

ACO Fellowship Application Information Sheet

Admission to Fellowship

Fellowship of the Australian College of Optometry (ACO) recognises members who have made a significant contribution to the practice and the profession of optometry and the community. Fellows of the College are members who are held in high esteem within the profession.

There are five categories under which members can apply for Fellowship:

1. Personal achievement in acquiring skill and knowledge
2. Contribution to knowledge and learning
3. Acquisition of special clinical expertise
4. Professional leadership/service
5. Previous Fellow of the ACO applying for reinstatement of Fellowship

Fellowship Responsibility

- As Fellowship of the College is ongoing, Fellows must commit to and continue to adhere to the ACO's Code of Ethics.
- Except where Honorary Membership has been awarded to a member, Fellows must continue to be a financial member of the College.
- As senior clinicians, Fellows of the College are expected to engage with the College and its activities.
- The Council may withdraw Fellowship from any member who, in the Council's opinion, no longer merits the recognition conferred by Fellowship. It will do so only after proper enquiry by the Membership Manager, consideration of the report of that enquiry by the Council and after providing the Fellow with an opportunity to provide explanations.

Recognition of Fellows

Fellows are entitled to use the post nominal FACO and are listed in the ACO Annual Report and on the ACO website.

Pre-requisites for Application for Fellowship

- Prospective applicants for Fellowship are required to have been full financial members of the ACO for the previous three years. (Category 5 applicants exempt).
- All applicants are required to adhere to the ACO Code of Ethics.
- The Professional Development Department is empowered to recommend to Council, candidates for admission to Fellowship for outstanding achievement, without an application having been made by the member.

Procedure for Admission to Fellowship

1. Applicants need to complete an 'Application for Fellowship of the Australian College of Optometry' form and provide the requested documentation and names of referees (at least one of whom is a Fellow of the ACO.)
2. Applications will be assessed against the criteria and endorsed by Council. The applicant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.
3. In the event of an unsuccessful application, the applicant will be given reasons in writing and has the opportunity to reapply.

ACO Fellowship Application Form Completion & Submission

1. Applicants should apply under **at least two** categories (with the exception of those applying under Category 5).
2. Applicants must demonstrate a contribution in at least one criterion in each category.
3. Those applying under *Category 3 Acquisition of Special Clinical Expertise* are required to provide **three** examples that demonstrate specialist expertise.
4. Previous Fellows of the ACO applying for reinstatement of Fellowship (Category 5) may apply under this category only.
5. Together with the application form, applicants need to provide:
 - a. Contact details of their referees (at least one of whom is a Fellow of the ACO)
 - b. A one-page case for why the applicant should be awarded a Fellowship, addressing one or more of the criteria
 - c. A two-page (max) CV of professional history

Completed Application Forms with attachments should be forwarded to:

Membership Division
Australian College of Optometry
374 Cardigan Streets
CARLTON VIC 3053

Tel: 03 349 7578
Email: membership@aco.org.au

ACO Fellowship Categories and Criteria

Category	Criteria to demonstrate achievement	
1. Personal achievement in acquiring skill and knowledge One or more of the criteria may apply	Further clinical qualification	Eg: Graduate Certificate or Diploma in optometry, Masters degree in optometry by course work
	Fellowship by examination	Eg: Fellow of American Academy of Optometry, (British) College of Optometrists (by exam), Australian College of Behavioural Optometrists
	Completion of research training	Eg: Masters degree or PhD obtained by research
	Qualification in a cognate field	A qualification in a cognate field such as psychology, a biomedical discipline, public health, health administration, rehabilitation, business or law, obtained after qualifying to practise optometry
	Goal oriented continuing education	Attended continuing education, especially courses, well in excess of the minimum continuing education requirement over a three year period with a clear learning objective in mind
2. Contribution to knowledge and learning One or both of the criteria may apply	Publications	Has published a book or number of clinical reviews, case reports or research papers in refereed journals
	Clinical teaching	Holds or has held a part time teaching appointment involving giving a significant series of lectures or tutorials per year, or regular weekly clinical instruction for at least five years, or has given regular continuing education to colleagues for at least five years
3. Acquisition of special clinical expertise Three examples of meeting this category are usually required whereby the sum of attainments in a special field of optometry demonstrates special clinical expertise	Clinical expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A professional qualification in an optometric specialty (for example: Diplomate in a specialty in the American Academy of Optometry; PGDip; FACBO; any post registration higher qualification) • Active membership for several years of a specialist society in optometry • Extensive post graduate clinical experience in a clinic attached to, or in, an optometry or medical school, a hospital or a health care or welfare agency • Having a well-established specialty practice or a practice with a strong referral base from colleagues, medicine or other allied health professions • Having published a book or a number of clinical reviews, case reports, or clinical research papers in refereed professional journals • Substantial lecturing in clinical optometry in a University or in continuing education • A portfolio of at least three cases studies that demonstrate special clinical expertise in a specific area. For example: Low Vision, Glaucoma, Orthokeratology (please attach with application) • Attendance at intensive courses and major conferences in a special clinical field over the last five years
4. Professional leadership/service One or more of the criteria may apply	Professional leadership	Has served as an office holder or a member of Council, Board, or a permanent committee of a professional optometric body for at least five years or has served for a similar number of years on a Board or committee of a hospital or other health care agency
	Professional service	Has been involved to a significant extent as an unpaid volunteer in programs to promote health or to bring better care to disadvantaged communities in Australia or overseas
5. Previous Fellow of the ACO applying for reinstatement of Fellowship	Previous lapsed Fellow of the ACO	