

SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY POLICY**Date Revised:** 12/16/2025**Responsible Party:** Student Affairs**Contact(s):** Connie Wright, Student Affairs Director

Advanced International Optometry Degree Program (AIODP) Admissions Policies and Procedures

AIDOP Admissions Requirements

- Doctorate Degree in Optometry/Ophthalmology, Master's or Bachelor's Degree in Optometry from an accredited recognized international school/college of optometry with a GPA of at least a 3.2 on a 4.0 scale
- Applicants must have completed a minimum of three academic years (90 semester hours) of secondary education. Of the required 90 semester hours, 80 of these must be related to health science and/or optometry or ophthalmology course work.
- Successful completion of at least one year of direct, unsupervised clinical care following completion of optometry degree.
- Must coordinate any immigration document needs directly with UAB's [Office of Global Engagement](#).
- Three letters of recommendation from former teachers, mentors or employers
- Students from non-English speaking countries are required to submit English proficiency scores (TOEFL/IELTS/PTEA) that meet the UAB Graduate School's minimum score requirements.
 - TOEFL: 80*
 - TOEFL Essentials: 8.5
 - IELTS: 6.5
 - PTEA: 56
 - IELA: 176
 - Duolingo: 120

Application and Interview Process Application

Requirements:

- Application forms must be complete to be considered for the program.
 - Primary application is completed through Optomcas at www.optomcas.org. UAB Supplemental Application at [UABSO Supplemental Application for Admission](#). Applicants are asked to note their interest in the AIODP program in the comments section on the supplemental application.
- Applicants must submit official transcripts from each college/university and optometry school to either Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE) or World Education Services

(WES) for a course-by-course evaluation

- Applicants must submit an original Personal Essay
- Applicants are asked to submit OAT scores if available (not required)

Initial Interview Process:

The AIODP committee, consisting of at least 4 members of the UABSO faculty, independently review each completed application to confirm candidates have met the AIODP eligibility requirements. Eligible applicants must have a minimum of 80 (eighty) semester hours of health science and optometry/ophthalmology related course work based on transcript conversions by evaluation services such as WES or the equivalent.

Committee members review applicant transcripts, essay responses, and letters of recommendation and then provide an independent recommendation regarding the candidate's eligibility for an initial interview. Candidates selected for an initial interview are invited to meet with at least 3 members of the AIODP committee virtually. The initial virtual interview takes between 45-60 minutes and consists of two parts:

- An interview questionnaire is used to guide the assessment of the candidate's academic background, academic achievement, optometry experience and interpersonal skills. Interviewer's impressions are recorded on the Panel Interview Form and submitted to Student Affairs after the interview.
- After the general interview questions, candidates are given an oral exam of basic science questions related to general optics, ocular anatomy, refractive error, visual pathways, ocular physiology, and other optometric concepts to assess the candidate's understanding of general optometry.

Candidates demonstrating adequate optometry experience, academic achievement, interpersonal skills, and successfully completing the oral exam are invited for a second, in-person interview at the school.

Second, In-Person Interview Process:

Candidates successfully completing the initial interview may be invited for a second, in-person interview at the UAB School of Optometry. The interview will consist of the following two parts:

- Clinical test to evaluate entry-level clinical eye examination skills. Candidates must show clinical proficiency commensurate with end of 2nd year traditional optometry students and pass a Comprehensive Practical Examination (CPE) on a patient volunteer while being assessed by a member of the AIODP committee.
- A basic science and clinical case-based written examination to evaluate critical thinking and assess the candidate's knowledge of basic science, geometrical

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optics, visual optics, and clinical vision science. Candidates must score a minimum of 60% on the written exam to be considered for the AIODP program.

Candidates invited for the in-person interview will be provided with a list of clinical skills required of the CPE along with a list of equipment needed. The school may provide some equipment at the request of the candidate. Candidate's skills are evaluated by the observing clinician and scores recorded on the CPE rubric. The in-person interview requires approximately four hours to complete.

Candidates successfully passing the CPE/clinical assessment and the written exam, may be invited to join the next AIODP cohort. Candidates will be notified by email or phone call regarding their acceptance or denial into the AIODP program.

Application Timeline

- The application cycle opens with OptomCAS in late June/early July.
- Applications will be reviewed as they are received on a rolling basis until the application window closes.
- The application cycle ends on February 28th (for students planning to enroll the following January).
- Final acceptance for the AIODP class will be made by June 1st for students entering the class the following January.

Duties and Responsibilities of Student Affairs and the AIODP Admissions Committee

	Student affairs	AIODP Admissions Committee
Provide promotional information and advertisement about the program.	Responsible for posting and distribution.	Provide assistance with authorship.
Answer questions about program from prospective students.	Yes- Primary resource.	Secondary resource.
Manage optomCAS and collect applications. Complete applications to be shared with AIODP committee monthly.	Yes	No
Review applications and determine who is eligible for initial zoom interview.	No	Yes

Schedule virtual interviews for applicants and committee.	Yes	assist
Schedule in person interviews for applicants and committee.	Yes	assist
Organize/author in person clinical and written exams	assist	Yes
Communicate with applicants denied an interview	Yes - Send email template in OptomCAS based on committee comments.	Assist - Send comments to SA for letter. Further discuss with applicant if needed.
Communicate with applicants not passing interview	Yes- Send email template in OptomCAS based on committee comments.	Assist - Send comments to SA for letter. Further discuss with applicant if needed.
Communicate with applicants accepted into the program with next steps	Yes-Secondary	Yes-Primary
Answer applicant queries about the interview process and status of application.	Secondary – Provide policy and OptomCAS status as appointed by the committee.	Yes-Primary Provide SA with application status after application review. Answer applicant interview questions beyond policy questions.
Individualized admissions advice or applicant competitiveness assessment.	No	Limited-The committee chair may provide admissions advice for candidates requesting assistance.