

GOC COVID-19 statements - consultation response

A summary of the other specific amendments to each statement is provided in the table below

Statement	Phase(s) in which it applies	Amendments
GOC statement on education provision and approach to quality assurance activity during the COVID-19 emergency (annex 1 of GOC response)	Red, amber and green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated timescale to respond to notified changes (para 20). • Removal of references to 2020/21 academic year. • Clarification re trailing of competencies (para 41, first bullet point). • Clarification around temporary changes (para 43).
GOC statement on supply of spectacles and contact lenses during COVID-19 emergency (annex 2)	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-reference to the statement on contact lens aftercare (para 6). • Amendment from 'up to' to 'no more than' in reference to the contact lens specification (para 9). • Amendments to the list of factors that registrants should consider in exercising their professional judgement (para 12): reference to optical professional bodies (second bullet point); amendment of reference to the expiration of the specification (fourth bullet point); and addition of limiting supply (fifth bullet point).
GOC statement on contact lens aftercare during COVID-19 emergency (annex 3)	Red, amber and green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-reference to the statement on supply of spectacles and contact lenses, and clarification that this statement does not include the fitting of contact lenses (para 6). • Clarification that there is no legal definition of aftercare and reference to definitions of aftercare (para 7). • Amendments to the list of factors that registrants should consider in exercising their professional judgement (para 8): reference to specific clinical advice from the optical professional bodies (third bullet point); addition of patient's ability to access remote care (seventh bullet point); and addition of suitability of technology for remote consultation (eighth bullet point).
GOC statement on our approach in fitness to practise for the service of documents and facilitating hearings during the COVID-19 emergency (annex 4)	Red, amber and green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of reference to The General Optical Council (Committee Constitution, Registration and Fitness to Practise) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020 (paras 2, 4 and 13). • Clarification of our current position for service of notices for fitness to practise proceedings, outlining that notices will only be sent electronically where we have consent from the registrant (paras 4-8). • Removal of examples of notices, notifications and documents. • Clarification of the current position that we are currently scheduling hearings in accordance with our Remote Hearings Protocol (para 11). • Reference to our pre-admittance guidance note for observers (para 17).

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GOC statement on optometrists, dispensing opticians and students working in different settings during the COVID-19 emergency (annex 5)	Red, amber and green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New paragraph re registrants using their own judgement in deciding whether to work in another setting and the prioritisation of eye health care (para 6). • Emphasis around registrants' professional accountability and personal responsibility (para 7). • Reference to legal restrictions on practice and free e-learning resources (para 9). • Annexing of GOC statement on redeployment of optometrists and dispensing opticians within pharmacy practice (para 15 and annex).
GOC statement for CET providers on CET provision during the COVID-19 emergency (annex 6)	Red, amber and green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition re providers contacting us if they would like to apply any other changes not listed in the statement (para 10). • Removal of references to specific software already approved by the GOC (now in a separate link) and removal of references to software that are not currently suitable.
GOC statement on verification of contact lens specifications during COVID-19 emergency (annex 7)	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of reference to the risk of supplying contact lenses to an inaccurate specification (para 11, fourth bullet point). • Addition of limiting supply to the list of factors that registrants should consider in exercising their professional judgement (para 12, first bullet point).
GOC statement on infection prevention and control during COVID-19 emergency (annex 8)	Red, amber and green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement for registrants to check most up to date links for guidance (para 6). • Addition to responsibilities of employers to ensure that appointment times are sufficient for compliance with cleaning and disinfection advice (para 12, second bullet point). • Addition of reference to the possibility of enhanced infection prevention and control procedure having negative outcomes for certain patient groups (para 16).
Redeployment of optometrists or dispensing opticians within pharmacy practice	Red, amber and green	No changes have been made to this statement but it has now been annexed to the GOC statement on optometrists, dispensing opticians and students working in different settings during the COVID-19 emergency (annex 5).
GOC statement on use of technology during COVID-19 emergency (annex 9)	Red, amber and green	Amendments to the list of factors that registrants should consider in exercising their professional judgement (para 10): consideration of relevant legislation (sixth bullet point); and suitability of technology for remote consultation (seventh bullet point).
GOC statement on service of registration notices during the COVID-19 emergency (annex 10)	Red, amber and green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of reference to The General Optical Council (Committee Constitution, Registration and Fitness to Practise) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Rules 2020 (para 3). • Clarification of our current position for service of registration notices, outlining that notices will only be sent electronically where we have consent from the registrant (paras 4-5, 7-8).