Becoming an Anterior Segment Diplomate of the American Academy of Optometry is a multistep process. To start:

1. Complete the online application
2. Upload a copy of your Curriculum Vitae
3. Complete the proposed plan for written requirements and forward them to the Diplomate Chair
4. Once approved from the Chair, you will need to pay the $100 application fee

**CLINICAL CANDIDATES**

Clinical candidates are optometrists who are licensed to practice at the highest level permitted by law in their jurisdiction and are engaged in active clinical practice.

To become a Diplomate in Anterior Segment, a minimum of 5, maximum of 7 case reports are required. A mandatory case report for each subject area, one on Infection and one on Inflammation should be submitted. The remainder of submitted cases can be from any of the 6 subject areas, but should cover a variety of topics or presentations of disease.

**Mandatory Cases: (Minimum 1 case for each area)**
1. Infection
2. Inflammation

**Other areas:**
3. Trauma (eg: chemical, foreign body, blunt force, etc.)
4. Surgical management or co-management
5. Neurologic (eg: ptosis, pupil abnormalities, etc.)
6. Miscellaneous (eg: genetic, infestations, tumors, cysts, complications due to systemic disease, etc.)

**CASE REPORTS**

The purpose of written case reports is to demonstrate one's commitment to the Academy’s goal of lifelong learning. Case reports should display technical skills and knowledge, level of professionalism and ability to care for the patients. Keep in mind that the case reports you write are a reflection of you and your skills, more than they are about the patient about whom you are writing. You may not submit any case report about a patient you used for your Fellowship, or before becoming a Fellow. For more information see the guidelines for preparing a case report prior to submitting any case report.
At least five case reports are required for all clinical candidates. All written work (including posters / papers, articles, lectures, etc.) must have been completed and presented prior to the June 1st deadline to sit that same calendar year.

Credit for up to two case reports can be given with documentation of the following, as long as the topic area is anterior segment related, and is work that the applicant has done after receiving Fellowship in the Academy:

A. A case report or research paper accepted to a peer-reviewed journal.
   Turn in copy of paper and citation for journal. See listing of journals accepted for fellowship work for sample of acceptable publications. The candidate must be the first or second author, and be prepared to talk about the paper at the oral examination.

B. Two posters / papers accepted to the Academy meeting (two posters / papers give credit for one case report).
   Turn in copies of posters / paper, and at which meeting it was presented. Candidate must be first or second author on the poster / paper, and be prepared to talk about the poster / paper at the oral examination.

C. A lecture (grand rounds, 1- or 2-hour) accepted to the Academy meeting.
   Turn in abstract, outline, and at which meeting it was presented. Candidate must be the only lecturer for a one hour course, or can have two lecturers for a two-hour course, and be prepared to talk about the lecture at the oral examination.

D. Leadership in the Profession, Contribution to Optometric Books and Diplomate in ABO

The Diplomate Chair will make the final decision as to whether the subject of submitted materials qualifies as anterior segment related for credit towards the case report requirement.

PUBLICATIONS IN PEER REVIEWED JOURNALS

An article may be accepted in lieu of a case report if it was published in one of the following peer reviewed journals:

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<tr>
<th>Acta Ophthalmologica</th>
<th>Journal of Neuro-Ophthalmology</th>
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<tr>
<td>Archives of Ophthalmology</td>
<td>Journal of Refractive Surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arquivos Brasileiros de Oftalmologia</td>
<td>Journal of Vision</td>
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<td>BMC Ophthalmology</td>
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<td>British Journal of Ophthalmology</td>
<td>Molecular Vision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canadian Journal of Optometry</td>
<td>Ocular Immunology and Inflammation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical &amp; Experimental Ophthalmology</td>
<td>Ocular Surface</td>
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When multiple authored published articles are submitted for credit, the article will only be considered if the candidate appears as the first or second author. If the article is over ten years old, it may be acceptable, but a brief paper describing what changes have taken place on the topic since it was published must also be presented.

POSTER AND PAPERS

Two clinical case report posters or papers written after attainment of Fellowship will be considered in lieu of one case report.

A poster or paper may be accepted if it was presented at a peer-reviewed meeting from which the content is archived and citable, and as approved by the Academy’s Inter-Professional Scientific Review Committee and the Diplomate Chair.

The following organizations/meetings listed below who have successfully completed the review process. Please note that the Diplomate Chair will still review each document submitted for final approval of points.
- American Academy of Optometry (AAO)
- Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO)
- American Optometric Association (AOA)
  *Only able to accept from 2012 and forward*
- Global Specialty Lens Symposium (GSLS)
  *Only able to accept from 2014 and forward*
- College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD)

Posters and papers must be presented at an approved venue prior to granting credit towards a case report for Diplomate, e.g. A Candidate cannot use a poster/paper being presented at the same Academy meeting where he/she is sitting for the oral exam.

When a multiple authored poster or paper is submitted for credit, it will only be considered if the candidate appears as the **first or second author**. A poster or paper over ten years old may not be accepted.

The Diplomate Chair will make the decision if a submitted article meets the standards outlined above.

An electronic copy of the paper and/or poster will be required.

**ACADEMY LECTURE**

A unique lecture given within the past ten years at an Annual or International meeting of the Academy may be accepted if:
  a. Candidate was sole presenter of a one-hour lecture.
  b. Candidate presented for at least one hour of a two-hour lecture.

Documentation of successful completion of the lecture with dates and location must be provided along with a description of the lecture.

**LEADERSHIP CONTRIBUTION**

While most candidates are in positions that inherently require leadership skills, points for leadership will only be awarded for activities at the national or state level outside of the scope of the candidate’s regular compensated position. Leadership in lieu of a case report will only be awarded for those candidates who can document a sustained record of highly significant contributions to the profession or vision science that resulted from the individual’s leadership positions.

Candidates with accomplishments that might make them eligible for leadership points should seek preliminary approval from the Diplomate Chair by submitting the organization(s) served, the dates of service, the leadership position(s) and a statement outlining the significant contribution(s) to the profession.

After receiving preliminary approval from the Diplomate Chair, the candidate must complete a 1,200-word essay that demonstrates to the satisfaction of the committee that significant contributions to the profession or vision science resulted from the individual’s leadership activities within the position.
PROFESSIONALLY RELATED BOOK

A book published by the candidate in one or more of the following or similar types of professionally related books, may be considered in lieu of a case report: *Applied Science, Optometric Education, Optometric Management, Clinical Optometry* or other.

When multiple authored published books are submitted for credit, an explanation of the candidate’s role in writing the book must be provided for the book to be considered. If the book is over ten years old, it may be acceptable, but a paper describing what changes have taken place on the topic since it was published may also be requested.

The Diplomate Chair will make the decision if a submitted book meets the standards outlined above.

WRITTEN and SLIDE PRACTICAL

The written/slide practical exam must be taken at an Academy meeting. The candidates may sit for the written exam any time after one case report has been accepted by the committee. If the candidate is using lectures, posters, or publications in lieu of a case report, they must still have one original case report accepted by July 15 to sit for the written/slide practical exam at that year’s Academy. Therefore, it is recommended that the candidate have the case submitted by June 1 in order for the committee to review their report, and to give the candidate time to make revisions.

The written exam will consist of multiple choice questions that will test the candidate’s knowledge on anterior segment topics and current research in anterior segment. The slide practical exam will consist of case scenarios with accompanying video and/or photography to test the applicant’s clinical acumen. After discussion, case elements will be altered so the candidate can show their clinical thinking process and how it may change based on the modifications made to the case. Examples: A) What if the patient is not in pain, how does that change your differential? B) You now have the following blood work results; does this change your clinical thinking? C) The patient’s history now includes pregnancy. Does that change your choice of medicine? The written/slide practical exam is designed to give the candidate feedback on subject areas they may need to improve upon.

Candidates will be tested on the following concepts in regards to the Anterior Segment of the eye. There will be a total of 75 questions on the exam and candidates will be given 90 minutes to take the test.

The written test will be divided into three sections:

1. 35% or 26 Questions on Inflammation
2. 35% or 26 Questions on Infection
3. 30% or 22 Questions on:
   - Trauma
Abnormal growth
Deposits
Dystrophies
Current Trends in Anterior Segment testing or treatment

The slide quiz will consist of 60 minutes going over 10+ cases.

For the purposes of the exam, the Anterior Segment includes the following structures:
Eyelids, Adnexa, Lacrimal system, Conjunctiva, Episclera, Sclera, Cornea, Limbus, Anterior chamber/Angle, Iris, Ciliary Body, Crystalline Lens


**ORAL EXAMINATION / DISCUSSION**

The Oral Exam and Discussion component must be taken at an Academy meeting. Candidates may only sit for the oral exam after all other requirements have been fulfilled. The final requirements must be completed by July 15 to sit for the Oral Exam/Discussion at that year’s Academy. Therefore, it is recommended that the candidate have their final case submitted by June 1 in order for the committee to review their report and to give the candidate time to make revisions. The candidate’s cases, as well as posters / papers, lectures, or journal articles (if applicable) will be discussed. Any weaknesses identified by the written/slide practical exam will be discussed to ensure the candidate has improved in these areas.

**AWARDING OF DIPLOMATE**

Upon successful completion of the requirements, the candidate will be nominated for Anterior Segment Diplomate status. The Board of the American Academy of Optometry as well as the Anterior Segment Section must approve the candidate’s application and successful completion of requirements. The Diplomate in Anterior Segment will be awarded at the Annual Banquet.
The Anterior Segment Section anticipates that requirements toward Diplomate status can be completed well within a five year time period. Candidates who have not completed requirements within five years may apply to have their application extended for two years. The Diplomate Committee will determine whether to extend an application based on work in progress. If the committee determines that the applicant has not made sufficient progress toward fulfilling the requirements, but the applicant still wishes to continue on in the process, the Committee may allow the applicant to reapply and pay the application fee again. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and the decision of the Committee is final.