



Training prospectus

Visual impairment training,
consultancy and support services

Overview of courses offered

Description	Duration	Pages
An intensive course in low vision therapy	3 weeks	5-7
Introduction to low vision therapy	2 days	8-9
Working with central vision loss	2 days	10-11
Working with low vision aids	1 day	12-13
Light and low vision	1 day	14-15

Additional modules

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Psychosocial dimensions of sight loss	18
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Please note:

Our courses can be tailor made with flexible timings and content in order to provide the right programme for your needs, any content from our longer courses plus additional modules can be used on a mix and match basis. If you would like to book or discuss any aspects of your training needs, please do contact us in order to discuss your precise requirements using our contact details on page 20.

Please see page 19 for our training courses terms and conditions.

About us

Optima Low Vision Services Ltd. was founded in 1994 and has become one of the largest providers of low vision services in the UK.

There are three strands to our business;

- I. suppliers of low vision equipment
- II. provider of low vision assessment services
- III. developers and providers of low vision training programmes

Optima is a major supplier of low vision equipment to the NHS, sensory services, national and local charities as well as private companies and individuals throughout the UK and Ireland. Our comprehensive range of optical and non-optical low vision equipment includes a wide variety of illuminated and non-illuminated magnifiers along with electronic magnifiers, monoculars, binoculars, task lighting and an extensive range of filters and tints.

Optima also provides comprehensive low vision assessments as a NHS contractor to thousands of people each year within a large area of the south west of England. Our clinical work is undertaken by a team of low vision therapists who work with individuals referred to the service to improve their daily life. Our assessments identify tasks our clients are having difficulty with and explore strategies including low vision skills and techniques, glare relief, lighting and the correct use and application of low vision equipment for both near vision and distance tasks.

Finally, combining our clinical assessment practice with our extensive knowledge in the supply of low vision equipment, Optima is ideally placed to provide comprehensive low vision training for organisations and individuals. From those looking to improve their skills and knowledge of low vision, individuals taking part in continual professional development to organisations establishing their own low vision service, we can provide the programme to suit your needs.

With our up-to-date knowledge and experience of current practice and methods used in Low Vision Assessment and Therapy, coupled with our detailed knowledge of the aids and equipment available to enhance the visual potential of people with low vision you can rest assured that our courses are based on sound practical experience and up-to-date methods.

How our courses are delivered

There are two main ways you can attend one of our courses

1. Through an organisation or employer “*buying in*” a course for its own staff (maximum numbers per course 14). The course will then be run at a venue arranged by the sponsoring body. Should the sponsors wish to “*sell*” any spare places on a course this can often be arranged with neighbouring organisations or individuals in order to recoup costs. Optima may have a list of individuals who would like to join a course in specific areas, therefore we may be able to pass on some names if you need to sell on places.
2. We can also offer individual places on courses organised at our own training facility in Totnes Devon.

All courses are a mixture of theory and practice, consisting of set presentations, informal question & answer sessions and practical workshops. We are always happy to amend the contents of the courses to meet specific goals – or – indeed, design and present courses of any length to meet particular agencies need.

Participants attending the one and two day courses will receive a Certificate of Attendance; participants who successful complete the three-week course will be awarded a Certificate of Successful Completion.

Cost

Fee for 1 or 2 day courses:

- At Optima training facility, Totnes: £150 per person per day + VAT
- At venue provided by purchaser: £500 per day + expenses + VAT

Fee for 3 week intensive course:

- At Optima training facility, Totnes: £1,500 per person + VAT
- At venue provided by purchaser: £3,800 per person + expenses + VAT

An Intensive Course in Low Vision Therapy

Course aims

The purpose of this 3 week intensive course is to provide a thorough and in depth understanding of visual impairment, visual impairment services and the myriad range of strategies and equipment that can be employed in order to assist those with a visual impairment.

Course objectives

At the end of this course participants will be able to:

- Understand and describe the anatomy of the eye and its functioning
- Explain the most common visual pathologies and to discuss how they can affect vision
- Demonstrate the theory of fixation and other strategies that help with control vision loss
- Know the strategies and techniques used to identify and measure visual fields and to help persons with peripheral field loss and low acuity
- Explain the strategies and techniques used to help children with a visual impairment
- Demonstrate the full range of optical devices available
- Be aware of the psychosocial dimensions of low vision and how this needs to be considered
- Observe and carry out real life low vision assessments in a clinical setting

Course information

This course is primarily aimed at Orthoptists and/or dispensing opticians but may be useful to other workers with a general background in the low vision field, such as a rehabilitation officer with considerable experience and knowledge of low vision assessment and therapy. Students who successfully complete a written project and demonstrate their competence within the practical element of the course will be awarded a Certificate of Competence.

Course programme

Week one

Introduction

Who are the visually impaired? How many are there? Who is involved with helping them to maintain their independence? Who does what? What is involved in the rehabilitation process?

A brief history and guide to services for people with a visual impairment.

Interdisciplinary Models of providing a seamless Low Vision Service.

Some case studies

Low Vision Therapy

Part One

Central vision losses

Part Two

Peripheral vision losses

Part Three

Very low acuity

Part Four

Nystagmus and the use of low vision aids

Part Five

Working with children and low vision aids

Part Six

Low vision and other disabilities

Hemianopia

MS

Parkinson's Disease

Learning difficulties

Brain Injuries

Prescribing Low Vision Aids

Predicting Levels of Magnification

Refractive Errors and their effect on the use of Low Vision Aids

When to use distance and/or reading spectacles with Low Vision Aids

Individual Project Preparation Session

Week Two

Light and Low Vision

A practical guide to increasing visual performance and reducing the effects of glare.

Taking the Case History

Combining the clinical, functional and social elements of need.

Optical Low Vision Aids

Familiarisation with the range, their uses and abuses – their advantages and disadvantages.

Using Low Vision Aids

An experiential session

Near vision

Distance vision

Integrating optical and non-optical low vision aids

A practical guide

Organising, Managing & Budgeting within the Low Vision Service

Low Vision Therapy

Simulated practise sessions

The Psychological dimension

Issues around motivation

The use of electronic equipment

CCTVs, computers etc., their place within the field

Week Three

Supervised Practise with Patients

Four days of patient contact and de-briefing sessions.

Project presentations

A group session

Individual Student Assessments

Follow-up Sessions

Sixteen Week Follow-up

Two days

Introduction to low vision therapy

Course aim

To introduce the theory and techniques of low vision therapy that are used in the functional assessment and training of people with low vision, identifying and demonstrating how to use all the elements of practice based skills as part of a Low Vision therapy training package.

Course objectives

At the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Describe the effects of refractive errors and their correction in the use of Low Vision Aids.
- State the various types of lens used in LVAs and be able to understand the most effective types for specific tasks.
- Identify and explain the reasons why people with a visual impairment have specific difficulties in performing near vision tasks – with or without an LVA.
- Describe and demonstrate the basic low vision therapy skills necessary to maximise the visual potential of LVA users.
- Explain the importance of, and demonstrate the ability to accurately predict the minimum power of magnification required a person with low vision to perform a specific task
- Describe lighting as an aid to support people with a visual impairment and how to use lighting to maximise their visual potential.

Course information

This two-day course is designed for Rehabilitation Officers and low vision therapists, and other professionals and staff, who are directly involved in providing assessment and rehabilitation services for people with a visual impairment. The course content will advance your professional skills and knowledge base in low vision therapy, and increase your technical competencies in functional low vision practice. The content is delivered in an interactive way, with a mix of theory and demonstration based methods, with plenty of 'hands-on' practical exercises to improve professional confidence.

This is – without question - the most popular of our courses and comes highly recommended by numerous participants.

Course programme

Day one

- 9:30 – 10:45 Session One
- Welcome and introductions
 - Course aims and objectives
 - Fundamentals - *Vision, Optics & Perceptions*
- 11:15 – 12:30 Session Two
- Low Vision Therapy - *The Basic Techniques*
- 13:30 – 15:00 Session Three
- An Assessment Of Low Vision - *To include predicting levels of magnification*
 - Evaluation of LVAs - *the advantages and disadvantages of the various types of low vision aids*
- 15:30 – 16:00 Session Four
- Previous Session Continued
 - Feedback and close of Day One

Course Programme

Day two

- 9:30 – 10:30 Session One
- The Importance of Lighting
- 11:00 – 12:30 Session Two
- Low Vision Assessment - *A Practical Session – Simulated low vision assessments: how to assess visual potential, level of magnification required, optimal focal distances, lighting levels required.*
- 13:30 – 16:00 Session Three
- Low Vision Assessment – Continued
Previous session Continued
 - Course Conclusion & Feedback.
- 16:30 Close

Working with central vision loss

Course aims

The aim of this two day course is to equip practitioners with the knowledge and understanding to deal with central vision loss along with equipment and strategies to aid those with central vision loss to use their existing sight.

Course objectives

At the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Understand the anatomy behind and various causes of central vision loss and its functional impact
- Explain the benefits and pitfalls of using low vision aids and lighting when dealing with central vision loss.
- Identify the eccentric viewing needs of people with central vision loss and the theory behind the techniques
- Demonstrate the assessment of eccentric viewing techniques including steady eye strategy.
- Demonstrate appropriate training methods for central vision loss

Course information

This course is a mix of theory, practice and experiential exercises aimed at equipping rehab workers, low vision therapists and any relevant professional who works with people with central vision loss. The content of this course will examine the background and theory of eccentric fixation, the assessment tools available to you and how to use them, identifying a 'best point of vision' and teaching a person with central vision loss how to use their vision, working on both near and distance based tasks. Practical exercise built into the course programme will allow delegates to hone their skills and competencies to a higher level.

Course programme

Day one

- 9:30 Welcome and course introduction
- 10:00 – 12:30 Session one: Understanding low vision
- *Central vision loss*
 - *Peripheral field loss*
 - *Low acuity without field defects*
 - *Perceptual difficulties*
- 13:15 - 16:30 Session two: Low vision aids
- *The importance of lighting*
 - *LVAs – advantages and disadvantages*
- 16:30 Close of day one

Day two

- 9:30 – 12:30 Session three: Eccentric viewing
- *Eccentric viewing and reading*
 - *Steady eye strategy*
- 13:15 – 16:00 Session four: Low vision assessment
- *Low vision in practice: combining EV and LVAs*
 - *Low vision practical sessions – group assessments*
- 16:00 – 16:30 Session five
- *Question and answer session*
 - *Feedback and course conclusion*

Working with low vision aids

Course aims

To provide a general understanding of why people have difficulties in using LVAs, to identify the potential benefits and restrictions of the current range of LVAs and to introduce a basic set of techniques and strategies designed to help people with a visual impairment make the most of their LVAs and vision.

Course objectives

At the end of this course participants will be able to:

- Identify and explain the various reasons why people have difficulty in using a low vision aid
- Demonstrate methods for improving the use of an LVA
- Compare and describe the ranges and types of LVAs available
- Explain and demonstrate advantages and disadvantages of the various types of LVAs
- Describe the importance of effective lighting for people with low vision
- Demonstrate how lighting is measured, identifying the levels of illumination required and the types and positioning of light sources for people with a visual impairment
- List and explain the various reasons for using UV and blue blocking filters
- Identify the various elements of a low vision assessment and describe the benefits of having a low vision assessment
- State and explain general information and advice to people with a visual impairment regarding the use of LVAs

Course information

This one-day course is aimed at staff and volunteers who do not possess a specialist or professional qualification in visual impairment but who come into contact with people with low vision on a daily basis. This one-day course is ideal for volunteers, residential care staff, home care staff, resource centre workers, home visitors, staff and volunteers of local societies for the visually impaired and any interested individual who may come into contact with people with a visual impairment. The content of the course will offer and equip staff with options and strategies to support people with low vision, and enable them to understand the reasons why this input is appropriate.

Course programme

- 9:30 Session one
- *Welcome and introductions*
 - *The course aims and objectives*
 - *Understanding low vision – why do people have problems using magnifiers?*
- 11:00 – 12:30 Session two
- *Low vision aids: the advantages, disadvantages and use of the full range of LVAs*
- 13:15 Session three
- *Hyperoculars and prismatic*
 - *Monoculars*
 - *Binoculars*
 - *Video magnifiers*
- 15:30 Session four
- *The importance of lighting: getting the basics right*
 - *Filters and tints: enhance acuity, contrast sensitivity and reduce glare*
- 16:30 Question and answer session

Light and low vision

Course aims

The aim of this course is to introduce the concept of lighting as a major visual aid to visual enhancement and the techniques used in measuring and evaluating lighting levels and arrangements to support people with low vision. This course also discusses the difficulties lighting may cause in terms of discomfort and disability glare and how it can be assessed and managed in a structured approach.

Course objectives

At the end of this course participants will be able to:

- State and explain the terminology used in lighting and its measurement
- Identify and describe the lighting needs of people with a visual impairment
- Demonstrate how to measure lighting levels and make suggestions for the improvement of lighting levels and arrangement for specific individuals
- State and explain the differences between filters and tints
- Assess and demonstrate the selection of the most suitable filters and/or tints for the right situation

Course information

This course is designed for rehabilitation officers and those staff who are directly involved in providing lighting and filter assessments for people with a visual impairment. It may also be of benefit to staff of residential homes of the elderly. This course will equip relevant professionals and staff to make recommendations and provide general advice to improve lighting and glare reduction for visually impaired people.

Course programme

- 9:30 – 10:45 Session one
- *Welcome and introductions*
 - *Fundamentals*
 - *Lighting concepts, terminology used in lighting and its measurements*
- 11:15 – 12:30 Session two
- *Lighting needs of people with low vision*
 - *Task lighting*
 - *Environmental lighting*
- 13:30 – 15:00 Session three
- *Glare: defining the problem*
 - *Filters and tints explained*
- 15:00 – 16:00 Session four
- *Filter and tint selection process*

Anatomy and visual pathologies

Module aims

The purpose of this course is to provide a general introduction to and understanding of the human visual system and the common reasons why people have difficulty seeing. To help participants understand and appreciate the effects of living with poor sight and to introduce the basic principles of making the most of sight loss.

Module objectives

At the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Describe the basic anatomy of the visual system and how it works
- Explain why people wear spectacles and describe why they do not make a significant difference for those with visual impairments
- State and explain the causes and effects of the 6 most common visual pathologies and the potential treatments currently available
- Describe the general day to day difficulties of living with impaired vision
- Identify the 3 main concepts of vision enhancement
- Demonstrate the principles involved in helping people with a visual impairment make the most of their vision

Module information

This course is aimed at staff and volunteers who do not possess a specialist or professional qualification in visual impairment, but who come into contact with people with low vision on a daily basis. Ideal for volunteers, residential care staff, home care staff, resource centre workers, home visitors, staff and volunteers of local societies for the visually impaired and any interested individual who may come into contact with people with a visual impairment.

Children and low vision

Module aims

To equip educational professionals to introduce, develop and deliver practical skills and methods that enable children and young people with low vision to maximise their visual potential both inside and outside the classroom.

Module objectives

At the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Introduce and explain the concepts and basic techniques used in low vision therapy with children
- State and compare the benefits and time implications involved in low vision therapy programmes
- Explain and demonstrate a practical guide to the equipment which may be required to improve a child's visual performance both inside and outside the classroom
- Identify the issues and describe the practical implications of developing an effective inter-disciplinary approach to low vision care

Module information

This practical course is aimed primarily at specialist teachers of children with visual impairment, specialist educational support staff, rehabilitation officers/workers and other staff involved with supporting children to maximise their visual potential. The content includes many practical elements of low vision practices when working with children and young people, but also explores other related issues around low vision work in an educational context.

Psychosocial dimensions of sight loss

Module aims

To increase understanding and knowledge of the emotional, psychological and social aspects of sight loss and to enable professionals to work more effectively with people with sight loss.

Module objectives

At the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Describe and explain attitudes, fears and emotions in respect of sight loss
- Identify and describe the main themes arising in this area of work
- Demonstrate how to respond to the emotional needs which affect a client's rehabilitation and their ability to cope

Module information

This course is ideal for any professional, from social care, health and voluntary sector organisations at any level, who works with anyone who is having difficulty coming to terms with the emotional and psychological aspect of sight loss. As an essential element of the rehabilitation process, this course will equip professionals with appropriate knowledge and skills to support people at their immediate point of need. A range of emotions and responses will be explored along with various models of loss by using case studies and discussion groups and examples of good practice.

Using monoculars

Module aims

This course will introduce the skills and techniques used in a functional assessment of distance viewing, introducing distance telescopes and monoculars and the structured training programmes necessary to enable a person with low vision to get the maximum use out of a distance LVA device.

Module objectives

At the end of this course participants will be able to:

- Describe and demonstrate how to assess for and introduce a distance monocular or binocular
- Demonstrate how to provide a structured training programme in the use of distance monoculars and binoculars
- Identify the process and explain what is involved in integrating distance monoculars and binoculars with other forms of vision enhancement strategies

Module information

This course is designed for rehabilitation officers/workers, mobility officers and staff who are directly involved in orientation and mobility training and those who provide assessment and rehab services for people with a visual impairment. Professional staff will be equipped with the appropriate knowledge to provide support for distance and outdoor vision tasks and needs.

Terms and conditions - Individual

Cancellation

For all cancellations, any expenses already incurred by Optima Low Vision Services Ltd in relation to the course will be charged and are payable within 14 days of the invoice date. Additional cancellation fees as a percentage of the total course fee will apply as follows...

If Cancellation is made:

- 60 days or more before course start date – No Charge
- 30 - 59 Days - 50%
- 15 - 29 days – 75%
- 14 days or less – 100%

All cancellations must be received in writing by email, fax or post and the cancellation date will be the date that the correspondence is received into our offices.

Cancellation by Optima Low Vision Services Ltd

In the unlikely event of a cancellation by Optima Low Vision Services Ltd, alternative dates for training will be provided and you must agree to a date within one calendar year of the original course date. If Optima Low Vision Services cannot provide an alternative date, payment received in respect of that course will be refunded in full.

Transfer of Course Date

The option to transfer to a different course date can be used only once. If a delegate fails to attend on two separate occasions, this will be treated as a cancellation less than 14 days under our terms and conditions and incur a 100% cancellation fee.

Payment Terms

Payment must be received within 14 days of the date at which the booking confirmation is signed or immediately if booked less than 14 days before start date. All expenses incurred by Optima Low Vision Services Ltd will be invoiced after the course and must be paid within 14 days from invoice date.

Terms and conditions – Corporate

Cancellation

For all cancellations, any expenses already incurred by Optima Low Vision Services Ltd in relation to the course will be charged and are payable within 30 days of the invoice date. Additional cancellation fees as a percentage of the total course fee will apply as follows...

If Cancellation is made:

- 60 days or more before course start date – No Charge
- 30 - 59 Days - 50%
- 15 - 29 days – 75%
- 14 days or less – 100%

All cancellations must be received in writing by email, fax or post and the cancellation date will be the date that the correspondence is received into our offices.

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Transfer of Course Date

The option to transfer to a different course date can be used only once. If a delegate fails to attend on two separate occasions, this will be treated as a cancellation less than 14 days under our terms and conditions and incur a 100% cancellation fee.

Payment Terms

Invoice(s) will be sent out shortly after the final day of the course and will include all expenses incurred. Payment must be received within 30 days of the course end date or cancellation date, whichever is earlier.

For further information or to book a course, please contact:



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