HANDBOOK FOR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT (PQA) CANDIDATE

2023

Prepared by,

PQA Committee
Pertubuhan Akademi Optometri Malaysia (PAOM)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the Optical Act 1991, an individual must register with the Malaysian Optical Council (MOC) to practise optometry in Malaysia. An individual must possess a recognised Bachelor of Optometry degree listed in the Second Schedule of the Optical Act 1991 to be eligible for registration as a practising optometrist in Malaysia. Pursuant to Section 42(2)(e) of the Optical Act 1991, an individual who possesses a bachelor's degree in Optometry that is not listed in the Second Schedule of the Optical Act 1991 must sit and pass a Professional Qualifying Assessment (PQA) before eligible for the registration. This handbook provides the required information for PQA applicants prior to the examination.

2.0 PQA OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the competency level of applicants holding a Bachelor of Optometry degree qualification not listed in the Second Schedule of the Optical Act 1991 for registration as a practising optometrist under the Optical Act 1991 with the MOC.

2. To accommodate applicants who have obtained a Bachelor of Optometry degree qualification listed in the Second Schedule of the Optical Act 1991, where the program duration was only three (3) years, for registration as practising optometrists under the Optical Act 1991 with the MOC.

3. To ensure that only competent optometrists are registered with the MOC.

3.0 WHO SHOULD SIT FOR PQA

1. Applicant who obtained a Bachelor of Optometry degree qualifications **LISTED** in the Second Schedule of the Optical Act 1991, but the program is only conducted **for three (3) years**.

No	Category	Clinical Attachment	PQA
1	Applicant has undergone the Pre-Registration Scheme and **passed** the Professional Qualification Examination (PQE) in the United Kingdom.	Do not require	Do not be required to sit for PQA and be eligible for registration as a practising optometrist in Malaysia with the MOC.
2	Applicant has undergone the Pre-Registration Scheme, sat and **failed** in the PQE in the United Kingdom.	Do not require	Required to sit and pass the PQA.
3	Applicant has undergone the Pre-Registration Scheme but **did not sit** for the PQE in the United Kingdom.	Do not require	Required to sit and pass the PQA.
4	Applicant did not undergo the Pre-Registration Scheme.	i. Must undergo clinical attachment for one (1) year at any institution recognised by the MOC. ii. Must complete a clinical logbook given by the MOC.	Required to sit and pass the PQA.

2. Applicant who obtained a Bachelor of Optometry degree qualification **NOT LISTED** in the Second Schedule of the Optical Act 1991:
    i. If it is a **4-year program**, the applicant **is not required** to undergo clinical attachment. Applicant must sit and pass the PQA only.
    ii. If it is a **3-year program**, the terms and conditions below are applicable:

No	Category	Clinical Attachment	PQA
1	Applicant has undergone the Pre-Registration Scheme.	Do not require	Required to sit and pass the PQA.
2	Applicant did not undergo the Pre-Registration Scheme.	i. Must undergo clinical attachment for one (1) year at any institution recognised by the MOC. ii. Must complete a clinical logbook given by the MOC.	Required to sit and pass the PQA.

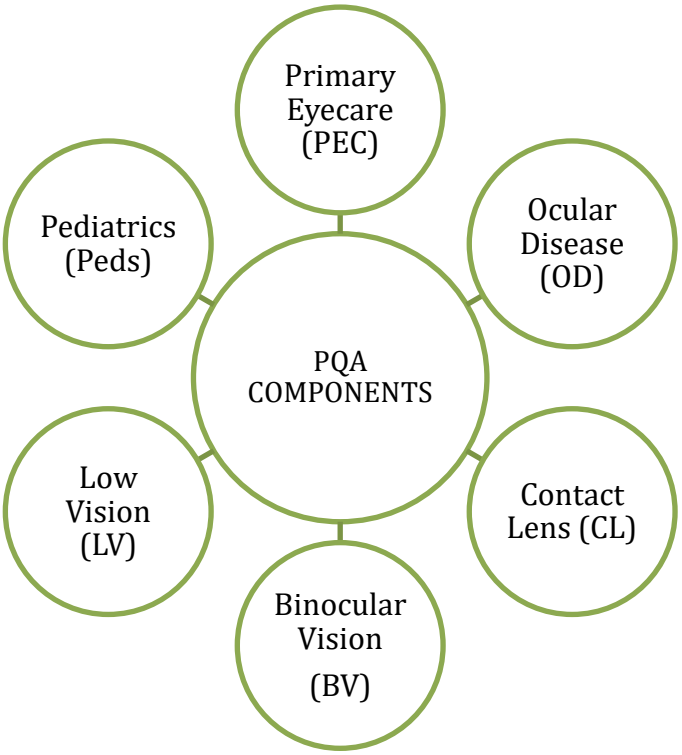
4.0 PQA IMPLEMENTATION

1. An applicant with a Bachelor of Optometry degree qualifications from a 3-year program from institutions listed in the Second Schedule of the Optical Act 1991 must undergo clinical attachment and sit for the PQA if they enroll in the optometry program after the MOC enforces PQA.

2. An applicant with a Bachelor of Optometry degree qualifications from a 3-year program from institutions NOT LISTED in the Second Schedule of the Optical Act 1991 must undergo clinical attachment before they sit for the PQA, effective immediately after MOC receives their application for registration.

5.0 PQA COMPONENTS

The PQA consists of six (6) components of optometry practices:



The applicant's competency level in each component will be assessed separately.
Part 1: Written examination (theory) and
Part 2: Clinical examination (practical)
The learning outcomes of the theoretical and practical parts of each component are as follows:

Component	Learning outcomes for the theory examination for each component. The candidate should be able to:	Learning outcomes for the practical examination for each component. The candidate should be able to:
Binocular Vision	1. Demonstrate an understanding of binocular vision by identifying clinical presentations of anomalies and recognizing the underlying causes of abnormal binocular vision. 2. Illustrate understanding on various techniques to assess binocular vision and ocular motility disorders and their interpretation.	1. Show the essential clinical skills for investigating binocular vision and ocular motility disorders. 2. Display appropriate management for binocular vision and ocular motility problems that includes vision therapy and making a competent referral decision.

	3. Deduce an accurate diagnosis and treatment plan for binocular vision and ocular motility anomalies by applying clinical decision-making skills.	
	Suggested references: 1. Ansons, A.M and Davis, H. (2014). Diagnosis and Management of Ocular Motility Disorders. 4th ed. Wiley Blackwell. 2. Bruce J. W. Evans. (2021). 6th ed. Pickwell's Binocular Vision Anomalies. Butterworth Heinemann Elsevier 3. Fiona J. Rowe. (2012). Clinical Orthoptics. 3rd ed. Wiley-Blackwell. 4. Mitchell Scheiman and Bruce Wick. (2019). Clinical Management of Binocular Vision – Heterophoric, Accommodative, and Eye Movement Disorders. 5th ed. Wolters Kluwer. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.	
Low Vision	1. Explain the concept and epidemiology of low vision and blindness. 2. Describe the assessment procedures in low vision assessments. 3. Differentiate the types and functions of optical and non-optical devices related to low vision and blindness. 4. Describe the special techniques and vision rehabilitation in low vision. 5. Propose correct diagnosis of LV problems. 6. Suggest the appropriate treatment strategies and management plan in LV cases.	1. Demonstrate the appropriate assessment for low vision cases. 2. Demonstrate the usage of LV devices based on the case. 3. Manage LV case competently according to the case.
	Suggested references: 1. A. Jonathan Jackson, James S. Wolffsohn, Low vision manual 2, Butterworth Heinemann/Elsevier, 2007, ISBN: 9780750618151 2. Dickinson. C., Trillo, A. H. & Crossland, M., Low Vision: Principles and Management, Elsevier, 2023, ISBN: 9780323876346 3. Jane MacNaughton, Low vision assessment, Elsevier/Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005, ISBN: 9780750688543 4. Paul B. Freeman, Randall T. Jose, The art and practice of low vision, Butterworth-Heinemann, 1997, ISBN: 0750696850	

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Ocular Disease</td><td>1. Discern the various types of ocular diseases.
2. Describe various ocular diseases management.
3. Plan the optometric management of various ocular diseases and emergencies.
4. Articulate the pathophysiological process of common ocular diseases.</td><td>1. Diagnose various types of ocular diseases competently according to the case.
2. Manage ocular disease cases competently according to the case.
3. Discriminate the need for urgent/non-urgent referrals.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Suggested references:
1. Bowling B. (2015), Kanski's Clinical Ophthalmology 8th ed.: A systematic approach. Saunders
2. Bye L., Modi N., Miles S. (2013), Basic Sciences for Ophthalmology (Oxford Specialty Training). Oxford University Press.
3. Forrester JV. et al. (2016) The eye: Basic Sciences in practice. Elsevier
4. Gerstenblith AT, Rabinowitz MP (2012) The Will's eye manual 6th ed. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
5. Trattler WB, Kaise PK, Friedman NJ (2012) Review of Ophthalmology 2nd ed. Saunders</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Contact Lens</td><td>1. Differentiate and explain the criteria and purpose of various types of contact lens (CL).
2. Justify the fitting characteristics and aftercare regimes for all types of contact lenses.
3. Identify CL complications and its management</td><td>1. Competently select and fit various types of CL on patients according to the case.
2. Identify the fitting characteristics of CL effectively.
3. Interpreting results of various ocular data relating to ocular diseases, in relation to CL.
4. Manage CL cases accordingly.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Suggested references:
1. Efron N. (2017). Contact Lens Practice (3rd ed) Elsevier Health Sciences.
2. Efron N. (2018). Contact Lens Complications (4th ed) Elsevier Health Sciences.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Primary Eye Care</td><td>1. Identify the correct procedure in optometry.
2. Interpret the results of the assessments.
3. Formulate the correct diagnosis for a given case.</td><td>1. Perform primary eye care routine on patients competently according to the case.
2. Diagnose a given optometry cases.
3. Manage the case competently.</td></tr>
</table>

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<tr><td></td><td>4. Plan suitable management of various cases in primary eye care.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Suggested references:
1. Elliot D.B. (2020). Clinical Procedures in Primary Eye Care (5th ed) Elsevier
2. Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (2018). Prosedur Operasi Standard: Perkhidmatan Penjagaan Mata Primer. Majlis Optik Malaysia, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia. ISBN: 978-967-16055-2-3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pediatrics</td><td>1. Explain the normal and abnormal development of the visual system
2. Identify common ocular and visual abnormalities in pediatrics.
3. Plan the assessments to diagnose and manage pediatric cases.</td><td>1. Identify common ocular and visual abnormalities in pediatrics.
2. Plan the assessments to diagnose and manage pediatric cases.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Suggested references:
1. Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (2018). Prosedur Operasi Standard: Perkhidmatan Penjagaan Pesakit Optometri Pediatrik. Majlis Optik Malaysia, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia. ISBN: 978-967-16055-1-6
2. Alvarez-Peregrina, C.; Martinez-Perez, C.; Sánchez-Tena, M.Á. (2022). Myopia and Other Visual Disorders in Children. Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health 19, 8912. https://doi.org/10.3390/ ijerph19158912.
3. Susan, J.(2011) ‘Leat To prescribe or not to prescribe? Guidelines for spectacle prescribing in infants and children’, Clin Exp Optom, 94(6), pp.514–527
4. Schnell, P., Taub, M. B., Duckman, R. H. (2019). Visual Development, Diagnosis, and Treatment of the Pediatric Patient. United States: Wolters Kluwer Health. Duckman
5. Rosenfield M and Logan N. (2009) Pediatric Assessment in Optometry: Science, Technques and Clinical Management. Butterworth-Heinemann, Elsevier. Edinburgh: New York.</td></tr>
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6.0 GENERAL RULES

1. The PQA is scheduled to be held twice a year, where:
   Part 1 – The theory examination will be conducted in April each year.
   Part 2 – The practical examination will be conducted in June each year.

Each part of the examination will be conducted in two days.

Component	Part 1 (Theory Examination)	Part 2 (Practical Examination)
Day 1		
Binocular Vision	60 minutes	30 minutes
Low Vision	60 minutes	30 minutes
Ocular Disease	60 minutes	30 minutes
Day 2		
Contact Lens	60 minutes	30 minutes
Primary Eye Care	60 minutes	30 minutes
Pediatric	60 minutes	30 minutes

2. The passing criteria for the examination are outlined as follows:

   A. PART 1
      a. It is compulsory to register both Part 1 and Part 2 within the same assessment year.
      b. To achieve a passing status for Part 1, candidates MUST successfully pass ALL components in Part 1.
      c. If a candidate is required to retake any component(s) in Part 1, it is imperative for the candidate to participate in the examination offered in the subsequent year where the PQA Examination is available. Non-compliance with this stipulation will obligate the candidate to retake all components of Part 1.
      d. Only candidates who successfully pass the component(s) in Part 1 are eligible to proceed to Part 2 within the same components.
      e. The result will be announced via email within 2 weeks following approval by the MOC Evaluation Committee.

   B. PART 2
      a. To achieve a passing status for Part 2, applicants MUST successfully pass ALL components in Part 2.
      b. If a candidate is required to retake any component(s) in Part 2, it is imperative for the candidate to participate in the examination offered in the subsequent year where the PQA Examination is available. Non-compliance with this stipulation will obligate the candidate to retake all components of Part 2.
      c. The result will be announced via email within 2 weeks following approval by the MOC Evaluation Committee.

3. All PQA results are considered final, and no appeals will be entertained.
4. Candidates who successfully pass both Part 1 and Part 2 are eligible for registration as an Optometrist with MOC. MOC secretariat will manage the registration process for candidates

who have successfully PASSED the PQA.

5. The general examination rules are as follows.
    a. Candidates must present the original **identification card/passport** and an **invitation letter from PAOM** (see PQA flow chart, Appendix 2) on the examination day.
    b. Candidates are required to register for the examination **30 minutes** before the examination commences.
    c. No additional time will be given for late arrivals. If an candidate arrives more than 15 minutes after the commencement of the examination, you will be denied taking the examination.
    d. Candidates are prohibited from bringing notes, books, and communication devices, including cell phones, into the examination venue. However, candidates are required to bring their own stationery such as pens, pencils, erasers, color pencils, calculator, or any other relevant basic needs for Part 1. Additionally, for Part 2, candidates are encouraged to bring their own tools, such as a retinoscope, ophthalmoscope, occluder, pen torch etc.
    e. Candidates are required to dress appropriately, decently, and professionally including proper footwear.
        i. Male candidate: Short/long sleeves shirts or polo shirt with long trousers.
        ii. Female candidate: Short/long sleeves top, long trousers, a dress/skirt below knee or baju kurung.

REMINDER
Candidate MUST adhere to the rules and regulations outlined above. Failure to comply will lead to the disqualification of the candidate from sitting or continuing with the examination.

7.0 APPLICATION AND FEES

1. The applicant is required to submit the registration documents to the Malaysian Optical Council (MOC) for approval.

2. Upon approval, the applicant is obligated to submit TWO copies of the following documents to Pertubuhan Akademi Optometri Malaysia (PAOM) via email:
    a. The application form for PQA (Appendix 1).
    b. A Letter issued by MOC granting permission to sit for the PQA.
    c. Provide a certified copy of the Bachelor of Optometry degree.
    d. Provide a certified copy of postgraduate degree(s), if any.
    e. Provide a certified copy of identification card (for Malaysians)
    f. Additional documents required for non-Malaysians, a certified copy of passport and appointment letter from the Higher Education Provider.

3. In case there is a disparity in the printed names on any of the submitted documents, kindly include a Statutory Declaration.

4. If the original documents are not in Bahasa Malaysia or English, please provide translated versions in either Bahasa Malaysia or English. Ensure that the translated documents are accompanied by certified copies of the original documents in their original languages. Translation must be conducted by qualified translator or officers of an appropriate embassy.

5. It is recommended that the applicant retains a copy of the submitted form for future reference.

6. The examination fees must be paid via:
    a. Direct transfer to **Pertubuhan Akademi Optometri Malaysia** (CIMB Account No.: 8603273238) OR
    b. Online payment (FPX): https://toyyibpay.com/Yuran-PQA-Optometris

7. Notification of payment approval by PAOM will be sent via email.

8. Total fees for each Part are as follows:
    Part 1 (Theory) : RM 3450.00
    Part 2 (Practical) : RM 4850.00
    In the event of re-sitting, the total fees for each component are as follows:
    Part 1 (Theory) : RM 820.00
    Part 2 (Practical) : RM 1020.00

9. The applicant will receive information about the PQA, including the date, venue, and time, at least two weeks before the examination. This information will be communicated via email and announced on the MOC website.

10. All application documents for PQA must be submitted via email to:

PERTUBUHAN AKADEMI OPTOMETRI MALAYSIA

Email	:	akademioptometrimalaysia@gmail.com
Contact Number	:	+(60)3-9289 7499 (Cik Norlaili binti Arif)
Website	:	www.paom.org.my

**The flow chart of the PQA process is summarized as in Appendix 2.*

8.0 Result

The PQA results will be presented and endorsed during the MOC Evaluation Committee meeting. The official letter regarding the PQA results will be issued by the MOC Secretariat to candidates within a period of 2 weeks following approval by the MOC Evaluation Committee.

APPENDIX 1

Latest Passport Photo Size

APPLICANT FORM
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT (PQA)

Application for The Professional Qualifying Assessment for Registration of Optometrists Under Section 19(2) Optical Act 1991

1.	Full Name of Applicant:	
2.	Malaysian NRIC No:	
3.	Date of Birth:	
4.	(a) Residential Address:	
	(b) Postal Address:	
5.	Particulars on Qualification (a) Description of Qualification: (In Full)	
	(b) Institution which Granted Qualification:	
	(c) Date of Qualification:	
6.	*Marital Status:	Single / Married / Divorced
7.	Contact Information (a) Telephone (office):	
	(b) Telephone (mobile):	
	(c) E-mail address:	
8.	Payment Details	

(a) Reference No.:	
(b) Sum:	
(c) Date of Transaction:	
(d) Attach Proof of Payment:	

The following fee is payable to:

Pertubuhan Akademi Optometri Malaysia

(CIMB Account No.: 8603273238)

Or

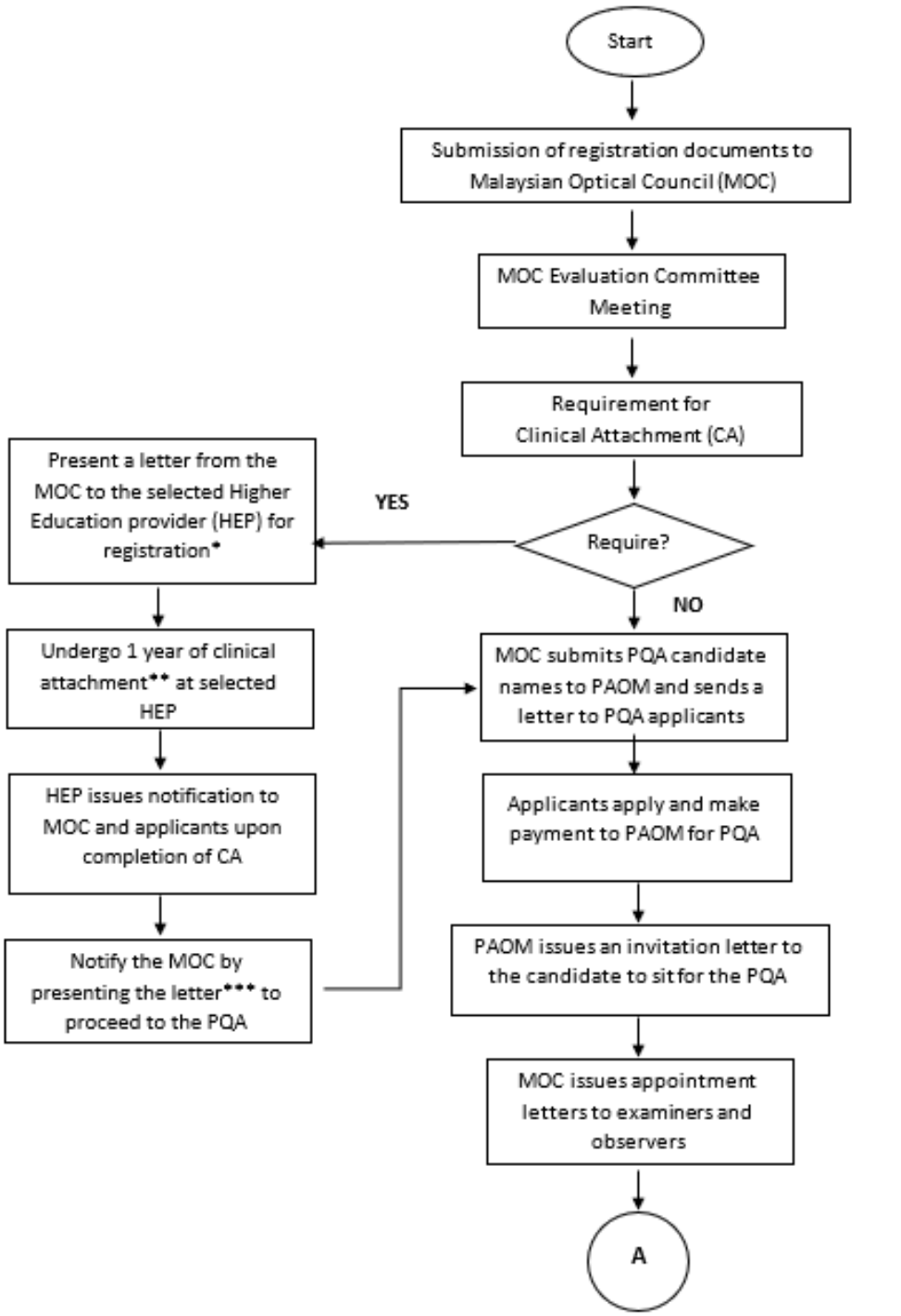
via FPX: https://toyyibpay.com/Yuran-PQA-Optometris

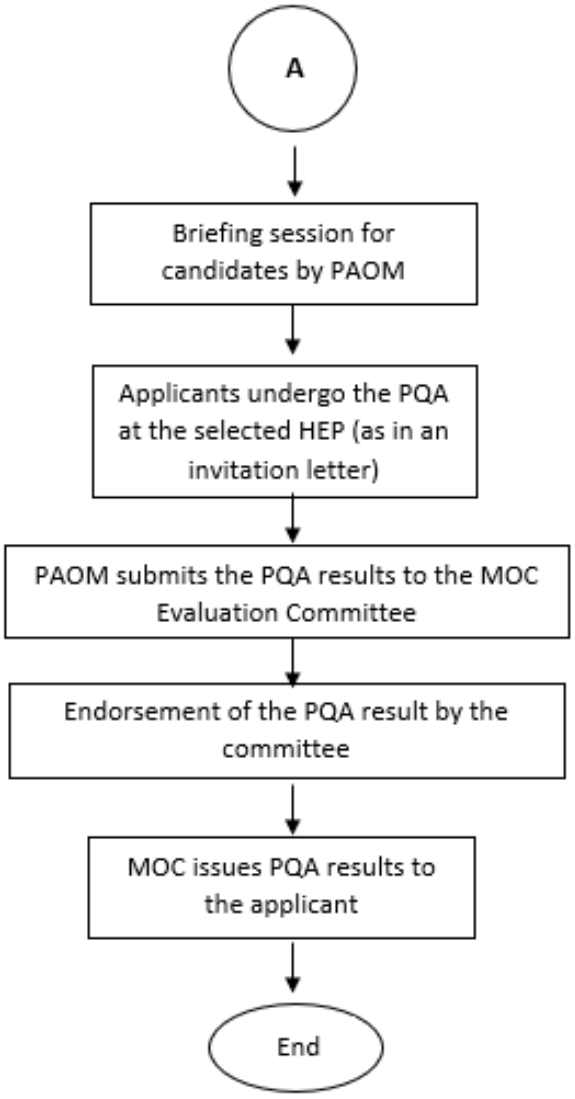
Date:	**Signature of applicant** **Full Name:** **NRIC No.:**

**Strike off whichever is not applicable.*

Appendix 2

OPTOMETRIST PROFESSIONAL QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT (PQA) FLOW CHART





**The process of the registration will be advised by the HEP.*
***Please refer to the section 3.0*
****The letter is only valid within one (1) year from the date of issuance.*