



Considering optometry as a career?

Optometry is an extremely rewarding career choice that we encourage you to consider. We believe that a career in optometry and the vision sciences will provide you with immense satisfaction as you will play a key role in helping individuals and communities to protect and care for their eye health and vision. Your patients will benefit from your ability to prevent, detect, manage and treat eye conditions that may lead to vision loss and even blindness.

What study do I need to do?

If you are considering a career in optometry you will be required to complete a university degree over a 3.5–7-year duration, depending on which university you enrol in. You can find out more on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) website, <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/>, by searching for 'Approved Programs of Study'.

Career pathways

Once you graduate there are many paths that you can take. You could:

- Work in clinical practice
- Work in a hospital or a community health centre such as an Aboriginal community-controlled health service
- Deliver visiting outreach services to underserved communities
- Try working, studying or volunteering overseas

- Participate in local and international eye outreach programs
- Follow your passion into vision research or academia
- Own your own optometry business
- Work as an industry representative for various optical companies
- Work as a clinical teacher at various universities

If you:

- **Have a social and friendly personality**
- **Have a genuine desire to help others**
- **Can demonstrate strong communication and academic skills**
- **Possess the motivation to want to continually learn**

you could make a wonderful optometrist and we would welcome you to our profession.

Optometry Australia The influential voice for Optometry

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Lauren Hutchison

A journey into optometry



Lauren is a proud Muruwarrri woman with strong family ties to Wiradjuri country. Lauren graduated from QUT with a Bachelor of Vision Science/Master of Optometry in 2017 and has since been working on Wiradjuri country in Forbes NSW for an independent practice. Lauren is passionate about the specific health needs of her people, especially in rural and regional areas where allied health services are limited and people's access to care is restricted.

Ever since Lauren can remember she has wanted to pursue a career in health.

"The first career I ever had my eye on was pharmacy. Then I thought that maybe medicine was my calling... Until I realised that I'm a fainter. Blood and needles just are not my thing.

"I definitely had a light bulb moment in grade 10 when I had my 2-yearly visit to my local optometrist and was explaining this predicament to him. He suggested optometry and asked if I would like to do a few days' work experience alongside him. I have never looked back" said Lauren.

"After deciding that optometry was what I wanted to do I went straight to my school career adviser to see what I needed to do to achieve this. She explained to me that the entry requirements were high and that I would really need to buckle down for my HSC. So that's what I did. I definitely had a lot of support, both at school and at home. My parents and grandparents were always an amazing support system; I couldn't have got through it without them."

Lauren says that Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) has been a source of support for her career development.

"IAHA has played a massive role in supporting me throughout my journey. Before IAHA I always knew that Indigenous and community eye health was my passion, but I had no one to guide me on how to achieve this. Even down to the everyday mental breakdowns, the friends I have made through IAHA have always been there to comfort and support me."

For those considering a career in optometry, Lauren says "Do it! Optometry is a rewarding career!"

"What I love most about optometry is helping people to see. It sounds obvious, but we really do take our sight for granted. When you give a child their first pair of glasses and see the look on their face that says 'Is this really what the world looks like?' that is such an amazing feeling. Or when you are able to pick up on a condition early and the patient is able to go back to their GP and get on top of it before it causes real issues.

"It can be challenging at times, but the feeling you get when you help to improve someone's life, even just a little is so amazing. I would not trade it for the world."

Read more: <https://iaha.com.au/allied-health-careers/journeys-into-allied-health/lauren-hutchinson-journey-optometry/>

