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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

This Order, which is made under the Opticians Act 1989, approves Rules made by the General Optical Council setting out requirements in relation to a specialty for independent optometrist prescribers (“the specialty”).

Rule 2 makes amendments to the General Optical Council (Registration) Rules 2005 (“the Registration Rules”) for the purposes of removing spent provision and the introduction of the specialty. The specialty may be entered against an optometrist’s name in the register, who may then prescribe certain licensed medicines. The registrar must be satisfied that an applicant for the entry of the specialty has had adequate practical experience relating to the specialty. The registrar may remove an entry for the specialty where not satisfied that the registrant remains entitled to the specialty and must then so notify the registrant.

Rule 2 also inserts new rule 11A to the Registration Rules to permit registered optometrists and those registered dispensing opticians who are studying to fit contact lenses to fit contact lenses.

Rule 3 amends the General Optical Council (Continuing Education and Training) Rules 2005 (“the CET Rules”) to provide for the required continuing education and training requirements in relation to the specialty and the two other existing therapeutics specialties. These provide that a registrant who has more than one therapeutics specialty need only obtain one set of CET points per three year CET cycle from the coming into force of these Rules. Rule 4 makes transitional provision with regard to the continuing education and training cycle for the period 2007 to 2009.

Rule 5 amends rule 3 of the Contact Lens (Qualifications Etc.) Rules 1988 to clarify that a registered optometrist does not need a specialty in contact lens fitting in order to do so.