Master of Optometry (commences in 2012) (OP85)

Year offered: 2011
Admissions: Yes
CRICOS code: 065379E
Course duration (full-time): 2 years
International Fees (indicative): 2011: $10,750 (indicative) per semester
Domestic Entry: February
Total credit points: 192
Course coordinator: Enquiries to optometry.enquiries@qut.edu.au or phone 07 3138 3368
Campus: Kelvin Grove

Overview
This course is the second component of a five year dual degree program, comprising a three year Bachelor of Vision Science (OP45), followed by a two year Master of Optometry (OP85).

NOTE that:
- both degrees need to be completed before a graduate can apply for registration as an optometrist
- there is no direct entry to the OP85 course
- all applicants enter the program through the OP45 Bachelor of Vision Science and progress to the OP85 course on successful completion of the OP45 course
- Commonwealth-supported places will be offered in the Master of Optometry from 2012.

The profession of Optometry is undergoing expansion in its scope of practice as a result of legislative amendments to allow appropriately trained optometrists to use therapeutic pharmaceutical agents in the practice of Optometry. The five year program increases graduates’ depth of knowledge in the areas of general and ocular pharmacology, with training in the therapeutic management of eye disease.

Information for existing optometrists
The Master of Optometry course provides the second component of the entry-level program to the profession in Australia - it is NOT designed to provide qualified optometrists with a masters level qualification. A route for further study is through higher degree research training http://www.rsc.qut.edu.au/. The Faculty’s Master of Applied Science by Research (HL84) is an option for students seeking a Masters level qualification.

Information for overseas trained optometrists
Overseas trained optometrists seeking to gain registration in Australia should contact the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand at www.ocanz.org for details concerning eligibility for registration through the assessment process for overseas trained optometrists before considering further study.

Why choose this course
A graduate of OP45 Bachelor of Vision Science must also complete the Master of Optometry to be eligible for registration as an optometrist.

The course provides increased exposure to real world learning experiences both within the QUT Health Clinic, and in the workplace via the inclusion of extended clinical placements.

Case-based learning and case-based assessment will enhance the training in diseases of the eye and ocular therapeutics. Guest lecturers and practising optometrists are involved in the clinical training.

Entry requirements
The requirement for admission to the course is completion of QUT’s Bachelor of Vision Science.

Career options
Graduates are highly employable, with all students employed on graduation. Graduates can work or specialise in areas such as contact lens practice, children’s vision, occupational/public health optometry or low vision, as well as general primary care clinical practice. The majority of optometry graduates enter private practice and work initially in established practices, often with a view to future partnership or the establishment of their own practice. Graduates are also employed in government service, including hospitals. A number of graduates are working in secondary clinical care environments, primarily in ophthalmology medical eye care practices. The course also provides a route to employment within the ophthalmic industry, or students may enter the teaching and research fields after further study.

Professional recognition
The dual degree program Bachelor of Vision Science/Master of Optometry meets the requirements for accreditation by the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand. Graduates of the program meet the requirements for registration by the Optometry Board of Australia.

Students must complete the Master of Optometry as well as the Bachelor of Vision Science to be eligible for registration.
The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) requires that graduates demonstrate English language skills at IELTS level 7 or equivalent before being considered for professional registration. For further information visit the AHPRA website: http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Process/Registration-Requirements.aspx

Please refer to the Optometry Board of Australia website http://www.optometryboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx for additional information on the Board's Registration Standards.

Student registration
QUT automatically registers students enrolled in this course with the Optometry Board of Australia in accordance with the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009. Details about student registration are available from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency at www.ahpra.gov.au

Other requirements
Ophthalmic instruments costing approximately $5000 are required for the clinical program. These should already have been purchased for the undergraduate program which precedes the Master program (Bachelor of Vision Science).

A uniform shirt (approx $40 per shirt) must be purchased for wear by all students whilst they undertake patient consultations and perform clinical eye examinations in the Optometry Clinic.

Students will also be required to maintain First Aid Certification and have a Blue Card before undertaking the clinical units.

Further information
For information about this course, please call the Public Health and Optometry Student Centre on +61 7 3138 3368 or email optometry.enquiries@qut.edu.au

Potential Careers:
Optometrist.