

# Just the Job Information Sheet

## Job title

Ophthalmologist

## Job description

An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who has undertaken additional specialist training in the diagnosis and management of disorders of the eye and visual system. Ophthalmology usually involves both medical and surgical management of eye disorders.

## Qualifications required

In Australia and New Zealand, an ophthalmologist is required to have undertaken a minimum of 12 years of training after leaving school.

This includes:

- 5 years at a medical school, graduating with a degree in medicine
- 2 years (minimum) as a newly qualified doctor undertaking basic medical training
- 5 years of ophthalmic specialist training (the Vocational Training Program) and successful completion of examinations set by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO)

## General requirements

The objective of the Vocational Training Program is to produce a specialist ophthalmologist who, on completion of training, is equipped to undertake safe, unsupervised, comprehensive, general ophthalmology practice.

- 2 years of basic training during which trainees must demonstrate integrated clinical skills and knowledge in the Ophthalmic Sciences and the Ophthalmic Basic Competencies and Knowledge. These subjects include specialised knowledge in anatomy, physiology, physical optics and pharmacology.
- 2 years of advanced training during which trainees are expected to demonstrate integrated knowledge, clinical and surgical skills.
- A final year during which the trainee develops their specialist experience in preparation for specialist qualification and to function in community as an independent general ophthalmologist.
- On completion of the Vocational Training Program graduates are eligible to apply for fellowship (full membership of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists, effectively a licence to work independently as an unsupervised ophthalmologist).

**Training costs**

Five years of medical school training is eligible for funding with a government-provided student loan. Once qualified as a doctor you are paid a salary or wage and the remainder of your training as an ophthalmologist is generally in paid work.

**Career path**

An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who has undertaken additional specialist training in the diagnosis and management of disorders of the eye and visual system. Ophthalmology training equips eye specialists to provide the full spectrum of eye care, including the prescription of glasses and contact lenses, medical treatment and complex microsurgery. Many ophthalmologists are also involved in scientific research into causes and cures for eye diseases and vision problems.

**Salary range**

A full-time ophthalmologist working in a public hospital is likely to earn \$150,000 per year or more depending on seniority and experience.

**How to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry**

Successful completion of medical school training to become a qualified general doctor is a pre-requisite for ophthalmology training.

In addition to an aptitude for and interest in the medical and surgical treatment of eye disorders, the qualities that are considered important to a career in ophthalmology are proficiency as a:

- communicator
- collaborator
- scholar
- manager
- professional
- health advocate

**Other places to source information about this job**

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists' website  
[www.ranzco.edu](http://www.ranzco.edu)