Optometric Education (OE) Diplomate Application and Evaluation Process

Introduction

The Optometric Education (OE) diplomate program began in 2012. Academy diplomates are doctors of optometry who have strived to attain a level of excellence beyond the Fellowship program. An OE diplomate has demonstrated this excellence through training and scholarship in optometric education.

OE diplomates demonstrate scholarship expertise, relevant to undergraduate, postgraduate, continuing and/or interprofessional education in areas such as:

- Pedagogy and andragogy
- Curriculum
- Learning
- Educational evaluation
- Professional gatekeeping
- Educational policy
- Philosophy of education and/or
- Sociology of education

OE scholarship typically takes the form of:
- Data-driven studies—either scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)\(^1\) or discipline-based educational research (DBER)
- Teaching case reports, and
- Educational reviews

Diplomate Process

There are two stages in the diplomate process: applicant and candidate. The following checklist summarizes the required elements (more detailed information follows after the checklist).

Applicants:
- Application Fee ($100 U.S.)
- Fellowship verification
- Curriculum vitae
- Applicant statement, including record of:
  - Optometric teaching (5 years or 3 years plus optometric residency)
  - Advanced education training (20 points)
  - OE scholarship (4 instances)

Candidates (5 year deadline):
- Unpublished written articles in OE scholarship (4)
- Oral presentation on OE scholarship
- Oral final exam on OE scholarship

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\(^1\) SoTL (scholarship of teaching and learning) is instructor-conducted published scholarship within the instructor’s course that is motivated by improving student learning. It is more reflective and less generalizable than discipline-based educational research.
**Determining Applicant Eligibility**

Applicants must:

1. Be a Fellow in good standing of the American Academy of Optometry and meet the maintenance of fellowship requirements
2. Have completed either:
   - a minimum of 5 years teaching experience, or
   - an accredited residency program plus a minimum of 3 years of teaching experience

Successful diplomate applicants become diplomate candidates, who have five years to complete their candidacy.

**Submitting the Application**

The application consists of:

- $100 U.S. fee, paid to Academy
- Academy verification of Fellowship
- Submission to OE Diplomate Committee of an up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV)

**Reviewing the Application**

The diplomate committee will evaluate the application based on two submissions: curriculum vitae and applicant statement.

**Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

- **Purpose:**
  - To review the overall career training, scholarship, teaching and service record
- **Written Submission:**
  - Applicants will provide their up-to-date CV, which includes their education, employment record, licensure, awards and honors, professional development, publications, presentations, invited talks, funding, teaching (undergraduate, clinical, graduate, continuing), graduate supervision, committees, appointments, memberships, appointments, refereeing, and consulting.
Applicant Statement

- **Purpose:**
  - To review the intentions and motivations of applicants for attaining diplomate status and to gain an appreciation of their commitment to optometric education (OE) through evidence of their record of teaching, advanced training in the field of education and commitment to OE scholarship

- **Written Submission:** using the [Applicant Statement form], applicants will include 4 elements:
  - **Personal Statement:** A brief statement elaborating on their perspectives on optometric education in the context of the diplomate process (maximum 200 words)
  - **Teaching History:** An indication of their total years of OE teaching. Applicants must have a record of either:
    - a minimum of 5 years teaching experience, or
    - an accredited residency program plus a minimum of 3 years of teaching experience
  - **Advanced training in education:** Applicants must provide evidence\(^3\) of advanced training in education (20 points required). Training may take the form of:
    - Graduate degree in education (20 pts)
    - Specialized certification in education (10 to 20 pts)
    - Baccalaureate degree in education (10 pts)
    - Educational courses taken at an accredited college or university (10 pts/course)
    - Multi-day educational conference/symposium attendance (5 pts/conference)
    - Single or partial day educational workshop/lecture attendance (2 pts/event)
    - Other examples may be considered at the Committee’s discretion
  - **Evidence of OE scholarship:** Applicants will submit 4 exemplar instances of their optometric education scholarship\(^4\). The evidence can take the form of:
    - Peer-reviewed, published articles in peer-reviewed journals
    - Funded research grants
    - Books or book chapters, and/or
    - Invited optometric talks at regional, national or international meetings

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\(^2\) The Applicant Statement form is submitted into the OE Diplomate Portal, under the entry, ‘Candidate Statement’

\(^3\) Proof must be provided (e.g., diplomas; transcripts; confirmed registration; attendance certificates; or CE credits for lectures, workshops, symposia, etc.).

\(^4\) Proof must be provided if the instance cannot be viewed online (e.g., funding letters, talk invitations). The Committee will determine if multi-authored submissions qualify for consideration (applicants must articulate their role).
Candidacy Process

Those who have satisfied the application requirements will be notified that they are now diplomate candidates and the timetable for the diplomate process will be established. Candidates will have a maximum of 5 years to complete the three components of the diplomate process: 1) Article Submission, and 2) Oral Presentation, and 3) Final Examination. If either the oral presentation or final examination is not successfully completed, the candidate must wait a minimum of one year to repeat the component.

Article Submission

Candidates will be required to demonstrate ongoing engagement and advanced level of expertise in OE scholarship. This will be demonstrated through the submission of written articles of publishable quality, as described below.

- Purpose:
  - To allow candidates to showcase some of their strengths in educational scholarship, and
  - To demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively, in writing
- Evidence:
  - Candidates will submit 4 written articles of publishable quality\(^5\). These submissions, which cannot have been submitted for publication, should be based on the OE scholarship activities of candidates. Work may be done in collaboration with others. For multi-author work, the candidate must describe the nature of their contributions and their role relative to the other authors. The diplomate committee will make the determination whether the contribution is substantial enough and may require additional documentation. The submitted articles may take the form of:
    - Teaching case reports\(^6\),
    - Educational research articles, and/or
    - Critical analyses of current educational literature
  - Evaluation Criteria:
    - Establishing an understanding of the theory, use, strengths & limitations of the educational concepts addressed in the article
    - Including appropriate and properly cited references
    - Demonstrating publishable quality writing

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\(^5\) The Committee will determine if multi-authored submissions qualify for consideration (candidates must articulate their role).

\(^6\) Teaching case reports typically include 6 sections: Background, Case Description, Educational Guidelines, Teaching Components, Conclusions, References (see http://journal.opted.org/publication-guidelines/).
Oral Presentation

After the Committee approves the articles submitted, an oral demonstration will be scheduled during an Academy meeting.

• Purpose:
  o To allow candidates to share their thought processes and techniques with regard to their OE scholarship, and
  o To demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively, in speech.

• Oral Presentation:
  o Candidates will provide a 30 to 45-minute oral presentation before the OE diplomate committee
  o Alternatives to a stand-alone oral presentation are possible with the prior approval of the diplomate committee. For example, the oral presentation may include:
    ▪ Videos or lecture captures to showcase an employed teaching strategy
    ▪ A paper delivered at the OE Scientific Section or Symposium
  o The oral presentation will be based on either:
    ▪ One of their 4 accepted written OE scholarship articles, or
    ▪ An alternate OE scholarship topic that has been approved at least two months before the Academy meeting by the OE diplomate committee (candidates who choose this option will also have to submit a written submission of publishable quality that describes the theory, use, strengths and limitations of the pedagogical concepts raised in their oral presentation)
  o Evaluation Elements:
    ▪ Demonstrating the relevance of the chosen pedagogical method to optometric education
    ▪ Exhibiting effective communication strategies

Oral Final Examination

If the candidate has successfully undertaken all prior components, a final oral examination will be conducted. This examination will normally take place following the oral presentation, during the same annual Academy meeting.

• Purpose:
  o To justify the approaches to and foundational concepts within all of the submitted written documents and the oral presentation of candidates, and
  o To demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively, in speech

• Candidates will discuss, with the OE diplomate committee, their experience and advanced training in the field of optometric education as well as their OE scholarship submissions

• Evaluation Elements:
  o Showcasing the applicability of their OE scholarship activity and advanced education to:
    ▪ Practice at personal, institutional and/or professional levels
  o Demonstrating experience and expertise in OE scholarship.
OE Diplomate Checklist:

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Candidates (5 year deadline):
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