

# Graduate Diploma in Orientation and Mobility

## School of Optometry and Vision Science

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. Entry Requirements

**Q: What are the Entry Requirements?**

**A:** A 3-year bachelor's degree (AQF level 7 is the entry level into this program. Applicants with equivalent undergraduate qualifications or other experience are welcome to apply to determine if they might meet the requirements through alternate pathways.

**Please note:** A requirement of the US certifying body ACVREP (Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals) is that candidates have qualification of AQF 7 or higher, thus graduates of this Graduate Diploma will be eligible to take the US ACVREP certification exam to become a COMS. (Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist)

**Q: Can postgraduate qualifications be assessed for credit transfer?**

**A:** Yes, please state when applying if you wish to be considered for credit transfer.

**Q: I have a postgraduate degree, will this be accepted?**

**A:** Yes, we accept bachelors and higher degrees. (AQF level 7)

**Q: I have a bachelor's degree from health sciences, can I receive credit for this?**

**A:** Students with a prior qualification in health science or a related area may receive credit for prior learning. Please state when applying if you wish to be considered for credit transfer.

**Q: Can work experience be considered for credit eligibility?**

**A:** Work experience can be considered for credit eligibility. Please provide CV, lived and occupational experience, work references and statement of service and specify on your application if you wish to be considered for credit eligibility. Please all provide information including whether you were supervised by a certified Orientation and Mobility specialist with ACVREP COMS certification. You will still be required to complete assessable components.

## 2. Length and Offering

**Q: How long does it take to complete this degree.**

**A:** This program is 1 year Fulltime, it is made up of 8 x 6 UoC courses. You need to complete 48 UoC over the three terms that the course runs.

**Q: When is this program offered?**

**A:** In 2021 the program opens in Term 2 (31 May 2021). From 2022 onwards the program will accept new students in Term 1 (January-February) of each year.

## 3. Cost

**Q. How much does this program cost?**

**A.** The Fee is \$31,200 plus there is an annual student services and amenities fee of \$313.00.  
<https://student.unsw.edu.au/ssaf>

**Q. Are there Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP)?**

**A.** Yes there are CSP places: <https://www.news.futurestudents.unsw.edu.au/understand-commonwealth-supported-places>

**Q. Does this program qualify for HECS-HELP?**

**A.** Yes, please refer to: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/hecs>. to find out if you are eligible for HECS-HELP.

**Q. Are there other costs associated with this program?**

**A.** Students are required to complete 80 simulation-teaching training hours. Students not residing in Sydney might need to travel to Sydney for 1-3 weeks to complete these hours if the appropriate supervision is not available in their home state.

Students are also required to complete 350 hours of work experience learning (WIL). Some costs associated with this work experience might need to be met by the student, although many organisations will support WIL hours through in-kind support.

#### **4. Learning and Teaching**

**Q. Can this program be taken part time?**

**A.** Currently this is a full-time program only.

**Q. Is this program taught face to face or online?**

**A.** Lectures and tutorials are on-line, with approximately 1 hour face to face tutorials per course per week. There are placements made up of a significant Work Integrated Learning (WIL) component, and real-world simulation. As mentioned above, if appropriate supervision (COMS) cannot be arranged for students residing outside of Sydney, students might need to travel to Sydney for this face-to-face learning.

**Q. Can you tell me about the simulation and workplace Integrated learning (WIL) component of the program?**

- A.** There are 2 types of practical components that will be required to be completed as part of the Graduate Diploma in Mobility and Orientation
1. Simulation-teacher training hours: this is 80 hours condensed into 3 weeks and most of this is partner work. It would be easier to facilitate most of these hours in your home state if there is another student in the program from that state. If not, there might be a need to travel to NSW for some of these 80 practical hours. These hours form part of the second term courses.
  2. Work Integrated Learning (WIL): UNSW will facilitate the placements and we will hopefully be able to organise most of these placements in a student's home state. If you have a relationship or preference to do the WIL at a specific Industry organisation, and if we can approve the supervision, we are very happy to assist organising that. There is a substantial requirement of WIL in the year course, 350 hours. These hours are in courses for the final 2 terms, although we might help you begin some of these hours earlier in your program if that works better for you.

**Q. I don't live in NSW, can I complete this program in another State?**

- A.** Yes you can, we are hoping you will have the opportunity to complete your placements in your home state. If arrangements for the block of practical's in the second term of study cannot be arranged for students residing outside of Sydney, students might need to travel to Sydney for this face-to-face learning. As if a WIL placement can not be arranged in your state, then you may need to undertake this requirement in another state.

**Q. What courses should I take each Term?**

**A. Term Two 2021 (Term 1/2022)**

<sup>1</sup> VISN5511 The Visual System, Impairments & Implications 6UoC

<sup>3</sup> VISN5512 Sensory Processes and Movement 6UoC

<sup>2</sup> VISN5513 Orientation and Mobility Foundations: Disability, Diversity and Inclusion 6UoC

**Term Three 2021 (Term 2/2022)**

<sup>4</sup> VISN5521 Orientation and Mobility Techniques 6UoC <sup>1,2,3</sup>

<sup>5</sup> VISN5522 Vision Rehabilitation 6UoC <sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>6</sup> VISN5523 Orientation and Mobility in Practice A 6 UoC <sup>2</sup>

**Term One 2022 (Term 3/2022)**

<sup>7</sup> VISN5523 Orientation and Mobility in Practice B 6 UoC <sup>4,5</sup>

<sup>8</sup> VISN5531 Development and Ageing: Implications for Orientation and Mobility 6UoC <sup>2,3</sup>

**5. Job Prospects and Professional Recognition**

**Q. What sort of job opportunities will be available once I have completed the Graduate Diploma in Orientation and Mobility?**

**A.** The UNSW Graduate Diploma in O&M is the only program of its kind in Australia. Currently there are a lack of orientation and mobility specialists in Australia, particularly in rural areas. There is the opportunity of working in non-for-profit rehabilitation organisations, the private sector, in research and overseas, i.e. Singapore, Africa and the Pacific Islands are in need of O&M specialists.

**Q. Registration with ACVREP**

**A.** Following completion of the Graduate Diploma in O&M, graduates wishing to achieve registration with ACVREP will need to pass a certification exam. The Graduate Diploma in O&M has been developed to meet the content and WIL hours required for COMS certification.