



*The* **ROYAL COLLEGE** *of*  
**OPHTHALMOLOGISTS**

OST Curriculum 2024

## Level 4 Learning Outcomes and descriptors

Patient Management Domain

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*The Royal College of Ophthalmologists is a registered charity in England and Wales (299872) and in Scotland (SC045652)*

## Neuro-ophthalmology (ix)

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### Level 4

#### Learning Outcome

#### Descriptors

*An ophthalmologist achieving this level will, in addition:*

#### **Demonstrate advanced clinical management and surgical skills.**

- Demonstrate competency in diagnosis, investigation and management of neuro-ophthalmic conditions, including, but not exclusively:
  - optic nerve disorders
  - chiasmal syndromes
  - post-chiasmal visual field loss
  - disorders of the ocular motor pathways (including ocular motor nerve palsies, nystagmus and supranuclear disorders of gaze)
  - abnormalities of the pupils
  - disorders of higher visual function
  - trigeminal, facial nerve, pain/headache and vascular disorders related to neuro-ophthalmology
- Manage eye and vision problems relating to brain damage (such as stroke, trauma, compressive lesions and multiple sclerosis).
- Employ a neutral density filter to enhance the interpretation of a swinging light test.
- Perform and reliably interpret examination of motility (including saccades, supranuclear, vestibular and OKN), nystagmus, pupil, ptosis, fields to confrontation, colour vision, tests of higher visual function.
- Demonstrate competency in investigating complex neuro-ophthalmology cases.
- Have an advanced understanding of neuro-imaging, electrodiagnostic tests and other investigations employed in neuro-ophthalmology.
- Perform temporal artery biopsy and understand the indications, limitations, technique and risks of the procedure.
- Use ultrasonography techniques to locate the temporal artery prior to its biopsy.
- Know how to handle tissue samples to increase the diagnostic yield and liaise with laboratory staff so that the specimens are correctly identified, presented and transported.
- Interpret the result of a temporal artery biopsy and make appropriate and reliable arrangements for the result to be acted upon in a timely fashion.

- Understand the role, indications and limitations of temporal artery duplex scanning in the diagnosis of giant cell arteritis.
- Have a sound understanding of the indications for, use of, and limitations of pharmacological, radiological, and surgical therapies used in the management of patients with neuro-ophthalmological disorders.
- Maintain a record of activities, using the RCOphth electronic logbook.

**Manage the complexity and uncertainty of neuro-ophthalmology cases.**

- Understand and apply advanced knowledge of neuro-ophthalmic disease and practice.
- Diagnose and manage complex neuro-ophthalmology cases including, but not limited to:
  - optic neuropathy related to inherited and acquired causes and compressive lesions
  - papilloedema
  - oculomotility disturbance (including myopathies, infra-/inter- and supranuclear disorders and vestibular disorders)
  - visual field anomalies such as:
    - functional disorders
    - neoplastic/paraneoplastic disorders
    - higher cortical visual dysfunction
    - infective, inflammatory, auto-immune, vascular/ischaemic disorders
    - neuro-ophthalmology presentations of systemic disorders
- Independently manage emergency neuro-ophthalmology cases.
- Manage neuro-ophthalmology clinics independently.
- Understand and utilise available instrument technology relevant to neuro-ophthalmology.
- Evaluate published developments in neuro-ophthalmology and modify own practice appropriately. Understand where controversies and alternative managements exist.
- Give specialist advice to non neuro-ophthalmology specialists.
- Liaise and support colleagues from other subspecialties to optimise patient care, when co-management is required.
- Recognise and refer patients who will benefit from more specialist input.

**Apply management and team working skills appropriately, including in complex, dynamic situations.**

- Use highly developed consultation skills efficiently to manage busy clinics whilst managing patient expectations.
- Ability to review and set up new methods of service delivery for efficient use of resources including virtual clinics where appropriate.

- Assist with decision-making where there are cognitive impairment barriers, employing Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) services or equivalent if necessary.
- Understand how culture or religious beliefs can affect patients' decision-making and needs, and communicate these effectively to the team.
- Be sensitive to social situations and the impact these may be having on the patient, their carers and their disease.
- Understand when information must be shared more widely with schools, carers, police, etc. and understand the responsibilities and implications of sharing information.
- Receive and respond to communications in complex or challenging situations.
- Give specialist advice to non neuro-ophthalmologist specialists.
- Establish close relationships with neurology, neurosurgery, neuroradiology, endocrinology, rheumatology colleagues. Attend local multidisciplinary teams and work with other ophthalmic specialties to agree pathways of care.
- Liaise and support colleagues from other special interest areas, particularly medical retina, emergency ophthalmology and medical ophthalmology, to optimise patient care, when co-management is required.
- Promote professional values within the team.
- Work as a collaborative member of a team, respecting differences of opinion.
- Accept constructive and appropriately framed criticism.
- Support colleagues.
- Be an advocate for patients.
- Manage significant events and complaints, including writing formal reports.
- Understand and follow local policies in response to complaints.

**Be an effective supervisor, teacher and trainer of neuro-ophthalmology disease.**

- Participate in education/training of medical students/junior trainees, and allied health professionals in neuro-ophthalmology.
- Supervise and accredit/sign off trainees to Level 3 in neuro-ophthalmology.

The indicative time for training at this level is **12-18 months** of full-time equivalent.