



CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

School of

Optometry and Vision Sciences

Undergraduate
degree programmes

Welcome

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100%
of our
graduates
are in
employment

(Higher Education Statistics
Agency's latest Graduate
Outcomes Survey 2021/22)

£22 million
purpose-built
optometry
facility with
on-site public
eye clinics

Source: THE (Times Higher
Education) analysis of REF
(Research Excellence Framework)
2021

93%
overall
student
satisfaction

National Student Survey 2023



Welcome

The School of Optometry and Vision Sciences at Cardiff University is a stimulating, rewarding and friendly place to study and it gives me great pleasure to introduce you to the School.

An undergraduate degree is a life-changing and wonderful experience and is a major investment in your future. Your choice of subject and university is of major significance to you and we believe that, at Cardiff University, you can achieve your full potential.

The role of the optometrist as part of the professional eye care team is changing and expanding. The opportunities for a fulfilling career, involving the treatment and management of eye disease, have never been better. Here at the School of Optometry and Vision Sciences, our aim is to prepare you for a career in optometry which equips you with the confidence and desire to deliver the highest standard of eye care to the public. That's why our programmes provide you with the theoretical knowledge, clinical skills, and the patient contact required of the modern eye care professional.

After they graduate, many of our students undertake postgraduate taught courses or study for a higher research degree in order to become either a specialist in a specific area of optometry or to pursue a career in research or academia. Whichever route you choose to take, our enthusiastic and caring tutors will support you every step of the way.

We offer two MOptom optometry programmes that provide an excellent education in optometry. Our programmes consistently score highly in student satisfaction and in university league tables. Our employability record is also exceptional and our graduates are sought after by employers across the sector.

We are proud of our strong student community – our students and graduates often describe studying in the School as a 'family-like environment'. We also have a fantastic optometry society (OPSOC) which provides both academic support as well as the opportunity to take part in a range social activities. At Cardiff, you will develop the lifelong friendships that begin as part of student life.

Our strong student community combined with our excellent facilities and dedicated teaching is why we think our School is the best place to study optometry and why we'd love to welcome you here!

Professor Joy Myint

Head of the School of Optometry and Vision Sciences



About us

Our School is based in a £22 million optometry facility with in-built eye clinics which are available to the public.



Location

We are conveniently located in the Cathays area of Cardiff which is close to other academic buildings, the newly opened Centre for Student Life, the Students' Union, city centre shops, attractive parkland and several of the student residences.



Teaching

Our teaching is informed by evidence based advanced clinical research and many of our teaching staff are leading experts in their fields. You will be taught by a group of friendly and supportive academics with vast experience in ophthalmic practice and vision sciences research. You'll also benefit from regular patient contact throughout your studies to help you hone your clinical skills.

Our impact is wide reaching

From providing top quality education and life long learning for optometrists to helping communities through our research and civic and global outreach.

Research

Our researchers aim to facilitate the detection, diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of vision disorders.

Research at our School has a wide range of fascinating real life applications and has made a positive and lasting impact on the lives of people affected with vision disorders.

For example, our Down's Syndrome Vision Research Unit, led by Dr Maggie Woodhouse OBE, was awarded one of the UK's most prestigious academic awards – a Queen's Anniversary Prize – for its pioneering research and treatment of vision problems in children with Down's Syndrome.



Public eye clinics

Our on-site eye clinics provide you with in-house placement opportunities with patients.



Laboratories

Our range of laboratories are where you'll discover more about the intricacies of the human visual system.



Clinical Examination and Research Facility (CERF)

You'll be able to hone your optometric skills in CERF.

Studying with us

Our case-based learning combined with our outstanding facilities will help you develop the independent working skills and experience required of a successful healthcare professional.

Teaching methods and assessment

Our teaching methods range from formal lectures to independent research projects, with practical classes and tutorials in clinical topics. Small group teaching and tutorials will allow you to develop your communication skills, encouraging you to present your ideas and learn the necessary skills for managing patients. You will sit assessments in each semester to give you the opportunity to show what you have learned throughout the year. You will also contribute to an e-portfolio reflecting on how you demonstrate your clinical and professional ability in preparation for registration as an optometrist.

Personal tutors

At the start of your studies, you will be assigned a personal tutor, who is a member of the academic staff of the School. Personal tutors are there to advise on academic, non-academic and personal matters, in a confidential and informal manner. They can help to support your professional development by advising on future career options. In addition to personal tutors, the University has a whole range of specialist advisors who you can call upon.

Facilities

Our School is equipped with outstanding facilities to fully prepare you for a career in optometry.

Our optometric teaching clinics mirror the healthcare environments in which you will undertake placements and eventually work in as a qualified professional. These

clinics enable patient interactions and are equipped with a range of modern optometric equipment and instrumentation.

Integral to the School are our eye clinics, that offers a wide range of high-quality optometric services to the public including primary care, acute eye care, binocular vision, contact lenses, low vision, paediatric and special assessment clinics.

It's where you will experience life as a student optometrist working with a variety of patients through our many in-house placement opportunities.

We also have "Teach and Treat" clinics, in which NHS specialist eye clinics are run from our building in areas such as glaucoma, medical retina and oculo-plastics.

You will have various opportunities to spend time in these clinics throughout your studies.

Other facilities for your studies include:

Our School is equipped with outstanding facilities to fully prepare you for a career in optometry

- Extensive primary and secondary care clinics
- Pre-clinical areas
- Clinical Examination and Research Facility (CERF)
- Translational Research Facility (TRF)
- Vision sciences research labs
- Social study areas

Our degree programmes

Our degree programmes will provide you with the scientific and clinical knowledge to register as an optometrist with the General Optical Council.



Optometry (MOptom), UCAS code: B512

Optometry with a Preliminary Year (MOptom), UCAS code: B514

Both our degree programmes have been designed to be stimulating, flexible and relevant to the needs of a career in optometry.

Great emphasis is placed on the practical aspects of the subject and you will be able to gain first-hand experience in our purpose-built clinics, including our 'Teach and Treat' NHS specialist clinics.

Optometry (MOptom)

You will also have the opportunity to gain higher professional qualifications, which are embedded into our MOptom courses. We offer both four and five-year degree programmes which lead to gaining an MOptom qualification in optometry.

These courses will provide you with the clinical skills required to ensure that the primary care needs of the public are met to the highest of standards, professional development by advising on future career options. In addition to personal tutors, the University has a whole range of specialist advisors who you can call upon.

This four-year integrated master's programme will provide you with the clinical skills, theoretical knowledge and the patient contact required for a rewarding career in optometry.

You will become familiar with many aspects of optometric care including general eye examination, spectacle dispensing, contact lens fitting, ocular vision disorders, low vision, abnormal conditions, and paediatric optometry. You will also learn how to manage a wide range of optical and medical eye problems confidently and autonomously.

As you progress through the programme, you will embark on your extended clinical placement organised by the College of Optometrists. This will enable you to experience life as a working optometrist and take on more responsibility for patient care.

Throughout your studies, you will also have unique opportunities to observe and work in our in-house specialist eye clinics, such as medical retina and glaucoma, led by our multi-disciplinary eyecare team to hone your clinical skills.

Opportunities to achieve selected higher professional qualifications are embedded into this programme preparing you for expanding roles and future changes in the profession. You will be able to establish an excellent foundation for further specialist postgraduate clinical or research career pathways, and you will be well prepared to address lifelong learning, leadership and professional development challenges, allowing you to thrive in modern UK optometric practice.

You will spend time on external placement in local hospital and optometry clinics.



What I love about studying Optometry at Cardiff is the services and support from the lecturers and supervisors.

No question goes unanswered and the range of technology and equipment available means I'm ahead of the game. I'm up to date with the field of optometry and it's turning me into the practitioner I want to become."

Maia- 2nd Year optometry student

Optometry with Preliminary Year (MOptom)

This five-year programme consists of a foundation year, followed by the four-year MOptom Optometry programme. It has been designed for students who have the desire and academic ability to study for a degree in optometry, but who do not have the suitable academic background.

During the foundation year, you will study four modules, which not only give you the necessary scientific knowledge in order to enter the first year of the MOptom Optometry programme, but also emphasise the logical thinking and analysis skills necessary to succeed.



Why study optometry with us?

Sight is one of our most precious senses – and optometrists help improve sight.

Optometry is a dynamic and exciting area of scientific and clinical study that is suited to people who want a rewarding and varied career in eye care. It is a healthcare profession that not only offers the unique opportunity to vastly improve people's lives, but also allows you to gain expertise in a particular area of interest, such as glaucoma or paediatric optometry.

If you love working with people, problem-solving, want to improve people's quality of life, and are scientifically minded, then optometry is for you.

Dr Jennifer Acton

Senior Lecturer and Director of Recruitment and Admissions



Visit our course webpages to find out more about both programmes



Careers

in optometry

Optometrists are healthcare specialists trained to examine patients eyes, give advice on visual problems and prescribe spectacles and contact lenses to correct patients' vision. They are also qualified to diagnose, treat and manage eye diseases such as glaucoma, and even detect signs in the eye which are related to general health conditions like diabetes.

As a qualified optometrist, you will have a wide range of career options available to you with excellent progression opportunities. And with the roles and responsibilities of optometrists expanding, there has never been a more exciting time to join the profession. For example, optometrists are now becoming qualified to perform minor surgical procedures such as injections to treat age-related macular degeneration. As part of the MOptom course, you will complete higher professional qualifications in areas such as medical retina and low vision, with further options to undertake more specialist qualifications.

Route to becoming an optometrist

If you complete our MOptom programme, you will be able to register with the General Optical Council and practice in the UK as an optometrist.

The focus on specialist clinical eyecare practice in Year 4 means you will be equipped to start working in specialist areas of practice from the outset should you wish. These include glaucoma, medical retina, acute eye care, low vision, paediatric optometry, and independent prescribing.

Additionally, within 6 months of qualifying you could choose to complete the training needed to become an independent prescribing optometrist.

Our reputation and the high quality of our teaching means that our students are in demand after graduating. In fact, 96% of our graduates are in employment according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency's latest Graduate Outcomes Survey 2018/19 published in 2021. Previous employers included universities, various NHS Trusts, multiple and independent optometrists and companies such as Astra Zeneca and Johnson & Johnson.

Types of optometrist

There are several different types of optometrist: primary care optometrist, hospital, and academic optometrists; as well as other career pathways such as research too. Choosing which one will depend on your interests and career aspirations.



Our video **'What is an Optometrist?'** explains the different types of optometrist to help you choose which one you may be interested in.





100% of our
graduates are in
employment

(Higher Education Statistics Agency's latest Graduate Outcomes Survey 2021/22)

**Registering with
the GOC**

If you graduate with our MOptom, you will be able to register with the General Optical Council (GOC) and practice in the UK as an optometrist right away.

Graduate stories

All of our graduates have their own stories to tell and we hope this will be the beginning of yours. Find out about life as an optometry student from some of our graduates.



Names: Huda and Alia Hathaf
Course: Optometry
Graduation year: 2022
Current employer: Specsavers Swansea

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Huda and Alia are twin sisters from Swansea who both studied optometry at Cardiff University and graduated in 2022. Here, they tell you the story of how they both ended up studying the same course, what their highlights of studying with us were and what they plan to do next. They also provide you with some tips and advice if you choose to come and study with us.

Why did you decide to study optometry?

Alia: For me, it wasn't until I completed work experience at a local opticians that I knew optometry was for me. What really excited me was how varied a career in optometry can be with the chance to genuinely improve people's lives.

From witnessing a foreign body removal from a gentleman who had metal fragments in his cornea, to the way the optometrist communicated to a diabetic individual on the role a healthy diet has on the health of their eyes, each patient's circumstances were completely different and that's what I found fascinating.

Huda: I first decided I wanted to do optometry because I always found the idea of improving the lives of others and enhancing their quality of life rewarding, and optometry fitted this criteria perfectly. Along with an interest in studying something that was both scientific and in the healthcare field, I was also attracted to optometry because it's a profession that is constantly evolving with optometrists gaining more and more responsibilities.



I've absolutely loved being part of the fantastic optometry community at Cardiff University.

The clinical experiences offered have greatly improved my communication skills and I have a new profound confidence, passion and desire to provide the highest standard of eye care to the community.

Alia Optometry graduate 2022

What has been your highlight of your time at Cardiff University?

Alia: My highlight has to be volunteering with “Maggie’s Club” at the School of Optometry. Maggie’s club is a collaboration between School researcher and senior lecturer, Dr Maggie Woodhouse OBE and UCAN productions. It’s a series of amazing workshops and activities for partially sighted and blind individuals and is a lot of fun. My role was to interact and communicate with these young people through play and music. It has been a brilliant opportunity and it has further deepened my passion to work and specialise in paediatrics and special assessment. This experience has given me the confidence to volunteer with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) where I now serve in their Council and represent the volunteers’ voice.

Huda: It’s the same for me - volunteering at Maggie’s Club was my highlight! It has given me the confidence to volunteer as a telephone group facilitator for the RNIB, where I communicate with adults with a vision impairment. I would encourage all students to take part in any form of volunteering work during your time at university. Not only will you achieve the skills to build a rapport with all people but you’ll also gain awareness of how vital integrating as part of a team is.

Now that you’ve graduated, what are your career plans?

Alia: We are both undertaking our pre-registration training year in the same optical practice at Swansea Specsavers and we can’t wait to get started....obviously after our summer break!

Huda: We both have a passion in working in paediatric and special assessment clinics so are hoping to pursue that after our pre-registration year. We would also love to carry out supervision work in the near future to inform and inspire the next generation of optometrists to truly progress and grow into the best eye health care professionals they can be.

What advice would you give new optometry students before they join us in September?

Alia: Join the University’s Optometry society – OPSOC, and integrate yourselves into university life. It’s such an exciting time and it’s your opportunity to meet people from all walks of life. Make sure you take an active role in volunteering for the community and try to continue with that alongside your studies - it will certainly help with your communication skills as you’ll be seeing patients during clinics. Don’t ever be afraid to ask questions, the staff in the Optometry School are there to support you. Be confident in yourself, you’re going to have a fantastic time at Cardiff University so enjoy every second of it!

Huda: Join the Cardiff Optometry Facebook group - it’s an excellent opportunity to make friends and network with other students. I would also encourage you to become familiar with the Cardiff Students’ Union website - they’ve got a list of societies available that will enable you to connect with a group who shares the same interests as you.

What did you enjoy most about studying optometry at Cardiff University?

Alia: “I’ve absolutely loved being part of the fantastic optometry community at Cardiff University. The clinical experiences offered have greatly improved my communication skills and I have a new profound confidence, passion and desire to provide the highest standard of eye care to the community.”

Huda: “Studying optometry at Cardiff University is an experience I will never forget and I feel ready for the next chapter in my life as a pre-registration optometrist. During my degree, I enjoyed meeting a wide variety of patients and assessing their vision using advanced optometric technology. It has given me great insight and has highlighted the importance of optometrists being primary eye care professionals.”



What did you enjoy most about studying optometry at Cardiff University?

My favourite part of studying optometry at Cardiff University was the continuous support from staff in clinical skills. I was able to amalgamate my passion, intrigue and desire for exploration to actively participate in various clinical activities and collaborate on research projects, whilst achieving positive outcomes and simultaneously building my experience in an eclectic range of optometry disciplines. This includes actively seeing patients for various contact lens fit assessment, other patients with disabilities, and other patients with progressive diseases such as macular degeneration and glaucoma.

Name: Mohannad Abunijmeh

Course: Optometry

Graduation year: 2022

Current employer: Specsavers
Didcot

Why did you choose to study optometry at Cardiff University?

I chose to study optometry at Cardiff University because it is highly recognised, upholds high educational standards and is renowned for using the latest technology in Optometric practice. Another reason why I chose to study at Cardiff is because it is very friendly, diverse and has many convenient local commodities. I'm Palestinian-American (from Jerusalem

and Chicago) and these aspects were of great importance to me. I'm grateful I graduated from Cardiff University and no words can express my appreciation for this honour.

How did you find studying optometry?

The course was amazing. It helped me to understand the complex nature and make-up of the human visual system and the threads that hold all of these together. I also enjoyed how the course focused on clinical skills to maintain vision, eye health and the monitoring of many clinical conditions such as glaucoma.



Our video **'What is an Optometrist?'** explains the different types of optometrist to help you choose which one you may be interested in.



Entry requirements

To be considered for entry onto any of our undergraduate courses, please apply through UCAS.

Typical entry requirements

These typical requirements are for guidance. Please check our website for the latest information.

- Optometry (MOptom) (Four years)
- Optometry with a Preliminary year (MOptom) (Five years)

A-level:

Four-year programme: typical range: AAA-AAB including two science subjects from Biology, Chemistry, Maths, or Physics.

Extended Project Qualification:

Five-year programme: ABB-BBB to include a maximum of one science subject (Biology, Chemistry, Maths, or Physics). Extended Project Qualification: Applicants with grade A in the EPQ will typically receive an offer one grade lower than the standard A-level offer.

WBA:

The Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate will be accepted in lieu of one A-level (at the grades listed above), excluding any specified subjects.

IB:

Four-year programme: 36-34 or 666-665 in 3 Higher Level subjects. Higher Level subjects must include two science subjects from Biology, Chemistry, Maths or Physics (minimum grade 5 at HL).

Five-year programme: 32-31 points including one Higher Level subject at grade 6 or 665 in 3 Higher Level subjects. For applicants without a science subject or with one science subject (Biology, Chemistry, Maths, or Physics).

Other:

Applications from those offering alternative equivalent/overseas qualifications are welcome, as are those who may have other relevant work/life experience.

International students

International applicant's entry qualifications should be of equivalent to GCE A-levels as described above. For further information on entry requirements, visits and the advisor available to help you in your home country, please contact the International Department: www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/international

General Optical Council registration

The General Optical Council (GOC) requires that all students studying on an optometry training course in the UK are registered with the GOC. You can find out more about this on the GOC website: www.optical.org





HEATH PARK

ROATH PARK LAKE

MYNACHDY

CATHAYS CEMETERY

PEN-Y-LAN

ROATH PARK

MAINDY

GABALFA

PONTCANNA FIELDS

BLACKWEIR FIELDS

CATHAYS

ROATH

PONTCANNA

BUTE PARK

CATHAYS STATION

CANTON

CITY CENTRE

QUEEN ST. STATION

RIVERSIDE

NINIEN PARK

CARDIFF CENTRAL

ATLANTIC WHARF



How to find the School

The School of Optometry and Vision Sciences is located on Maindy Road, on our Cathays Campus.

Key

-  School of Computer Science and Informatics
-  University and NHS buildings
-  Student residences

Important Legal Information

The contents of this brochure relate to the Entry 2026 admissions cycle and are correct at the time of going to press in June 2025. However, there is a lengthy period of time between printing this brochure and applications being made to, and processed by us, so please check our website at: **www.cardiff.ac.uk** before making an application in case there are any changes to the course you are interested in or to other facilities and services described here. Where there is a difference between the contents of this brochure and our website, the contents of the website take precedence and represent the basis on which we intend to deliver our services to you.

Your degree:

Students admitted to Cardiff University study for a Cardiff University degree.

This brochure is printed on paper obtained from well managed sources using vegetable-based inks. Both the paper used in the production of this prospectus and the manufacturing process are FSC® certified. The printers are also accredited to ISO14001, the internationally recognised environmental standard.

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Thank you.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

Cardiff University is a registered charity, no. 1136855

This prospectus can be made available in alternative formats, including large print (text), Braille and on audio tape/ CD.

To request an alternative format please contact Laura Roberts:

Tel: **029 2087 4455**

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**To find out more about the
School of Optometry**

Email: optomadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk

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