



PREPROFESSIONAL OPTOMETRY

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY

UPDATED FEBRUARY 2012

This Academic Planning Guide highlights major points only regarding admission and transfer. Students are advised to read the university and RDC calendars, and the Alberta Transfer Guide for other necessary information. Some courses listed may have prerequisites; refer to [Course Descriptions](#). Access this guide online: www.rdc.ab.ca/academic_advising.

PLEASE NOTE THAT:

- Some professional programs have a limited number of seats available according to province of origin;
- Some professional programs do not accept international students;
- Neither completing pre-professional program requirements nor the GPA received on that coursework guarantees acceptance into a professional program;
- Entrance requirements for professional programs vary as per university. It is a student's responsibility to ensure they are taking correct preprofessional coursework for a university other than specified in the title of an Academic Planning Guide;
- The information in this guide is a summary only and students are strongly advised to consult the calendar for the university they wish to attend. This guide is for University of Waterloo only.

The School of Optometry at University of Waterloo offers a four year degree in Doctor of Optometry. It is the only School of Optometry in Canada with English as the language of instruction. The study of Optometry provides students with a background in general science and specialized knowledge in visual science so that they may follow a career to practice Optometry or in optometric research if they so desire.

Applicants require a minimum of three years of study (90 credits/ *90) towards a Bachelor of Science with successful completion of all prerequisite courses before entering Optometry. RDC offers two years of study towards the 3-year preprofessional program; students must attend a university for year three. University of Waterloo does not give admission preference to students who take the preprofessional program there.

The Faculty of Optometry does not have quotas for other provinces or countries; international students may apply. University of Waterloo advises prospective students that most applicants do not gain admission to the School of Optometry even though they met the admission criteria. Pre-optometry students are strongly encouraged to fulfil the prerequisite courses required for admission while pursuing a BSc degree they enjoy and can excel at and that would provide them with suitable career choices if not admitted to Doctor of Optometry. A key consideration when choosing your alternate degree is flexibility. If the BSc program is very structured, you may not be able to meet all science and non-science prerequisites for Optometry. It may be that some of the prerequisites courses for Optometry will not fit into your alternate degree program.

Students may also want to consider a school of optometry in the United States. Further information may be found on the websites for the specific institutions. The information in this academic planning guide pertains to the Doctor of Optometry program at University of Waterloo only. Students are responsible for researching the admission requirements for other institutions, to ensure they are eligible to study at a foreign university and later, practice in Canada, and that they choose the correct courses while studying at RDC.

PREREQUISITE COURSES FOR DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY AT UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO ¹

REQUIRED COURSES	# OF CREDITS	COURSES TAKEN AT RED DEER COLLEGE
Introductory Psychology	3	PSYC 260
Introductory Ethics	3	PHIL 300
English	3	ENGL 219 ²
Calculus	3	MATH 202 <i>or</i> MATH 203 ^{2, 4}
Statistics	3	STAT 251 <i>or</i> BUS 306 ³
General Biology	6	BIOL 217/218
Microbiology	3	MICR 365
Physiology	6	PSIO 262
General Chemistry	3	CHEM 211 ²
Biochemistry	3	BIOC 393
Organic Chemistry	3	CHEM 351 ²
Physics	6	PHYS 205/226

SUGGESTED FIRST YEAR COURSES¹

FALL	WINTER
BIOL 217 (3)	BIOL 218 (3)
CHEM 211(3) ²	CHEM 351(3) ²
MATH 202 (<i>or</i> 203) <i>or</i> STAT 251 (3) ^{2, 3}	MATH 202 (<i>or</i> 203) <i>or</i> STAT 251 (3) ^{2, 3}
ENGL 219(3) ²	ARTS <i>or</i> SCIENCE OPTION (3) ⁴
ARTS CORE REQUIREMENT (3) ⁵	ARTS CORE REQUIREMENT (3) ⁵

NOTES:

- The year one and two course patterns in this guide show how to complete as many of the 15 prerequisite courses as possible during two years of study at RDC. However, *it is not necessary to complete the course work in the first two years of study*. Instead, it is recommended to choose a Bachelor of Science program that is flexible enough to accommodate as many prerequisite courses as possible. Choose a degree of interest to you that would set you on a career or education path you would enjoy if your plans for BSc Optometry change. When taking the preprofessional course work within a degree program fit the courses in where possible and ensure you fulfill program and admission requirements for *both* programs. It may be that all of the prerequisite courses do not fit into your alternate degree but they must be taken to qualify for admission to Doctor of Optometry.
- University of Waterloo requires only *3 (3 credits) in each of these courses but your alternate BSc program may require *6 Inorganic Chemistry, *6 Organic Chemistry, *6 Calculus, and/or *6 English. *Students should ensure program and transfer admission requirements for their alternate degree are met.*
- Students with a grade of 70% or higher in Math 31 are advised to take MATH 203 instead of MATH 202.
- ARTS or SCIENCE OPTION** Choose an Arts or Science Option that fits into your alternate BSc program.
- PHIL 300 and PSYC 260. Students transferring to UofA or UofL will receive *3 in Science for PSYC 260. Students transferring to UofC will be given *3 in Arts for PSYC 260. PHIL 300 is considered an Arts course at all three universities.
- PSIO 262 does not transfer for credit to UofA.

SUGGESTED YEAR 2 COURSES

In year two at RDC (and year three at a university), finish taking the fifteen prerequisite courses and take coursework to fulfill program requirements for your alternate degree while ensuring you take *30 per academic year (Fall/Winter).

Prerequisite courses that can be taken in year two are:

- BIOC 393 (3)¹
- MICR 365 (3)
- PHYS 205/226 (6)
- PSIO 262 (6)²
- Courses to fulfil requirements for your alternate degree to a total of *30.

NOTES:

1. Do *not* take BIOC 301.
2. If you will attend University of Alberta note that PSIO 262 is not accepted for credit. PSIO 262 transfers to University of Calgary as ZOO 361/363 (6) and to University of Lethbridge as BIOL 2xxx/3xxx (6).

FALL	WINTER
_____ (3)	_____ (3)
_____ (3)	_____ (3)
_____ (3)	_____ (3)
_____ (3)	_____ (3)
_____ (3)	_____ (3)

TRANSFER CHECKLIST

1. Students should ensure they are also fulfilling the course requirements for their alternate BSc program of study transferable to their university of choice.
2. Although entry to the Doctor of Optometry program requires three years of University courses (*90), it is not required that applicants have a degree to apply. Approximately 300 qualified applications are received each year for 90 seats. Therefore it is strongly recommended to pursue a BSc degree of personal interest while working towards the admission requirements for the Optometry program. Due to the intensity of the Optometry program, the Admissions Committee wants applicants to be pursuing their studies with a full course load of five courses per term (*30 per academic year).
3. The Science Average is the overall (cumulative) average of all courses taken while registered in a Faculty of Science. Applicants require an overall university average of at least 75% to be considered for admission. Historically, applicants who have been admitted to the program have had averages of 80% to 94%. The average OAT score is 370. Achieving a very high academic average does not guarantee your admission, just as a lower academic average does not necessarily exclude you from being admitted.
4. Both academic and non-academic portions of each application are considered. Successful applicants tend to submit applications that, in addition to a strong academic performance, show a strong non-academic profile (work and volunteer experience, special training, extracurricular activities, etc.). University of Waterloo suggests prospective students start thinking now about who they will use for referral letters and to, if possible, job shadow or volunteer or work at an optometric practice.
5. Successful completion of the Optometry Admissions Test (OAT) is also required for admission to the School of Optometry. OAT information is available in the School of Optometry website. Applications for Doctor of Optometry are available mid-July.

6. Students are responsible for reading the *University of Waterloo Calendar* and website for admission requirements and other important information.

HOW TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

[Science Department](#)

Warren Elgersma, Chairperson
Office: 1607-E 403-343-4052
warren.elgersma@rdc.ab.ca
http://www.rdc.ab.ca/about_rdc/academic_departments/sciences

[Academic Advising](#)

Academic Advising Centre: Room 1102
advisors@rdc.ab.ca 403-343-4039
http://www.rdc.ab.ca/academic_advising

[RDC Website](#)

<http://www.rdc.ab.ca>

[RDC Timetable](#)

<http://www.rdc.ab.ca/timetable>

[Alberta Transfer Guide](#)

<http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca>

University of Waterloo Calendar

<http://www.ugradcalendar.uwaterloo.ca>

School of Optometry

admissions@optometry.uwaterloo.ca 1-519-888-4567
Note: before contacting the School of Optometry, read [Course Eligibility](#).
<http://www.optometry.uwaterloo.ca>

BSc Biomedical Sciences, Department of Biology

<http://www.science.uwaterloo.ca/programs/biomedical.html>

PLEASE NOTE:

Be aware that you are responsible for ensuring that your registration is complete and appropriate and that your course choices comply with the program to which you have been admitted at RDC and/or to the university to which you wish to transfer.

You are cautioned that any changes to your courses, your major or your transfer destination may adversely affect your transferable credit, admission requirements for future programs, or eligibility to graduate from a RDC program. Consult with an academic advisor if you have any questions.

The function of academic advisors is to provide students with information and resources that enable them to make informed decisions relevant to their education. These resources include the RDC, the Academic Planning Guide for your chosen program and destination university, the Alberta Transfer Guide, and the calendar and contact information for your destination university. Academic advisors will assist you in interpreting information from these resources or refer you to your destination university if appropriate. Students in university transfer programs are strongly advised to refer to the calendar of the university to which they wish to transfer and should contact appropriate university departments as required.