

Optometry Planning:

In Ontario the University of Waterloo is the only English speaking Optometry program

The University of Montreal has a French program only but these are the only 2 Canadian programs.

OptomCAS is the centralized application system used to apply for US schools

It is the Optometry Centralized Application Service. Through this service applicants may file one application and send it to multiple optometry programs.

All schools and colleges of optometry in the US will participate.

For your GPA, Waterloo is looking for a minimum 75% cGPA; however most students that are admitted have 80-94%

The Optometry Admission Test (OAT) is computerized and students are allowed to take the OAT an unlimited number of times, but must wait at least 90 days between testing dates. However, only scores from the four most recent attempts and the total number of attempts will be reported (UWaterloo takes the highest score)

The OAT consists of four test sections: Survey of the Natural Sciences (Biology, General Chemistry, and Organic Chemistry), Reading Comprehension, Physics and Quantitative Reasoning

All schools and colleges of optometry in the United States, and the University of Waterloo, in Canada, require the OAT

Waterloo Optometry admissions now requires the CASPer test. Some US schools may also require this test in the future.

The CASPer Test stands for: Computer-Based Assessment for Sampling Personal Characteristics

It is an online test which assesses for non-cognitive skills and interpersonal characteristics that we believe are important for successful students and graduates of our program, and will complement the other tools that we use for applicant screening.

The CASPer test is comprised of 12 sections of video and written scenarios. Following each scenario, you will be required to answer a set of probing questions under a time contract. Each response is graded by a different rater, giving a very robust and reliable view of personal and professional characteristics important to our program. No studying is required for CASPer, although you may want to familiarize yourself with the test structure at takeCASPer.com, and ensure you have a quiet environment to take the test.

CASPer test results are valid for one year. Applicants who have already taken the test in previous years will therefore be expected to re-take it.

In order to take CASPer, you will be responsible for securing access to a computer with audio capabilities, a webcam, and a reliable internet connection on your selected test date. CASPer can be taken practically anywhere that you can satisfy the aforementioned requirements. No exceptions will be provided for applicants unable to take CASPer online due to being located at sites where internet is not dependable due to technical or political factors. To schedule your CASPer test, head to www.takeCASPer.com and register.

There are only a few test dates for the Optometry CASPer held each year so ensure that you check the Waterloo Optometry Admissions page well in advance (at least 6 months) of your application to plan your timing for the CASPer.

Also, relevant health-related experience is important to have. To ensure an understanding of the profession of Optometry, Waterloo strongly encourages job shadowing with an optometrist which means observing an eye exam.

Also ensure that you have completed the appropriate prerequisites for each university that you are applying to.

Waterloo has a list of requirements on the website; note that in the US they often require more humanities pre-reqs

Waterloo requires 2 references: an optometrist and character reference (for example, a professor, instructor, coach, or employer)

Instead of a Personal Statement, Waterloo requires an Admission Information Form. In CareerHub, the Further Education, Applying section, we have video tips for the written applications for both the Waterloo and US Optometry applications. You can also find samples of the Waterloo and OptomCAS applications in the Letter of Intent Binder behind the Centre for Career Action front desk. This binder is for use in the CCA library only.

Waterloo has a Multiple Mini Interview format with 6-mini interviews; you have 2 minutes to read the question outside, and then ~6 minutes inside the room; usually these happen in November or early January; most recently, the first weekend in January after the holiday break has been the interview weekend for Waterloo.

For the US, there are Standard panel interviews (they happen in the fall through spring because of rolling admissions and various deadlines). Some US schools have moved to the multiple mini interview format, and more may change in the future.