

OPTO90028 OPTOMETRY CLINICAL PLACEMENT SHIP

Information for Internship Hosts

Overview

Final year Doctor of Optometry (OD) students (Interns) will undertake the above subject which involves 38 weeks of clinical placements. The main training venue for our fourth year interns will be at UMEyeCare and the Australian College of Optometry. However, interns will also attend placements at rural, metropolitan, interstate and overseas locations. The length of placements is usually 1 day a week for 6 weeks at general metropolitan practices, two weeks at country practices and 1 day a week for 3 weeks at specialist practices. Our interns are mature postgraduates and can be expected to act in a responsible and professional manner at all times.

Attendance

Hours of attendance are negotiable. Interns are available 8.30am – 5.00pm, Mon-Sat (inclusive).

What happens during the Internship year?

During their Internship, the interns will consolidate their didactic and clinical knowledge learnt in the first 3 years of the Doctor of Optometry course. This will enable them to fully develop their professional patient management skills as an optometrist. Interns are expected to gain experience in the area of primary care, contact lenses, paediatrics, ocular disease, clinical therapeutic management of disease, low vision, and binocular vision clinical specialities during this period.

What commitment is required of Internship hosts?

Hosts (or Clinical Placement Supervisors) will be experienced clinicians who are able to provide real-world experiences to trainee optometrists. They are required to induct, supervise and facilitate the internship experience. Initially, a collaborated learning contract will be agreed between host and intern. Hosts will provide an overall assessment of the intern's performance during the placement. The host organisation must provide a safe and conducive work environment. If the host finds a student is inept in clinical procedure or understanding, they should contact a Clinical Placement Officer or Subject Coordinator (see below) to discuss the matter at hand, and if needed, a remediation program will be developed once the intern has returned from placement.

What are the benefits for the host organisation?

Mentoring the next generation of optometrists can be very rewarding. It is an opportunity to meet young, thoughtful and engaging interns 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 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.

What can Optometry Interns do?

Our interns are in the 4th year of their OD. The intern can provide full consultations whenever possible. If this is not possible, then part consultations could provide the clinical experience the intern is looking for. They are both confident and competent in clinical skills. They have been supervised through at least 80 consultations by the end of their third year. Interns will keep a short summary of what they have done/seen while on placement and complete a short reflective piece on completion of their placement.

The following is a list of suggestions of tasks/activities that Interns can carry out:

1. Our Interns are capable of doing a full consultation however we realise this may be difficult to organise and that part consultations with the practitioners may better suit your practice. It is expected that the intern will be included in consulting activities for at least 75% of the time at the host organisation. At specialist practices more active observation and less full/part consultations may occur.
2. Observation and discussion of therapeutic management of patients as they arise in the normal course of attendance at a practice.
3. Interns can undertake all skills involved in a normal optometric assessment. And so can assist you with any part of a consultation.
4. Interns are encouraged to participate, discuss and/or actively manage the speciality areas of optometry:
 - contact lenses
 - refractive challenges
 - low vision
 - disease or abnormal states
 - paediatrics
 - therapeutic applications
5. Interns can undertake frame and lens selections, as well as the delivery of optical appliances for the patients they are involved in examining. This assists the interns in thinking about continuity of the eye care they deliver.
6. Discussion of referral pathways to ophthalmology and general practitioners. How triage patients are managed in the host's practice.
7. In addition, an introduction to the practical aspects of running a practice would be appreciated which may include the following (**but not limited to**):
 - appointment systems
 - Medicare
 - patient records and filing systems
 - sources of patients
 - reminder letters
 - referral letters and reports
 - frame stock and frame selection
 - supply houses, ordering procedures
 - fees, accounts, receipts
 - management of complaints and communication with patients
 - community outreach and/or domiciliary service
8. The opportunity to observe more than one optometrist in the host organisation might also be useful if this is possible. If you hosts do any consultations at satellite clinics or with ophthalmology or in any other different settings, we would appreciate if the intern(s) could accompany you. The intern can spend up to 1 day in another experience approved by the department eg. Participate in a local school, hospital, age-care or diabetes clinic.

Professional Placement Letter Agreements (PPLAs)

Hosts will be required to read and sign a PPLA which sets out the obligations of both the University of Melbourne and the Host Organisation in relation to Doctor of Optometry Intern Placements.

The PPLA is intended to ensure that a subject-based professional placement undertaken in a host organisation meets the requirements of a professional placement under the Fair Work Act (2009) and sets out the intent of the placement and the obligations of the University and the host organization. The OD internship meets the requirements of the Fair Work Act as a 'vocational placement' which is unpaid and undertaken as part of a course of study. This mandates that the host provide a teaching environment.

Worker's Compensation & Insurance

Worker's compensation does not apply as the internship is unpaid. The Doctor of Optometry interns are covered comprehensively against accident or injury under the University of Melbourne's student insurance policy. The University maintains Public Liability and Professional Indemnity insurance that covers any liability of the University and the student in relation to the placement; however, the host organisation is expected to also maintain appropriate Public Liability insurance.

Contact Information

If you require further information or clarification on any matter, please contact the following staff:

Clinical Placement Officer

Ms Anthea Cochrane

Phone: +61 3 9035 9892

Email: antheac@unimelb.edu.au

Subject Coordinator & Clinic Director, UMEyecare

Associate Professor Daryl Guest

Phone: +61 3 9035 8755

Email: daryl.guest@unimelb.edu.au

If you are interested in participating in the Internship Placement Program, please click on the following link so that we can contact you.

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