
D I R E C T I O N S

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, ENGLAND

The General Ophthalmic Services Contracts (Clinical Placement Training Payment) Directions 2025

The Secretary of State gives the following Directions in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 120(1) and (3), 272(7) and (8) and 273(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006 **(1)**.

The Secretary of State has, in accordance with section 120(4) of that Act, consulted with the body appearing to the Secretary of State to be representative of persons to whose remuneration these Directions relate.

Citation, commencement, extent and application

- 1.—(1) These Directions may be cited as the General Ophthalmic Services Contracts (Clinical Placement Training Payments) Directions 2025.
- (2) These Directions come into force immediately after signing.
- (3) These Directions extend to England and Wales, but apply to England only**(2)**.
- (4) These Directions are given to NHS England**(3)**.

Interpretation

- 2.— In these Directions—

“contractor” means a party to a GOS contract other than NHS England or an Integrated Care Board;

“Clinical placement period” means a clinical placement lasting 44 to 48 weeks for either:

(a) an optometry trainee from a university in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland undertaking pre-registration training under the Scheme for Registration operated by The College of Optometrists; or

(b) a training placement agreed with a university in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland for a trainee studying for an Optometry Master of Science or Master of Optometry qualification at such a university;

“GOS contract” means a general ophthalmic services contract within the meaning of section 117 of the National Health Service Act 2006**(4)** (general ophthalmic services contracts: introductory);

“Optometry Trainee” means an individual who—

(a) is an optometry trainee from a university in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland undertaking pre-registration training under the Scheme for Registration operated by The College of Optometrists; or

(b) a trainee studying for an Optometry Master of Science or Master of Optometry qualification at a university in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland;

(1) 2006 c.41. Section 120(3) was amended by paragraph 58 of Schedule 4 to the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c.7) (“the 2012 Act”).

(2) By virtue of section 271(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006 (“the 2006 Act”), the powers being exercised by the Secretary of State in the making of these Directions are exercisable only in relation to England.

(3) NHS England (formerly known as the National Health Service Commissioning Board) was established by section 1H of the 2006 Act. Section 1H was inserted into the 2006 Act by section 9(1) of the 2012 Act. The National Health Service Commissioning Board was renamed “NHS England” by section 1 of the Health and Care Act 2022.

(4) Section 117 was amended by paragraph 55 of Schedule 4 to the 2012 Act.

- (c) has secured a clinical training placement in England; and
- (d) is not:

- (i) participating in an apprentice scheme; or
- (ii) a self-funding overseas or international student.

Payments in respect of clinical placement training

3.— Payments in respect of clinical placement training are payments to a contractor who employs an Optometry Trainee within their practice. The clinical placement training payment is intended to support contractors by enabling them to allocate resources for the provision of appropriate clinical supervision to an Optometry Trainee within their practice.

Eligibility for clinical placement training payment

4.— A contractor who employs an Optometry Trainee is eligible for a clinical placement training payment.

Application for clinical placement training payment

5.— Where a contractor meets the eligibility criteria in paragraph 4.1, in order to obtain the clinical placement training payment, the contractor must;

- a) submit an application to NHS England;
- b) use the form approved by NHS England for this purpose; and
- c) ensure all required information is included in the application.

Payments and Claim Period

6.— (1) A clinical placement training payment for training completed between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 is available to a contractor at the sum of £4,010 per eligible Optometry Trainee, calculated on a pro rata basis up to a maximum of £4,010 for a clinical placement period of 44 to 48 weeks.

(2) The clinical placement training payment is payable in two equal blocks, each corresponding to half of the clinical placement period.

(3) A claim for each block of the clinical placement training payment must be submitted by the contractor within three months after the completion of the relevant 22 to 24 week clinical placement period.

(4) Where a clinical placement is provided in two separate blocks by two different contractors each contractor may claim separately for one block.

(5) No more than two blocks can be claimed for a single trainee.

Outstanding claims

7.— (1) Any claim in respect of clinical placement training completed on or before 31 December 2025 must be made by 31 March 2026.

(2) The clinical placement training payment is the amount applicable for the financial year in which the placement is completed.

(3) Where a clinical placement training period covers more than one financial year, the contractor may claim the pro rata payment for each part of the placement at the rate applicable to the financial year in which that part is completed.

(4) A claim received outside the period specified in paragraph 7.1 is not eligible for payment and will not be processed.

Early Termination of Clinical Placement

8.— If an Optometry Trainee withdraws from a clinical placement, whether due to academic failure, physical health, or other reasons, the contractor may submit a pro rata claim for the clinical placement training payment. The payment must be calculated pro rata for the weeks up to and including the week in which the Optometry Trainee's participation in the clinical placement ceased.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Z. S. J.', is written over a horizontal line.

Date: 4 December 2025 16:07

Member of the Senior Civil Service
Department of Health and Social Care