



IMPORTANT: THIS INFORMATION IS FOR EYEGLASS PROGRAM APPLICANTS ENROLLING IN YEAR TWO OF THE EYEGLASSES PROGRAM (SEMESTER 3 &/OR 4) IN FALL 2023 OR WINTER 2024

NAIT/OAC Optical Sciences – Eyeglasses Program

The Optical Sciences Eyeglasses Program is produced by the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) and is administered by the Opticians Association of Canada (OAC) to students outside of the province of Alberta and Territories. This program is offered in English and French.

The Optical Sciences Programs will give those already employed in the optical industry the skills required of a Licensed Optician. The NAIT/OAC Optical Sciences Eyeglasses Program is a 4-semester training program. Each semester is approximately 3-months in length. The NAIT/OAC Contact Lenses Program is an additional 2-semester training program.

In the Eyeglasses Diploma Program, theory courses taken online are complemented by 2,000 hours of clinical practicum, directly supervised by a qualified preceptor in the workplace. **Therefore, applicants of this program must already be working in the optical industry.** *It is suggested that students work approximately 38 or more hours per week to be able to complete the clinical hours in the required timeframe.*

Career Options

Grads work as registered Opticians in retail dispensaries, low vision practices, refractive surgery clinics, and contact lens specialty practices. You can also go on to obtain advanced practice certificates in contact lenses and refracting.

Accreditation & Industry Certification

The NAIT Optical Sciences Programs are accredited by Accreditation Canada <https://accreditation.ca/>

Completion of this program is one of the steps towards registration as a Licensed Optician in British Columbia. The next step is to successfully pass the NACOR Optical Sciences Eyeglasses Examination. For more information on the NACOR exams, go to www.nacor.ca.

Students in B.C. must meet all registration requirements of the College of Opticians of British Columbia (COBC). For further information on registration as a Licensed Optician in B.C., visit the COBC website at www.cobc.ca

Quick Facts

Credential: Diploma

Intakes: Fall, Winter

Length: 4-semesters (3 mths/semester)

Location: Not applicable



Application Deadlines

Fall 2023 Intake (August 28 start) – Application period: May 15 to August 5

This intake runs courses for Eyeglass Semester One and Semester Three.

Winter 2024 Intake (January 3 start) – Application period: October 15 to December 1

This intake runs courses for Eyeglass Semester One, Semester Two and Semester Four.

Spring 2024 Intake (May 1 start) – Application period: April 1 to April 20

This intake runs courses for Eyeglass Semester Two as well as limited Semester Three & Four courses. This intake is for existing students only.

Entrance/Admission Requirements

Academic Requirements

- **CANADIAN HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR ASSESSED EQUIVALENT**

Applicants must have obtained a Canadian High School Diploma or the assessed equivalent (e.g. GED). Applicants must submit documentation as proof of this requirement. It is recommended that applicants have a strong background in mathematics, with knowledge of geometry and trigonometry.

Canadian High School or GED Graduates are asked to submit an official transcript of marks. Official transcripts are original academic documents bearing the official seal, stamp and/or signature of the issuing institution or agency. **Transcripts must include date of graduation.**

To order your Canadian High School Transcript, please visit the following website:

[Get High School Transcripts - alis \(alberta.ca\)](https://www.alis.alberta.ca)

Click on the province you graduated from for further instructions. *(Please indicate on your transcript request that the original transcript be mailed to your HOME ADDRESS and NOT to the OAC or NAIT)*

Applicants educated outside of Canada must submit an academic assessment indicating equivalency to a Canadian High School Diploma. The OAC and NAIT accept assessments from the following organizations:

- An official International Qualifications Assessment Service ([IQAS](#)) course-by-course Educational Assessment.
 - An official World Education Services ([WES](#)) course-by-course Credential Assessment (applicable to post-secondary documents only).
 - An official Education Credential Evaluators ([ECE](#)) course-by-course Assessment Report.
- **ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT**

Applicants who have not successfully completed three (3) full-time consecutive years of academic studies (excluding ESL courses) where the language of instruction was in English, need to provide further proof of English Language Proficiency. For more information about the ELP Requirement, please visit [English Language Proficiency - NAIT](#) or contact the OAC at education@opticians.ca



Non-Academic Requirements

- **WORKING IN AN OPTICAL DISPENSARY WITH A QUALIFIED SUPERVISOR**
Applicants must already be working in an optical dispensary and have a qualified preceptor/supervisor willing to supervise the clinical (practical) component of the program. The preceptor must be a registered, practicing Optician or Optometrist. The OAC and NAIT allow a preceptor to supervise a maximum of two (2) students at a time. The OAC and NAIT allow a student to have a maximum of two (2) preceptors. Additional requests must be approved by the OAC. **Preceptors must abide by and follow the policies and guidelines as outlined by their Provincial Regulatory College as it pertains to supervision of a student, if applicable.** Please ensure that your preceptor has checked with their Provincial Regulatory College to ensure they understand and meet the policies and/or requirements of your province, if applicable.

PLEASE NOTE: For Preceptors who are Licensed Opticians in BC, the Regulatory College in BC (College of Opticians of British Columbia - COBC) does not currently have any requirements in place outside of the NAIT requirements related to supervision of a student in BC.

Tuition & Fees (subject to change)

The cost per credit for tuition for 2023/2024 is \$102.00 (*\$183.60 for International students*).

The fees below outline enrollment in all courses for a particular Eyeglass Year Two Semester for Fall 2023, Winter 2024 & Spring 2024 intakes (if you are not enrolling in a full semester of courses, contact education@opticians.ca for tuition fees):

Eyeglasses Year Two

Semester Three: **\$2109.00** (\$1989.00 tuition + \$120.00 ancillary fees)
International fee: \$3700.20 (\$3580.20 tuition + \$120.00 ancillary fees)

Semester Four: **\$1956.00** (\$1836.00 tuition + \$120.00 ancillary fees)
International fee: \$3424.80 (\$3304.80 tuition + \$120.00 ancillary fees)

Tuition does not include applicable application fees, textbooks, workshop fees and supplies that may be recommended or required.

**International designation refers to students who do not have the status of Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident of Canada*

Textbooks & Supplies (estimate)

Eyeglasses Year One: \$400

Eyeglasses Year Two: \$200

**Please refer to Textbook & Supplies found under About the Program in this document*



How to Apply

Students outside of the province of Alberta and Territories register directly through the Opticians Association of Canada (OAC); **DO NOT** register through APAS on the NAIT website. Please refer to the [‘Application Process’](#) document for information on how to apply.

APPLICATION FEE: To apply for the Optical Sciences Programs, there is a non-refundable application fee of \$50 + GST (subject to change). This fee applies to first time Year One applicants only and is due at time of application.

Please note: Given that distance learning does not require one to be in Canada, foreign nationals wanting to complete this online program in Canada are not eligible for a study permit. For further details, please review Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada’s website.

Advanced Credit

You may apply for advanced credit once you have been accepted into the program. Advanced Credit can be Transfer Credit (for completed post-secondary courses), Credential Recognition (for completed certificates, diplomas or degrees) or PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition). Advanced credit requirements that are applied to each request include: You must have completed the course or program no more than five (5) years ago and must have a minimum mark of C- in the course(s) or program. Additional requirements may apply.

About the Program

Opticianry is a growing industry that involves the fitting and supplying of eyeglasses. The skillful preparation and fitting of corrective lenses is vitally important to the customer’s health, so people entering this field require rigorous training and education. The work is retail-oriented, so anyone considering this as a career must have great communication skills as well as a flexible schedule.

The Optical Sciences Eyeglasses Diploma is an independent study program consisting of four semesters. Depending on when a student enrolls, completion of the full program can take anywhere from 16 – 20 months*. Each semester requires completion of theoretical courses and clinical (practicum) courses. The clinical practicum consists of on-the-job training similar in nature to an apprenticeship – students perfect their skills under the supervision of registered personnel at their place of employment.

**This time frame will be extended if a student is unsuccessful in passing courses throughout the program.*

It’s all about the eye: the conditions, anatomy and physiology. Year One will emphasize the adjustment of frames, mathematics and optics, the use of instruments and tools, communication, prescriptions and single vision lens design, and analysis and interpretation of lenses and prescriptions. Year Two introduces the student to eye health, prescriptions and multifocal lens design, analysis and interpretation of multifocal lenses and prescriptions, screening and charting, ethics and standards of practice as well as management for opticians.

Distance Learning

This program is primarily taught online using an e-learning system called Moodle. The program contains a course of study governed by prescribed textbooks and computer-based learning guided by an online



instructor. Students must participate in online discussions, can view and print class notes, and apply theory through hands-on exercises and quizzes. Students are also required to complete an online final examination at the end of each semester. The average study time required to spend each week on the course is approximately 12 hours; however, the time required to master the content will vary with each individual. This time DOES NOT include Clinical work.

Technology Requirements

A reliable high-speed internet connection is required to connect to the online course content. To use Moodle, any current and supported operating system and web browser will work, however Mozilla and Chrome are preferred.

If using an iPad or tablet instead of a laptop or desktop computer, be aware that older and non-supported devices may not work in the program. A student-facing web camera either as part of the device or as a plug-in external device is required for tests and exams.

The Optical Sciences Programs use Respondus and Lockdown browser for tests and exams. Please review the computer requirements listed for the lockdown browser:

- [What are the computer requirements for installations of Respondus LockDown Browser? – Respondus Support](#)

Textbook & Supplies

Tuition does not include the cost of textbooks(s) and supplies. **It is the responsibility of the student to purchase the textbook(s) and supplies in time for course commencement.**

Please consult the textbook & supply list by clicking on this link: [TEXTBOOK & SUPPLY LIST](#)
Students can purchase textbook and supplies through the NAIT Bookstore (<https://shop.nait.ca>), or an alternate source.

Semester Final Examinations

Final semester examinations are completed online. You will complete an examination for each theory course you are enrolled in. There will be a scheduled date and start time for the final semester examinations. Final semester examinations will take place at the beginning of December for Fall intake, beginning of April for Winter intake and end of July for Spring intake. **Examinations MUST be taken on the scheduled day at the scheduled time.** You will receive more information about final examinations in the Student Handbook.

Clinical Practicum/Work Experience

Through the clinical practicum, students gain practical experience by working with patients and equipment under **direct supervision** of a qualified preceptor. Each level of the clinical practicum requires 500 **supervised** dispensing hours to be documented and signed off by the preceptor. The 500 dispensing hours per clinical practicum level are due at the end of each semester. Over the 4-semester program a student will complete 2000 practical hours (1000 in Year One and 1000 in Year Two). There is also an accompanying clinical practicum manual to be completed during this time. NAIT and the OAC allow a student to have a **maximum of two (2) preceptors** unless a request for more is approved by the OAC. NAIT and the OAC allow a preceptor to supervise a maximum of two (2) students at the same time.

It is important that you and your preceptor(s) understand the role they will play in your clinical practicum before they agree to act in this role. **Click to learn more about the: [CLINICAL PRACTICUM AND THE ROLE OF A PRECEPTOR](#)** *(Please print this off and provide a copy to your preceptor)*



Completion Requirements

To obtain a NAIT Optical Sciences Eyeglasses Diploma, students must successfully complete:

- 12 online theory courses with a minimum overall passing grade of 63% in each course.
- 4 clinical practicum courses of 500 dispensing hours each, under the direct supervision of a qualified preceptor. The 500 dispensing hours are due at the end of each semester, along with a clinical manual. ***The time frame to complete a clinical practicum is approximately 3 months, which translates to approximately 38 hours of supervised work per week.***

Required Courses

Here is the list of required courses that must be taken to successfully complete your program.

Semester 1

OPSC1112 Frames - 4.5 credits

Selecting the appropriate frame for a patient provides the foundation for a proper fitting optical appliance. Students will learn to differentiate frame parts; evaluate frame measurements; and adjust, repair and modify the frame.

OPSC1113 Math and Optics - 3.0 credits

The study of light and how it is altered by lenses is called optics. As an optician, you will have a greater understanding of lenses, how they work, and be able to communicate this knowledge to your patients. Math is the main foundation to optics. In this course you will learn to solve problems using basic mathematical skills, formulas and equations. You will be able to explain optical prisms and calculate optical formulas. Optical formulas will be used to determine what happens to the path of light and the power of a lens when you alter such factors as position of the light source, lens position and pantoscopic tilt.

OPSC1211 Instruments and Measurements - 3.0 credits

To make eyeglasses that will satisfy the patient's visual requirements, the student must be able to use a variety of instruments and tools to ensure the patient's lenses function properly. Students will learn to measure and interpret the patient's pupil distance, the position of the major reference point of a lens and multifocal heights.

OPSC1191 Clinical I: Eyeglasses - 9.0 credits

Students will apply theoretical knowledge in the optical environment. Students will acquire experience in professional behaviour, patient care and instrumentation under the direct supervision of an optician or optometrist. 500 dispensing practical hours are required as part of this Clinical.



Semester 2

OPSC1111 Communication - 3.0 credits

Students will learn the necessary skills to communicate effectively with patients and other professionals.

OPSC1212 Prescriptions and Single Vision Lens Design - 3.0 credits

Students will learn about the various ophthalmic lenses available to the patient and how each lens will play a different role in satisfying the patient's visual needs.

OPSC1213 Analysis and Interpretation of Lenses and Prescriptions - 3.0 credits

As an optician, you will analyze the glasses you make and those made by others. Therefore, you will need to determine lens power at any meridian, calculate the prismatic effect of a lens that has not been properly centered and compare any pair of eyeglasses to the standards of the ophthalmic dispensing industry.

OPSC1292 Clinical II: Eyeglasses - 9.0 credits

Students will apply theoretical knowledge in the optical environment. Students will acquire experience in professional behavior, patient care and instrumentation while under the direct supervision of an optician or optometrist. 500 dispensing practical hours are required as part of this Clinical.

Semester 3

OPSC2111 Eye Health - 4.5 credits

Students learn to recognize and define various anatomical and physiological aspects of the eye as well as ocular pathologies, systemic diseases and the effects of medication relating to the eyeglass wearer.

OPSC2112 Prescriptions and Multifocal Lens Design - 3.0 credits

Students learn about various multifocal lenses and how each lens will satisfy the patient's visual needs.

OPSC2113 Analysis and Interpretation of Multifocal Lenses and Prescriptions - 3.0

As a student optician, you will analyze the glasses you make and those made by others and compare these glasses to the standards of the ophthalmic dispensing industry. You will interpret, assess and solve problems with a multifocal prescription. Understanding the lens finishing process will help you perform these tasks.

OPSC2193 Clinical III: Eyeglasses - 9.0 credits

Students will apply theoretical knowledge in the optical environment. Students will acquire experience in professional behavior, patient care and instrumentation while under the direct supervision of an optician or optometrist. 500 dispensing practical hours are required as part of this Clinical.



Semester 4

OPSC2211 Screening and Charting - 3.0 credits

Students learn to complete patient histories and explain vision screening test and refraction results.

OPSC2212 Ethics and Standards of Practice - 3.0 credits

As a student optician, you will apply the code of ethics, standards of practice and implement occupational health and safety procedures to ensure a high standard of practice.

OPSC2213 Management for Opticians - 3.0 credits

As a student optician, you will use general business system concepts, structure, organization, management principles, and financial accounting systems in the day to day operation of the optical dispensary.

OPSC2294 Clinical IV: Eyeglasses - 9.0 credits

Students will apply theoretical knowledge in the optical environment. Students will acquire experience in professional behavior, patient care and instrumentation while under the direct supervision of an optician or optometrist. 500 dispensing practical hours are required as part of this Clinical.