



University of  
**Sheffield**

# **Primary Exemptions Tutor Handbook**

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## **Preface**

The role of the primary exemptions tutor needs to be undertaken by: an Ophthalmologist registered with the General Medical Council; or an Optometrist registered with the General Optical Council; or a Nurse Practitioner specialising in Ophthalmology with IP and registered with the General Nursing Council; or an Orthoptist annotated with exemptions on the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) register.

To fulfil the role of primary exemptions tutor you need to be prepared to offer supervision, counsel and reflective discussion with the orthoptist taking this course. It is essential that you work within the same healthcare trust. You will both need to feel satisfied with the guidelines and expectations set out within this handbook before you begin.

The student you are supervising is free to continue working under any patient group directives (PGD) or patient specific directives (PSD) you may have without supervision, whilst undertaking this course. Any decisions proposed by the student to supply or administer the medicines exempted for orthoptists that are not covered by an existing PGD or PSD will need to be signed off by you.

If you are unsure of whether you are suitable to take on this role, we ask you to discuss this with both your potential student and the module / course leader (contact details in Appendix one).

## **Introduction**

Thank you for agreeing to undertake the role of Primary Exemptions Tutor for a student enrolled on the 'Exemptions' module studied by distance-learning. In this handbook you will find information regarding the course that the student you are supervising is undertaking. You will also find information relating to the MMedSci programmes in full. This handbook contains the contact details of the academic and professional-services staff who support this module (Appendix one). Should you wish to contact anyone in relation to your student, or to address any queries you may have, we would be delighted to hear from you. We are very appreciative of every primary exemptions tutor who agrees to support and mentor one of the MMedSci students in their training regarding sale, supply and administration of the medicines exempted for Orthoptists. We hope that you will enjoy your role as a primary exemptions tutor. Please use this handbook as a guide to prepare you for supporting your student and as a point of reference as the course progresses. We have endeavoured to provide you with all of the information you will need within this handbook, in order to fulfil this role.

## **Orthoptics and Ophthalmology Programmes**

The course is provided by Orthoptics and Ophthalmology within the School of Allied Health Professions, Nursing and Midwifery at The University of Sheffield. We provide a range of undergraduate and post-graduate education, including the following educational programmes; BMedSci (Hons) Orthoptics, MMedSci (Vision & Strabismus), MMedSci (ACP in Paediatric Ophthalmology), as well as standalone modules for continued professional development (CPD). The contact details for module and programme leads can be found in Appendix 1.

## Background to Exemptions for Orthoptists

Changes to The Human Medicines Regulations 2012 (Statutory Instruments, 2012), introduced exemptions for orthoptists to sell, supply and administer certain medicines. These medicines include prescription only medicines and non-prescription, pharmacy only medicines. In order to use these exemptions, orthoptists, registered with the HCPC, must gain a satisfactory qualification from an HCPC approved programme and obtain annotation on the HCPC Register. The Exemptions module (either studied as a standalone module or within the full MMedSci) is an HCPC approved post-registration programme for qualified orthoptists. Successful completion of the course will allow orthoptists already registered with the HCPC, to apply for annotation to use exemptions within their own scope of practice. Admission to the Exemptions module is dependent upon the student gaining the support and mentorship of a designated, confirmed, primary exemptions tutor.

The list of prescription only medicines (POMS) exempted for qualified orthoptists is as follows:

- a) Anti-microbials; chloramphenicol, fusidic acid
- b) Anti-muscarinics; atropine, cyclopentolate, tropicamide
- c) Local anaesthetics; Lidocaine with fluorescein, Oxybuprocaine, Proxymetacaine, Tetracaine

The General Sales List (GSL) or Pharmacy only (P) medicines include phenylephrine 2.5%, fluorescein, sodium cromoglicate and some ocular lubricants. Chloramphenicol remains on the exemptions list as it is only available in P form for patients over the age of two years and orthoptists frequently care for children under the age of two.

## **Aims of the Exemptions Module**

The aim of this module is to facilitate advanced practice in the area of prescription only and non-prescription exemption listed medicines for Orthoptists, by enhancing knowledge of the pharmacokinetics and actions of these specific medicines. This will be achieved through interactive teaching from The University of Sheffield, by provision of excellent teaching materials for self-directed study, through the framework of the reflective diary which will provoke reflective practice and peer supported learning.

## **Role of the Primary Exemptions Tutor**

As a primary exemptions tutor – you will currently be qualified and registered with an appropriate professional body to be able to sell, supply and administer the medications exempted for orthoptists and your role will be to mentor, support and supervise the orthoptist undertaking the Exemptions course. It may be appropriate with the range of medicines for the student to have more than one exemptions tutor, but there is an expectation and necessity to have one ‘Primary Exemptions Tutor’ who takes overall responsibility for student support and mentorship. Upon agreeing to undertake the role of PET, you will be asked to complete the student’s primary exemptions tutor support form, a copy of which is supplied for you in Appendix two. This form asks you to confirm that you are willing to mentor and support the student during the course. The form asks for your name, profession and signature and in addition, your email address. We ask for this so that we may contact you and send you some information during the course, which you may find helpful in preparing for and undertaking this role. Upon receipt of your primary exemptions tutor support form, our course administrators will note your name and verified registration as supporting a named student.

We anticipate and advise that where possible students will choose a primary exemptions tutor with whom they already have a good working relationship and mutual trust. In undertaking this course students will be seeking to advance their clinical practice in the safe and effective use of the exempted medicines and will look to you as a guide, discussion partner and source of knowledge and experience. Students will value listening to your expertise, reflecting on patient cases with you and discussing decisions of whether to medicinally intervene or not.

The student you are primary exemptions tutor to, will undertake this course independently. The student will be studying primarily by distance learning, after an introductory day of teaching, provided by the University (the contents of this introductory day is included in this handbook in Appendix three). The student will then independently study eleven course units by distance learning. These course units guide the students through a process of self-directed learning, providing essential reading on topics relevant to the subject, directing students to key texts and asking students to perform course exercises. These exercises ask students to draw on their own experiences of observing and treating patients through their own patient group directives and patient specific directives. For example, in the first of the course units, students are asked to reflect on the medicines they are currently using and what the legal classification and legal mechanism for this patient use is. Later in the course students are asked to reflect on techniques they have used to assess the anterior chamber angle prior to instillation of a cycloplegic eye drop. As part of that reflection they may want to discuss cases with you, as part of their continued professional development in this new area of expertise.

## **What the course involves for students**

The Exemptions module for orthoptists is a thirty credit post-graduate module at Masters level and involves eleven units of study. These units may be viewed as chapters or subject areas and students are advised to try to work through one of these each week. Within the course units are unit exercises which require students to watch teaching videos, practise clinical techniques or reflect on their own clinical practice. The course unit exercises will be written up by the student and combined with their own reflective (anonymised) patient log to form the 'reflective portfolio' which forms the final assessment of the Exemptions module. A sample of the Reflective diary exercises have been included in this handbook in Appendix four. The reflective diary has been designed to help students develop insight within their studies and achieve deeper learning. The intention of the reflective diary is to aid students in recognising what they are learning and help identify areas of strength as well as areas where more experience is required. Students will need to reflect on their experiences both from their own orthoptic clinics and in visits to other clinics where they have seen medicines prescribed. Within the reflective diary students need to provide a log of anonymised patients (at least two paediatric and two adult cases) that they have seen. Reflection may lead to discussion or reading around a topic and primary exemptions tutors can play a vital role in sharing their experience and expertise with students in these type of discussions.

## The Exemptions course structure

The eleven chapters that the students will work through are titled:

1. Introduction
2. Legal framework
3. Pharmacology and Anatomy
4. Communication
5. Cycloplegia and Mydriasis
6. Ocular lubricants
7. Local anaesthetics
8. Antimicrobials
9. Administer and supply
10. Record Keeping
11. Continued Professional Development

You can find more information relating to the course on The University course webpages:

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/medicine/prospectivepg/taught/mmedsci/structure>

Should you wish to see more of the course materials that your student is reading, you are most welcome to ask them to share their reading with you. You are also welcome to contact the programme leader Dr Charlotte Codina (see Appendix one for contact details) to request any further information that you feel would be of benefit to you.

## The timeline of the course

The course begins with an introductory weekend, held virtually.

September (Autumn intake) / March (Spring intake)

Students then begin to work through the eleven course units, using their self-directed study and based on their own clinical experience to populate their reflective diary.

By the **end of October (Autumn intake) / April (Spring intake)** students submit their first assignment which focuses on communication with patients

By the **end of December (Autumn intake) / June (Spring intake)** students will need to have completed their online multiple choice exam. Within this, there are certain 'red flag' questions which must be passed in order to obtain a pass

By the **end of January (Autumn intake) / July (Spring intake)** students need to submit the fully completed reflective diary for assessment.



## Supervising students

As students progress through the course and gain a greater knowledge and skill-base in this subject area, they will be expected to work with further independent thinking and more aligned practice, at a rate that the PET and student agree upon together. To aid in this process of progression we have suggested that the student and the PET agree upon three stages of supervision. However, where patient group directives or patient specific directives (PGDs and PSDs) are already in place students will continue to use these without any additional supervision.

These three stages of supervision are:

**Initial phase:** Ongoing, regular reflective discussion occurs between PET and student on their practice using exempted medicines. Where no PGD/PSD is in place, any new medication or change to an existing programme of medication **must** be signed off by the PET. Where an existing PGD or PSD is in place, the orthoptist uses medications within their normal local arrangements.

**Interim phase:** Periodic reflective discussion and increasing alignment of practice between student and PET in the use of exempted medicines. Where no PGD/PSD is in place, any new medication or change to an existing programme of medication **must** be signed off by the PET. Where an existing PGD or PSD is in place, the orthoptist uses medications within their normal local arrangements.

**Final phase:** Reflective discussion and aligned practice between PET and student. Where no PGD/PSD is in place, **any** new medication or change to an existing programme of medication **is** proposed by the student and **must** be signed off by the PET. Where an existing PGD or PSD is in place, the orthoptist uses medications autonomously within their normal local arrangements.

We have purposefully **not** set a time frame for these three phases because the students will vary tremendously in the experience that they have had in using the exempted medicines under local (PGDs and PSDs). We have also not wanted to inhibit students already using these medicines from being able to do their current jobs because they are enrolled in this course.

It is however, expected, that by the time that the students have successfully passed the multiple choice (MCQ) exam, that primary exemptions tutors and students will have agreed that the student will have reached the interim or final phase of supervision. The reason for this expectation is that the MCQ tests students' essential knowledge of the safe and effective use of the exempted medicines. It also contains certain 'red flag' questions which must be passed which ensure essential patient safety. Students are able to receive their MCQ result immediately and upon successfully passing this element of the course, we would expect the student and the PET to feel confident to move to at least the interim stage of supervision. Students should print out and give a copy of their successful MCQ assessment to their PET and at the completion of the interim phase the PET confirms this on the 'Evidence of PET mentoring and assessment form' (Appendix five). Of course, if either the student or the PET do not feel such confidence, this decision can be delayed, but it is necessary for students to notify the course leader of this decision.

It will be necessary for the PET and student to each complete the 'Evidence of primary exemptions tutor support form' at times when you both agree that the student can progress from the initial phase to the interim phase, or from the interim phase to the final phase of supervision. Once these stages and the relevant section of the form have been completed, they must be uploaded on to Blackboard ORT6033. The 'Evidence of primary exemptions tutor support form' will be provided to you by the student, but you can find a copy in this handbook in Appendix five, for your own convenience.

## **Support from the course**

All students will have both a personal tutor and an academic tutor for the duration of the module and for the course in full if that applies and for whom they will have all appropriate contact details. All students are welcome to contact the programme leader Dr Charlotte Codina and are provided with a full course handbook which contains information as to what to do and who to contact should exceptional circumstances arise such as needing an extension for example. The students will have fully structured support in place in undertaking this course and will not be reliant on you for personal or pastoral support other than medicinal product supervision.

## **What to do if things go wrong**

As colleagues with an already good working relationship, we anticipate that any arising issues will be able to be resolved without any intervention from the University. If you feel concerned in regard to a student's lack of understanding or progress, you should in the first instance discuss this with the student. If, after doing this, you remain concerned, or either you or the student feels unhappy, we would ask you to contact the course leader Dr Charlotte Codina at your earliest convenience please. If a student has more than one exemptions tutor and a mutual decision is agreed upon between the PET and the student, for the role of primary exemption tutor to be moved from one tutor to another, then please do discuss this with the course leader.

## **Summary and evaluation**

We hope that you have found this primary exemptions tutor handbook a useful guide to the role that you have undertaken and to supporting and mentoring the orthoptist you are supervising. We want to thank you for the time you have given to supporting your student and to facilitating their completion of this module. We would really value your views if you have the time to tell us whether you feel the handbook sufficiently prepared you for the role, how much time taking on the PET role took you and whether there was any further information or resources you would have benefited from, to enable you to support your student. We will send you a link, through email to a Google form which asks you briefly about your experience of being a primary exemptions tutor. Once again, we would like to thank you for your time, energy and expertise in supporting one of our students.

## **Appendix One - Contact details**

### **Staff contact details**

#### **Professional lead for Orthoptics & Ophthalmology**

Dr Charlotte Codina

[c.codina@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:c.codina@sheffield.ac.uk)

#### **MMedSci Vision & Strabismus Programme lead**

Mr Karzan Hughes

[Karzan.hughes@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:Karzan.hughes@sheffield.ac.uk)

#### **Module lead for Exemptions**

[p.d.keating@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.d.keating@sheffield.ac.uk)

#### **Administrative support**

[Orthoptics@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:Orthoptics@sheffield.ac.uk)

## Appendix Two - Primary Exemptions Tutor Support Form



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Ophthalmology &  
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### ORT6033 PRIMARY EXEMPTIONS TUTOR SUPPORT FORM

I confirm that my manager has agreed to my undertaking this course and will support me in gaining practical experience by attending clinics in which medications exempted for orthoptists will be given or prescribed. I have identified a primary exemptions tutor who will mentor and support me during the course. This person has an appropriate registration with one of the following: The General Medical Council register for specialty in Ophthalmology for Ophthalmologists; the General Optical Council for registered Optometrists with IP; General Nursing Council for Nurse Practitioner in Ophthalmology specialty with IP; or the HCPC register for annotated Orthoptists.

Student's signature:

Date:

Print name:

HCPC Registration no:

Place of work (Healthcare Trust):

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Signature of primary exemptions tutor:

Date:

Print name:

Registration no:

Profession:

Email address:

## **Appendix Three – Example introductory day programme and tutorials**

### **Introductory day:**

10.00am **Introduction to Exemptions** – Mr Patrick Keating, Module Lead

10.15am **Red Eye** – Ms Katie Meakings – Trainee ACP in acute Ophthalmology

1.15pm **Dry Eye Disease** – Mr Alan Lok, Trainee ACP in Paediatric Ophthalmology

2.30pm **Course delivery, Assessments, & Mechanisms of using exemptions in practice** – Mr Karzan Hughes, Programme Lead / Module Lead

3.30pm **Q&A** - Module Lead

### **Tutorials:**

**Pharmacology & Pharmacokinetics** - Jacqui Holcombe, Registered Pharmacist

**MCQ exam tutorial** – Module Lead

**Reflective portfolio tutorial** – Module Lead

## Appendix Four - Reflective Diary Course Exercise Examples

### Unit 1 Exercise 1



Read:

The Allied Health Professionals Medicines Project Team, NHS England (2016) Summary of the responses to the public consultation on proposals to allow orthoptists to sell, supply & administer medicines under exemptions within Human Medicines Regulations 2012 across the United Kingdom. Available at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/orthoptists-summary-consult-responses.pdf> [accessed January 2021]



Do:

1. Reflecting on your current role and scope of practice, list and consider how you are currently using the POMs exempted for orthoptists?
2. How do you hope to enhance your current understanding and practice through the use of exemptions?

### Unit 1 Exercise 2



Read and familiarise yourself with:

1. The Standards and the Glossary of terms from the Health and Care Professionals Council (2016) Standards for the use by orthoptists of exemptions to sell and supply medicines. Available at: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10005216Orthoptistsexemptions.pdf>
2. The competencies required of orthoptists from the BIOS curriculum framework for education programmes to prepare Orthoptists to use exemptions (2016). Available at:

[https://www.orthoptics.org.uk/resources/Documents/BOSTU/Outline%20Curriculum%20Framework%20for%20Education%20Programmes%20to%20prepare%20Orthoptists%20to%20use%20exemptions\\_Feb%202016.pdf](https://www.orthoptics.org.uk/resources/Documents/BOSTU/Outline%20Curriculum%20Framework%20for%20Education%20Programmes%20to%20prepare%20Orthoptists%20to%20use%20exemptions_Feb%202016.pdf)

### Unit 2 Exercise 1



Do:

1. Reflecting on your current practice, what medicinal products do you routinely use?
2. What are the legal classifications of them?

## Unit 2 Exercise 2



Read:

Department of Health (2006) Medicines Matters A guide to mechanisms for the prescribing, supply and administration of medicines. Available at:

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130123191451/http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_064325](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130123191451/http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_064325)



Do:

1. Describe the principles of exemptions as defined in law. Outline the scopes of:
  - a. PSD's
  - b. PGD's
  - c. Exemptions
  - d. Non-medical prescribing
2. For each of the medicinal products you listed in Unit 2 Exercise 1, under which legal method have you supplied, sold or administered that product.

## Unit 2 Exercise 3



### Reflect and Consider:

1. Can you think of a clinical scenario that might result in an inappropriate use of exemptions?
2. Write down any strategies you currently use or are aware of that might help you to recognise and deal with patient pressures that might otherwise result in an inappropriate use of exemptions (an example of this might be telling a patient with conjunctivitis that their symptoms will likely resolve without chloramphenicol eye drops, however you will organise the eye drops for four days' time at which point they can come and get them without an additional appointment if their symptoms have not resolved).



## **Appendix Five - Evidence of Primary Exemptions Tutor Mentoring and Assessment**

### **Evidence of Primary Exemptions Tutor (PET) Mentoring and Assessment**

The reflective diary, the patient log and the input of the primary exemptions tutor are all invaluable in the process of reflective and clinical learning throughout this course.

The forms below should be completed by both the student and the primary exemptions tutor at the time of deciding to move from the initial phase of mentorship and support to the interim phase, at the time of moving from the interim to the final phase and at the end of the course.

The decision to move on to the next phase of study must be mutually agreed by the student and the primary exemptions tutor and evidence of this (i.e. the relevant form below, completed by both student and primary exemptions tutor) must be uploaded on to Blackboard ORT6033.

The approximate time-frames for completing each phase are outlined on Blackboard. We appreciate that this will be dependent on the student's previous knowledge and experience. However, if a student has not reached the end of the initial phase by which point the MCQ will have been completed, then the student or tutor should contact the course leader Mr Patrick Keating ([p.d.keating@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.d.keating@sheffield.ac.uk)) or Mr Karzan Hughes ([karzan.hughes@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:karzan.hughes@sheffield.ac.uk)). The student is expected to print out and share with the primary exemptions tutor, evidence of successful completion of the MCQ assessment. We are unable to process the awarding of the qualification until all forms have been submitted. Please refer to the primary exemptions tutor handbook for further guidance.

If either the student or the primary exemptions tutor wishes to discuss any aspect of the course further, or discuss a student's progress or mentorship, then they should contact the course leader as above. Further help and support including alternative telephone numbers and contact details is available on the course [webpages](#).

In the forms below the primary exemptions tutor should initial the confirmation boxes provided and then comment on the student's competence and abilities at the end of each phase in the larger spaces provided and sign this as indicated.

## Initial phase completion form – primary exemptions tutor response

**Initial phase:** Ongoing, regular reflective discussion occurs between PET and student on their practice using exempted medicines. Where no PGD/PSD is in place, any new medication or change to an existing programme of medication **must** be signed off by the PET. Where an existing PGD or PSD is in place, the orthoptist uses medications within their normal local arrangements.

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to advise the student on my own decisions to sell, supply or administer medicines exempted for use by orthoptists within their scope of practice.

I confirm that I have seen the student's patient log.

I confirm that, in my opinion, the student has demonstrated learning sufficient to allow them to progress to the interim phase of primary exemptions tutor mentorship and support.

Please use the box below to comment on the student's ability and comment on case examples that you have reflected on together, thus far.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Initial phase completion form - student response

Please use the space below to reflect on the initial phase of the course. You may want to include references from your patient log or reflective diary. Please include comments on what you have learned during this phase of the course and why you feel ready to progress to the interim phase of primary exemptions tutor mentorship and support.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Interim phase completion form – primary exemptions tutor response

**Interim phase:** *Periodic reflective discussion and increasing alignment of practice between student and PET in the use of exempted medicines. Where no PGD/PSD is in place, any new medication or change to an existing programme of medication **must** be signed off by the PET. Where an existing PGD or PSD is in place, the orthoptist uses medications within their normal local arrangements.*

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to advise student on my own decisions to sell, supply or administer medicines exempted for use by orthoptists within their scope of practice.

I confirm that, in my opinion, the student has demonstrated sufficient learning to allow them to progress to the final phase of primary exemptions tutor mentorship and support.

I confirm that I have seen evidence of student's successful completion of the course MCQ assessment.

Please use the box below to comment on the student's ability and comment on case examples that you have reflected on together, thus far.

|         |       |
|---------|-------|
| Signed: | Date: |
|---------|-------|

## Interim phase completion form - student response

Please use the space below to reflect on the interim phase of the course. You may want to include references from your patient log or reflective diary. Please include comments on what you have learned during this phase of the course and why you feel ready to progress to the final phase of primary exemptions tutor mentorship and support.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Final phase completion form – primary exemptions tutor response

**Final phase:** *Reflective discussion and aligned practice between PET and student. Where no PGD/PSD is in place, any new medication or change to an existing programme of medication **is** proposed by the student and **must** be signed off by the PET. Where an existing PGD or PSD is in place, the orthoptist uses medications autonomously within their normal local arrangements.*

I confirm that I have seen the student's patient log and have discussed and reflected with the student on their proposed decisions to sell, supply or administer medicines exempted for orthoptists within their scope of practice.

I confirm that, according to my observations they have achieved practice aligned with my own, within the scope of medicines exempted for orthoptists.

Please use the box below to comment on the student's ability and comment on case examples that you have reflected on together, thus far.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Final phase completion form – student response:**

Please use the space below to reflect on the final phase of the course. You may want to include references from your patient log or reflective diary. Please include comments on what you have learned during this phase of the course and why you feel ready to qualify in exemptions.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_