



**\*IMPORTANT: THIS INFORMATION PACKAGE IS FOR EYEGLASS PROGRAM  
APPLICANTS ENROLLING IN SEMESTER ONE COURSES IN FALL 2023 OR WINTER 2024\***

## NAIT/OAC Optical Sciences - Eyeglasses

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). This program is offered in English or French.

The Optical Sciences Programs will give those already employed in the optical industry the skills required of a Licensed Optician in Canada. 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 are working 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 certification in contact lenses.

### Accreditation & Industry Certification

***Please Note: Completion of the NAIT/OAC Optical Sciences Eyeglasses Program may not necessarily enable an individual to apply for licensing outside of Canada. This program follows the competencies outlined for Opticians in Canada.***

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

Licensing in Canada: Completion of this program is one of the steps towards registration as a Licensed Optician in Canada. Students must meet all registration requirements of the Provincial Regulatory Board of the Canadian province they wish to become licensed in.

For further information on registration as an Optician in a Canadian province, go to [How to Become An Optician | Become an Optician](#)

### Quick Facts

Credential: Diploma  
Length: 4-semesters (3 mths/semester)

Intakes: Fall, Winter  
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](mailto: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.

## Tuition & Fees (subject to change)

The cost per credit for tuition for 2023/2024 is \$234.00 for International students.

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

### Eyeglasses Year One

Semester One: **\$3700.20** (\$3580.20 tuition + \$120.00 ancillary fees)

Semester Two: **\$3700.20** (\$3580.20 tuition + \$120.00 ancillary fees)

### Eyeglasses Year Two

Semester Three: **\$3700.20** (\$3580.20 tuition + \$120.00 ancillary fees)

Semester Four: **\$3700.20** (\$3580.20 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 two (2) 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\*. 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** and guidance 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). The preceptor must be a practicing, licensed eye care professional (e.g. Optician, Optometrist). 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 one 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 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.

### Term 1

#### OPSC1111 Communication - 3.0 credits

Opticians must effectively communicate with patients, co-workers, and other health professionals. Students in the Communications course discuss and apply key concepts of the varying communication styles. Students will learn appropriate terminology and collaboration, critical thinking, and conflict resolution skills to deliver the best patient-centered care.

#### OPEG1112 Frames – 3.0 credits

Opticians need to know how to select proper eyewear frames based on patients' needs and preferences. Students in the Frames course learn how to identify the various frame properties, determine frame suitability, and properly recognize and adjust misaligned frames to produce the desired effect for display or on a patient.

#### OPEG1211 Instruments and Measurements - 3.0 credits

Patients rely on Opticians to obtain accurate anatomical and lens measurements to ensure the chosen lenses are successful. Students in Instruments and Measurements learn how to use equipment such as lensmeters, lensclocks, calipers, and distometers to measure lens properties, determine lens power, and compile and evaluate patient measurements for single vision, multifocal, and progressive lenses.

#### OPEG1191 Clinical I: Eyeglasses - 6.0 credits

Students will apply academic learning in a workplace setting under the supervision of their preceptor(s). Students will apply and practice theoretical knowledge of communication with patients, and other health professionals. They will recognize and correct frame misalignments on a patient as well as for standard alignment. Students will demonstrate the ability of to determine frame suitability and obtain measurements of a lens and patient with the use of appropriate tools. 500 dispensing practical hours are required as part of this Clinical.

### Term 2

#### OPSC1113 Foundational 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.

**OPEG1114 Ophthalmic Prescriptions and Lens Design - 3.0 credits**

Opticians need to know the different types of lenses available to select the correct type of lens to fulfill a patient's needs. Students in Ophthalmic Prescriptions and Lens Design will analyze prescriptions, examine the properties of varying lens types, and determine how they relate to an individual's vision considerations for sports, safety, outdoors, and/or indoor use of vision aid appliances.

**OPEG2115 Selecting and Troubleshooting Lenses and Frames - 3.0 credits**

Opticians are equipped to select, analyze, and troubleshoot a variety of lenses and frames to provide successful optical appliances to patients. Students in Selecting and Troubleshooting Lenses and Frames course examine patient profiles and prescriptions related to determining the proper selection of frames and lenses. Students will learn how to calculate lens power at any meridian, prismatic effect of a decentered lens, compare lens properties to the standards of the ophthalmic dispensing industry, and provide solutions for patients.

**OPEG2192 Clinical II: Eyeglasses - 6.0 credits**

Student opticians will apply academic learning in a workplace setting under the supervision of their preceptor(s). Students will apply theoretical knowledge of compiling measurements, selecting appropriate lenses and frames, and counselling patients on the use of various optical devices. Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize and solve common issues with prescription eyeglasses. 500 dispensing practical hours are required as part of this Clinical.

### Term 3

**OPEG1311 Eye Health – 3.0 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.

**OPEG2215 Advanced Optics – 3.0 credits**

Many factors determine how an eyeglass prescription will perform for a patient. Students in the Advanced Optics course calculate how lens power is affected by lens position and frame measurements. The effects of multifocal lenses and how prism affects multifocal and progressive lenses measurements are analyzed and calculated.

**OPEG2212 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.

**OPEG2193 Clinical III: Eyeglasses - 6.0 credits**

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

### Term 4



**OPEG2211          Screening & Charting – 3.0 credits**

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

**OPEG2214          Analysis and Interpretation of Visual Aids - 3.0 credits**

Patients with low vision have special unique visual needs. Students in this course learn to assess these needs, provide appropriate devices, recognize issues with these devices and provide solutions. Students also learn about the process of lens edging and finishing.

**OPEG2213          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.

**OPEG3294          Clinical IV: Eyeglasses - 6.0 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.