

OD3 Clinical Practice Visits

Students at the University of Melbourne begin patient consultations in 2nd year at our University of Melbourne EyeCare Clinic. In third year, students start seeing a significant number of patients at both our clinic and the Australian College of Optometry. Optometry at Unimelb understands the importance to optometry students of being able to participate in “real world optometry” and is working hard to prepare students for the challenges of optometric practice.

We have developed a model for the Doctor of Optometry (OD) Clinical Placement Program that encourages colleagues to become involved in our teaching program at a two different levels; OD3 and OD4-Internship.

For OD3, we are seeking practitioners who are willing to host one or more OD3 students in their practice for 1 day per week for three weeks, generally in the first three weeks of July each year. This is a period between semesters when our students are still attending clinical duties but do not have lectures to attend.

The broad aim of the program is for the student to observe an optometrist in action in a practice setting and how they interact with their patients and staff.

Students are covered by the University of Melbourne’s insurance policy while attending clinical practices and there are no paperwork requirements for practitioners. Some suggestions as to what the student could do while visiting are on the reverse of this page.

Mentoring the next generation of optometrists can be very rewarding. It is the opportunity to meet young, thoughtful and engaging students who will be the future of the profession. Hosts will have the opportunity to develop their clinical teaching skills, be involved in the teaching/learning process and be actively engaged in collaborative links with the University. In addition to this, hosts are eligible to claim five CPD points per semester for participation in postgraduate optometric education (see OBA, [Guidelines for continuing professional development for endorsed and non-endorsed optometrists](#))

Recognition of support for the program

To show our appreciation to Clinical Placement Supervisors (hosts) who participate in our External Placement Program, we are pleased to offer:

- a DOVS newsletter that will inform Clinical Placement Supervisors of teaching and learning initiatives;
- a certificate of appreciation specifying that the Clinical Placement Supervisor (and their practice) contributes to the University of Melbourne teaching program;
- access to expert teachers, clinicians and teaching resources;
- special rates for Specialist Certificates in Clinical Optometry offered by the Department of Optometry and Vision Sciences (DOVS) which can potentially lead onto the Master of Clinical Optometry (see www.optometry.unimelb.edu.au/courses/Special_Cert.html for more information);
- acknowledgement of participating Clinical Placement Supervisors on the department website as an Adjunct Clinical Teaching Instructor;
- networking opportunities;
- invitations to Webinars and Seminars to discuss the sharing of good teaching and learning practices.

If you are interested in having an OD3 student visit your practice as part of this placement program please click on the following link so that we can contact you.

[OD3&4 - Metropolitan \(General & Specialist\) Practice Information Survey](#)

Kind Regards
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Recommendations for Year 3 Students Attending Optometry Practices

Hours of attendance are negotiable and you are in control however 9:30 am – 4:30 pm is recommended.

There are no paperwork requirements for the optometrist to complete when supervising the student.

Students are asked to keep a short summary of their activities while with you and complete a short reflective piece when they have completed their three days with you.

Below are some suggestions for activities:

- The opportunity to actively observe an optometrist seeing patients in a clinical practice setting. By active observation we hope that students will be able to “have a look” when you pick up a finding of interest. For students in third year this will be many findings that you consider routine and should not be restricted to unusual ocular pathology (eg. an exotropia, a pterygium, a nuclear cataract will all be of benefit at this point). We hope this will help students develop skills particularly in the areas of diagnosis and management as these are the areas they find more difficult when working with patients. We also think it critical that students see how consultations can be completed successfully in a timely manner.
- Observation and discussion of therapeutic management of patients as they arise in the normal course of attendance at a practice
- Observation and discussion of management of specialist areas of optometry as they arise in the normal course of patient care in:
 - Contact Lenses
 - Low Vision
 - Paediatrics
- If possible it would be beneficial if the student optometrists undertake frame and lens selections, as well as delivery of optical appliances for the patients they are involved in examining. This assists the students in thinking about continuity of the eye care they deliver.
- Discussion of referral pathways to ophthalmology and general practitioners and use of ocular therapeutics within the practice (the observation of any therapeutic patients managed within the practice during the visit would be appreciated). How triage patients are managed.
- The opportunity to observe more than one optometrist in the practice is useful, if this is possible.