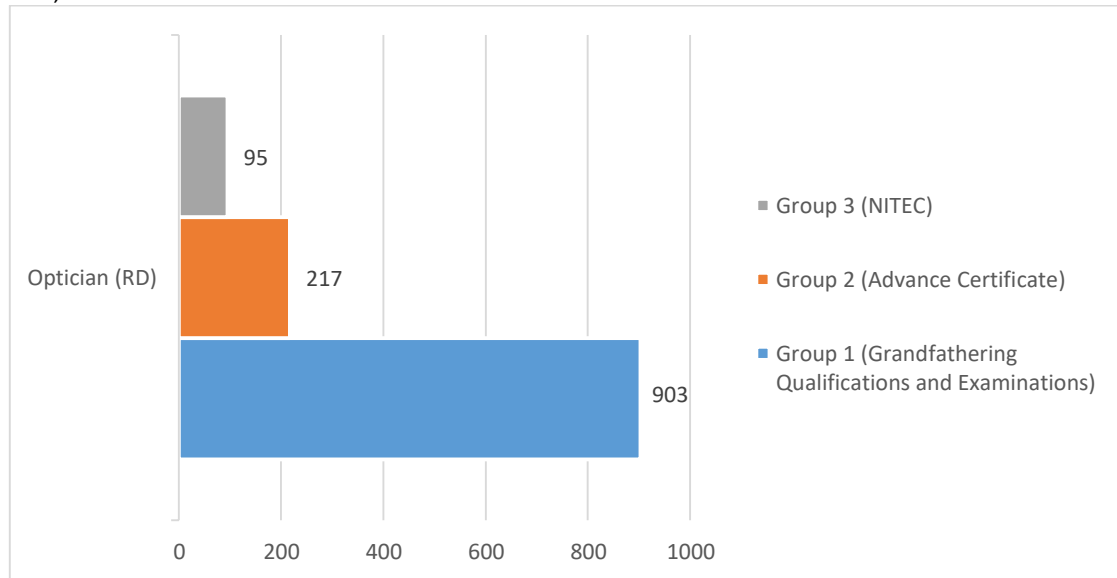
\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category



## 6.8 Practitioners by Basic Qualifications

### Qualification Type for Opticians (RD)

N=1,215

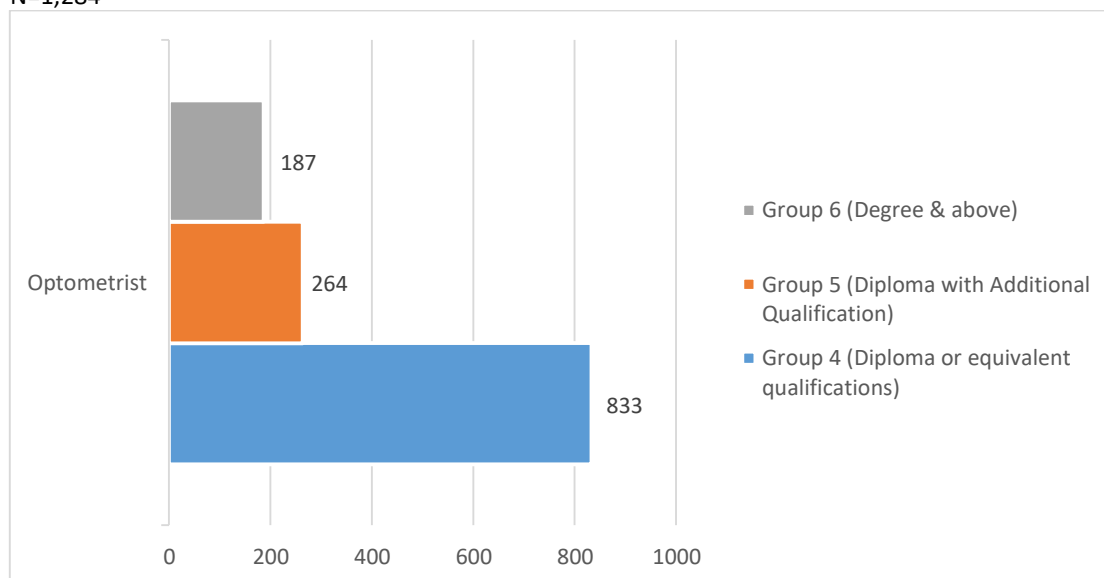


Qualification Type for Opticians (RD)	Optician (RD)
Group 1 (Grandfathering Qualifications and Examinations)	903
Group 2 (Advance Certificate)	217
Group 3 (NITEC)	95
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,215</b>



## Qualification Type for Optometrists

N=1,284



Qualification Type for Optometrists	Optometrist
<b>Group 4 (Diploma or equivalent qualifications)</b>	833
<b>Group 5 (Diploma with additional qualification) *</b>	264
<b>Group 6 (Degree and above)</b>	187
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,284</b>

*\*Additional qualification refers to any other qualifications that are recognised for display in practice but not for the purpose of registration by the optometrists and opticians (Registration and Practising Certificates) Regulations, and may be diplomas, degrees or higher qualifications*







**Optometrists & Opticians Board**

Email Address:

[OOB@spb.gov.sg](mailto:OOB@spb.gov.sg)

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<https://www.healthprofessionals.gov.sg/oob>

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