

... perform eye examinations and vision tests, prescribe lenses, other optical aids and therapy, and diagnose and manage eye movement disorders and associated sensory problems.

Indicative Skill Level

Most occupations in this unit group have a level of skill commensurate with a bachelor degree or higher qualification (ANZSCO Skill Level 1).

Skilled Occupation Criteria

Long-lead time

Optometrists and Orthoptists meet the criteria for long lead time, as entry to this occupation requires a substantial training commitment.

- ▶ Employment as an Optometrist or Orthoptist generally requires the completion of a university qualification of at least four years' study (full-time equivalent), such as a Bachelor of Optometry.

High use

Optometrists and Orthoptists meet the criteria for high use, showing that the skills which people have acquired through education and training are actually being deployed for the uses intended.

- ▶ Based on advice from Universities Australia, university courses in optometry and orthoptics have a strong degree of match with eventual employment in related occupations.
- ▶ 74 per cent of new graduates employed as Optometrists or Orthoptists had studied optical science, and a further 19 per cent had studied rehabilitation therapies (Australian Graduate Survey, 2008).
- ▶ As professionals, Optometrists and Orthoptists are expected to have a level of skill commensurate with a bachelor degree or higher qualification. 82 per cent of those employed as Optometrists and Orthoptists possessed this level of skill (ABS Education and Work, 2008).

High risk

Optometrists and Orthoptists also meet the criteria for high risk or high disruption. This indicates that the occupation is important for the effective operation of an enterprise and/or the broader economy.

- ▶ Optometrists are required to register with their state's or territory's Registration Board in order to gain professional recognition, and many employers require Orthoptists to be registered with the Australian Orthoptic Board.

Occupation trends

ANZSCO: 2514

Optometrists and Orthoptists

Employment level	2000 A high proportion of workers (73.4%) are employed full-time.
6 digit employment (2006 Census)	2514-11 Optometrist 3070 2514-12 Orthoptist 520
Employment growth	Over the five years to November 2009, employment decreased by 59.1%. Employment is expected to increase by 6.1% over the next five years.
Unemployment rate	There is almost no unemployment in this occupation.
Educational profile	Around 82.5% have a Bachelor or higher degree.
Vacancies	The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) rose by 75.0% over the 12 months to January 2010 to 116.7.
Gender	Around 61.4% of workers in this occupation are female.
Labour turnover	The proportion of workers leaving this occupation in a year is around 6.4%.
Age profile	The median age is 31.5 years and 14.1% are aged 45 years and over.
Earnings	Median full-time weekly earnings (before tax) are above average (\$1150).
Overseas-born index	The Overseas-born index for Optometrists and Orthoptists is 145.7 (all occupations = 100).
Graduate outcomes	Graduate Careers Australia data is provided at the aggregated level for 'health', but it shows 97% of Bachelor degree graduates across the health field of study seeking full-time work were working four months after graduation, 46% of whom were employed as Health Professionals, 15% as Personal and Community Service Workers and 9% as Science Professionals.
Skill shortages	Shortages of Optometrists were evident in 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Labour market

2514-11 Optometrist: Shortages have been evident since 2007 with shortages most evident outside New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, and, particularly in regional areas reflecting the location of the training courses in eastern states' capital cities, and an apparent unwillingness of graduates to apply for positions outside metropolitan areas. Overall, however, a relatively low proportion of vacancies are filled. Applicant numbers are small and there is less than one suitable applicant per surveyed vacancy.

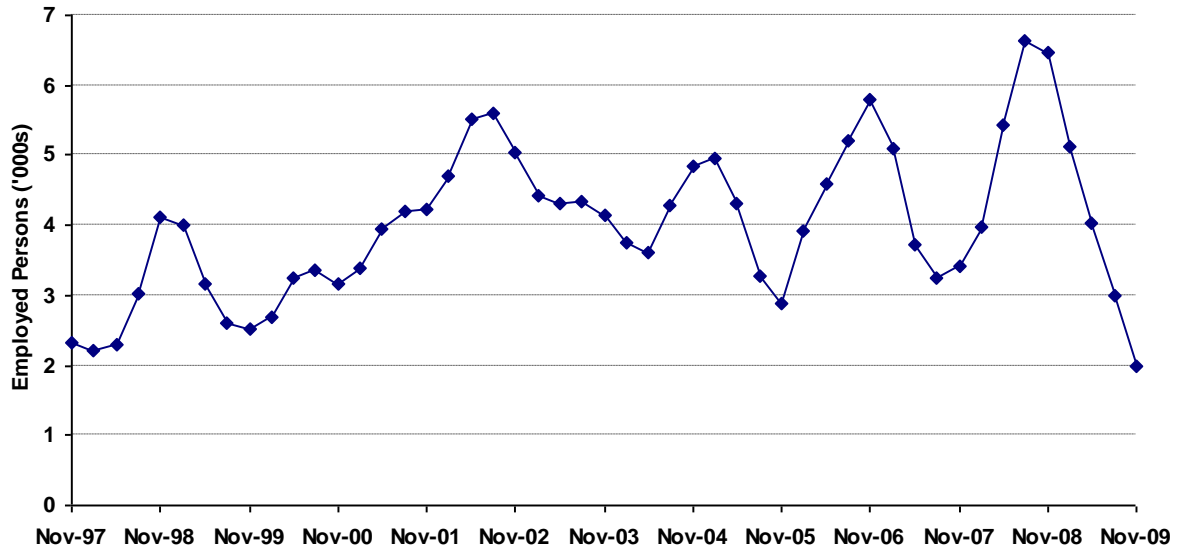
Some contacts suggest optometrists prefer self employment than working as employees.

2514-12 Orthoptist: Not assessed

Summary

Labour Force Survey figures for this relatively small occupational group have a high standard error and it is difficult to determine accurately changes in employment. However, shortages of optometrists for salary and wage positions have been evident over the past few years and there is virtually no unemployment.

12 Year Employment Level Time Series
Optometrists and Orthoptists



Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) - 3 Monthly Average - March 2006 - January 2010
Optometrists and Orthoptists (March 2006 = 100)

