

Recent changes to Optometry and Vision Science programs

In 2017 the School of Optometry and Vision Science introduced the undergraduate student degree, the Bachelor of Vision Science (BVisSci).

Students may take the BVisSci as a stand-alone degree or in conjunction with the Master of Clinical Optometry (BVisSci/MClinOptom).

Graduates of the BVisSci can work in the ophthalmic industry in the development of new technologies and diagnostic instruments, as well as working with ophthalmic practitioners in patient care.

The MClinOptom has been designed to offer advanced disciplinary knowledge in Optometry and Vision Science and the clinical skills and training required to practice optometry in Australia. The degree is also recognised in New Zealand and in most parts of Asia.

FAQ's

Why was the Optometry program extended to a five-year degree?

The practice of optometry in Australia expanded in recent years to incorporate the use of therapeutic drugs to treat particular eye diseases and conditions. The UNSW program was redesigned so that graduates are competent to use therapeutics and to be granted therapeutics authorisation in every applicable state in Australia and in New Zealand.

What is the duration of the programs?

If the BVisSci is taken as a stand-alone degree, the duration is 3 years.

If the BVisSci is taken in conjunction with the MClinOptom, the program is taken over five years. The first three years will comprise of the BVisSci followed by the two year MClinOptom.

These programs cannot be undertaken part-time or externally.

What are the entry requirements?

Direct entry into the BVisSci/MClinOptom is based solely on the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). Please refer to the information online at <https://www.futurestudents.unsw.edu.au/> for the entry requirements into the BVisSci/MClinOptom.

If I don't get the ATAR required, is there any other way of getting into Optometry?

You can apply to transfer into the MClinOptom if you first complete the stand-alone BVisSci at UNSW, subject to a number of conditions.

Progression into the MClinOptom will be a competitive process that is based on academic performance and there is no guarantee that you will be offered a place. To be considered for entry into the MClinOptom, students must maintain at least an overall **credit average** in the BVisSci. BVisSci students who are unsuccessful in obtaining a place in the MClinOptom are expected to graduate with a BVisSci or may wish to apply for Science honours program.

Note: As of 2017 the Bachelor of Science (3970) or Advanced Science (3962) with a major in Vision Science will no longer be used as an alternative pathway into optometry.

What is the starting salary?

Starting salary is typically \$75-80K. Salary may be higher in sectors where there is a higher demand, such as rural areas.

Are there any English requirements for registration as an optometrist?

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) requires graduates in optometry to demonstrate English language skills to be suitable for registration. For further information on all AHPRA requirements visit www.optometryboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx