DISCOVER YOUR STORY IN OPTOMETRY
The eyes have it! There are no substitutes for vision – it’s a critical part of everyday life. That’s why it’s vital we have highly skilled and trained optometrists who not only help correct our vision issues but also understand the connection between the health of our eyes and our overall well-being.

Optometry goes beyond correcting vision with glasses or contact lenses – it examines whole eye health that can extend into disease detection in the body, such as diabetes or hypertension. Having a career in optometry means you’ll be on the front lines of health care, assisting patients with optical therapy and eye-disorder management, as well as vision therapy, vision rehabilitation, sports vision, pediatrics, and more.

The field of optometry is constantly expanding – especially with an aging population. We encourage you to explore this dynamic discipline and learn how you might join its ranks.

*Let’s explore your story in Optometry at Waterloo.*
THE SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY AND VISION SCIENCE IS RANKED 5TH IN THE WORLD; #3 in North America by Clinical and Experimental Optometry

CANADA’S ONLY Doctor of Optometry program taught in English

MORE TO EXPLORE
Meet us online for more tips and stories:

Instagram: WaterlooSci
YouTube: UWScience
Facebook: WaterlooScience
Learn to see eye to eye. Becoming an optometrist has a variety of benefits and advantages. Not only are you a notable and important health-care professional, but you get to enjoy a career that’s personable, stimulating, and rewarding.

Optometrists have a stable work environment – often with good work/life balance and time for community involvement. Due to the nature of an eye exam, which is thorough and involved, optometrists can spend a long period of time with their patients and develop strong relationships with them. This builds trust between the optometrist and patient, which can help when difficult treatment decisions need to be made.

Optometrists are leaders in their communities and are well-respected professionals.

**1.2 MILLION**

Canadians identify as having vision loss, and this number is expected to double in the next 25 years.  
*Deloitte Access Economics, 2021*

**OPTOMETRY ASSOCIATIONS**

opto.ca | optom.on.ca
Coming Soon! The New Waterloo Eye Institute

Breaking ground in 2022, we’ll offer:
› Modernized clinics
› Ambulatory surgical centre
› Research excellence

We’ll leverage our expertise in biomedical sciences, as well as artificial intelligence and imaging, to study and create treatments for vision, diabetes, macular degeneration, glaucoma, Alzheimer’s, and more.

Innovative Teaching

Our virtual reality training lab helps Canada’s next generation of optometrists learn how to diagnose vision problems and eye diseases more quickly and accurately.

The FYidoctors Simulation Lab is the first of its kind in Canada and accelerates the development of essential clinical skills for optometrists. The authentic experience simulates a patient’s eye and provides students with an opportunity to use virtual reality on many cases that range from wellness to diseases, such as macular degeneration and diabetes.

More To See (Through Research)

Optometry isn’t just about looking at vision. It’s about holistic eye and body health. This means delving into areas that focus on everything from ocular biology to education. Here are the four main branches of research that the Vision Science graduate MSc and PhD degrees focus on:
› Health care, education, and delivery
› Neurosciences
› Ocular biology and pathophysiology
› Technology and optics
ADMISSIONS

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Our Doctor of Optometry (OD) program prepares you to become a registered optometrist. Candidates must complete a specific set of university courses and requirements to qualify for admission into the program.

START YOUR UNIVERSITY SCIENCE DEGREE

You must complete a minimum of three years in a university Bachelor of Science (BSc) program with a full course load (five courses per term) for six terms. The University of Waterloo offers many programs that help you meet the course requirements in three years (see opposite page for recommended programs). BSc programs from other institutions are given equal consideration. To ensure the BSc program and/or the courses you take meet the requirements, visit:

uwaterloo.ca/optometry

ACQUIRE NON-ACADEMIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

› Optometry Admission Test (OAT), minimum score of 300 for all sections
› Complete Altus assessment tools (CASPer and Snapshot)
› Direct work or volunteer experience in an optometry setting
› One letter of reference from an optometrist
› One character reference letter
› Complete the Admission Information Form (AIF)

uwaterloo.ca/optometry/apply

COMPLETE THE ACADEMIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Minimum university average of 75% is required.
› Introductory biology
  (two terms, including lab components)
› Microbiology (one term)
› Physiology (human/mammalian) (two terms)
› Introductory chemistry
  (one term, including lab component)
› Biochemistry (one term)
› Organic chemistry (one term)
› Physics (two terms, including lab components)
› Calculus (one term)
› Statistics (one term)
› English (writing) (one term)
› Introductory ethics (one term)
› Introductory psychology (one term)

DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY PROGRAM

CLINICAL TRAINING
Gain hands-on training and exposure to different patient populations, enabling you to apply your classroom and lab learning to the many aspects of optometric practice.

STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES
Access unique facilities and the latest technologies in our ocular disease, acute care, contact lens, low vision, binocular vision, pediatric and special needs, and sports vision clinics.

EVIDENCE-BASED TEACHING
Learn biomedical, visual, and clinical sciences from faculty who bring current and new knowledge to our classrooms and clinics. Graduate knowing you’ve been trained to provide patient care based on evidence and best practice.

TOP TALENT
Canada’s innovation university attracts award-winning instructors and researchers, along with some of the best and brightest students from across the world.

90
students admitted to the OD program each year (out of an average 300 applications)
Before you apply to the Doctor of Optometry program, you first need to start in a university science program. At Waterloo, we offer three majors that’ll best prepare you for admission. If you’re interested in other majors, that’s fine. Just note it will likely take you more time and possible degree modifications to achieve the academic requirements for Optometry admission.

**HONOURS SCIENCE**

Our most flexible science program, Honours Science allows you the most freedom when choosing your science courses (with a few ground rules, of course) and offers a healthy dose of electives to achieve your English and ethics requirements.

› Available in the regular system of study only

**BIOLOGY (LIFE SCIENCES)**

Studying life and life systems is an obvious choice for those interested in optometry and other health-care professions, so naturally Biology is a popular choice. It also offers sufficient electives to ensure you can meet the academic requirements for our OD program.

› Available in the co-op and regular systems of study. If you choose co-op, it will take at least four years to meet the academic requirements for the OD program, given that you will alternate between academic and work terms.

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES (LIFE SCIENCES)**

Focus on human and other animal systems and their functions relating to health, disease, and the healing process. This major is specifically designed to meet all of the science requirements for common professional school programs, including the OD program.

› Available in the regular system of study only

**ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THESE FACULTY OF SCIENCE PROGRAMS**

› Advanced Functions (min. 70%)
› Calculus and Vectors (min. 70%)
› English (ENG4U) (min. 70%)
› Any two of: Biology, Chemistry, Earth and Space Science, Mathematics of Data Management, Physics
› One additional U or M course

**INTERESTED IN EYE SURGERY?**

The above majors will get you there too – but you’ll want to research how to become an ophthalmologist, which is different than becoming a Doctor of Optometry.

**LOW 80s**

Admission average to Honours Science, Biology, and Biomedical Sciences
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

The University of Waterloo acknowledges that much of our work takes place on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. Our main campus is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

YOU+ WATERLOO

Our greatest impact happens together

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO | FACULTY OF SCIENCE
519-888-4567, EXT. 46243
science@uwaterloo.ca | uwaterloo.ca/optometry

200 UNIVERSITY AVE. W., WATERLOO, ON, CANADA N2L 3G1
uwaterloo.ca/future-students

Waterloo is committed to acting on the climate emergency and is working toward carbon neutrality and zero waste in our own practices. The paper this publication is printed on contains 100% post-consumer fiber, is manufactured using renewable energy and is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified.