

NEWS FROM THE ECOO ACCREDITATION AGENCY

July 2025

STRENGTHENING OPTOMETRIC EDUCATION: PROGRESS AND COLLABORATION ACROSS EUROPE AND BEYOND

Since the last update in October 2024, the ECOO Accreditation Agency has maintained a busy and productive schedule, advancing its mission to promote excellence in optometric education throughout Europe and internationally at the World Council of Optometry (WCO) 5th World Congress of Optometry in the USA.

Accreditation Visit at Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya

Between 2 and 4 October 2024, an accreditation visit took place at the Facultat d'Òptica i Optometria, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya in Spain. The European Qualifications Board (EQB) reviewed and approved the resulting report during its meeting in Ljubljana on 15 May 2025. This represents an important milestone on the institution's journey towards full accreditation, reinforcing ECOO's commitment to supporting high-quality optometry education in Spain and across Europe.

Upcoming Accreditation Visits

Looking ahead, the ECOO Accreditation Agency is preparing for two significant re-accreditation visits. The first is scheduled for early October 2025 at Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz in Olten, Switzerland, for the European Diploma in Optometry. The second is planned for early March 2026 at OHI, Vienna, concerning the European Qualification in Optics programme.

New Student Visitors Appointed

Following strong interest and a competitive interview process, five new student visitors have been appointed. These students will begin participating in accreditation visits from October 2025, bringing fresh perspectives from their diverse educational backgrounds:

- Alicia Sancho-Tello (University of Valencia)
- Teemu Mikkola (Oulu University of Applied Sciences)
- Muqaddas Mansoor (Polytechnic University of Catalonia, UPC)
- Mikaela Krüger (Karolinska Institute)
- Marija Koleda (University of Latvia)

Consortium Sessions for Optometric Educators

Building on [earlier successful meetings](#), ECOO hosted further consortium sessions on 17 and 30 April 2025 to foster collaboration among educators from accredited institutions. The focus was on enhancing clinical experience opportunities for students, particularly through the development and assessment of clinical portfolios.

Presentations from Daniela Nosch and Bente Monica Aakre, representing Olten and Kongsberg respectively, provided valuable insights into clinical education approaches and challenges faced by their institutions. These sessions encouraged productive discussions around practical solutions to strengthen clinical training within optometric programmes.

Review of the EDO Syllabus and Practical Competencies

In 2022, ECOO conducted two extensive surveys examining the relevance of the current European Diploma in Optometry (EDO) syllabus and practical competencies, targeting both educators and optical professionals. Following the presentation of the new WCO Competency Framework at the EQB meeting in Helsinki in May 2024, a panel convened in Brussels in January 2025 to review and update the EDO syllabus and competencies accordingly.

After a stakeholder consultation, the EQB has formally accepted the proposed revisions, which will be implemented from January 2026. Accreditation and re-accreditation activities already in progress will continue under the existing standards.

ECOO at the WCO World Congress of Optometry

The 5th World Congress of Optometry, held from 24 to 27 June 2025 in Minneapolis, USA, featured a dedicated event for accreditation bodies worldwide to exchange best practices and discuss self-assessment in optometric education.

Professor Brendan Barrett represented ECOO, delivering a presentation entitled: *“The European Diploma in Optometry: A framework for harmonising standards of optometric education and training in Europe and beyond.”* This presentation provided an excellent platform to highlight ECOO’s work and foster connections with global peers dedicated to advancing optometric education standards.

Brendan also participated in the accompanying panel discussions, covering the impact of the WCO Competency Framework on the ECOO EDO and an outline of the ECOO Accreditation scheme. Brendan’s presence fostered greater understanding of the ECOO accreditation scheme and its qualifications at WCO-level.



Prof. Brendan Barrett presenting at the WCO World Congress of Optometry in Minneapolis, June 2025

ABOUT THE ECOO ACCREDITATION AGENCY

ECOO has developed the European Diploma in Optometry (EDO) and European Qualification in Optics (EQO) as a syllabi and competency frameworks, and operates an accreditation scheme for institutions to benchmark against this framework. The Accreditation Agency has been set up to run this accreditation work.

To find out more about this work visit:
<https://ecoo.info/ecoo-accreditation-agency/>