

PLAR Resource:

PLAR study tools

Studying for PLAR is not mandatory. As an experienced optical professional, you already have a wealth of skills related to the optical field. The purpose of PLAR is simply to demonstrate your current level of knowledge.

Nonetheless, many PLAR applicants like to refresh their knowledge before taking the CGAs. Doing a bit of preparation may help you to feel more confident and less stressed on test day.

The following resources are available to help you prepare:

[Knowledge self-assessment](#)



The knowledge self-assessment is a **free online test** that uses a similar format and similar types of questions to what you'll find on the CGAs. It's a great tool to use if you're:

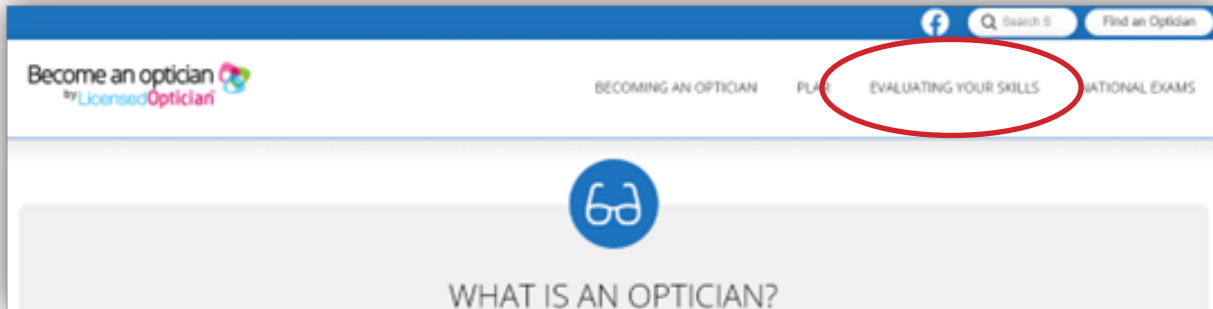
- Unsure whether the PLAR process is right for you
The self-assessment compares your knowledge to the knowledge of an entry-level optician in Canada, just like PLAR does.
If you score well on the self-assessment, then you're likely to be a good candidate for the PLAR process. If you score poorly on the self-assessment, you might not be ready for PLAR.
- Preparing to take your CGA(s)
Even though studying for PLAR isn't mandatory, it can be helpful to refresh your knowledge and to familiarize yourself with the format and types of questions involved.

The knowledge self-assessment includes separate sections relating to Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses so you can prepare, as applicable, for the CGA(s) you plan to take. When you complete each section, you'll get feedback on your answers to the questions.

You can take the self-assessment as many times as you would like. Your results will not be submitted to NACOR; they are just for your own learning.

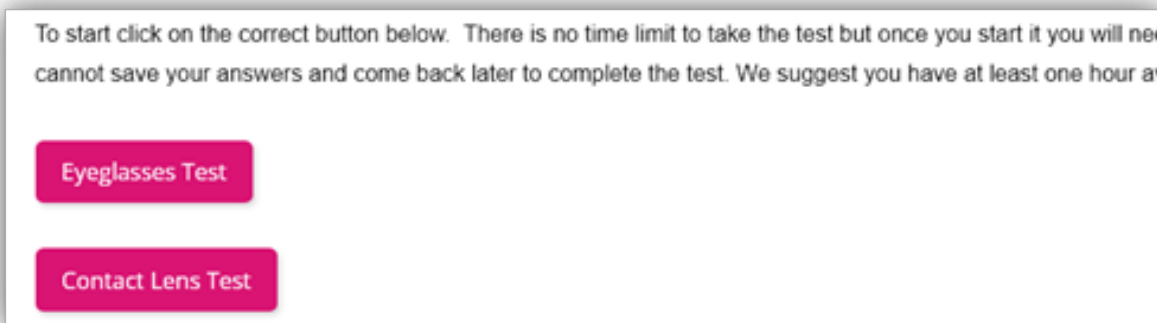
Here's how you can access and use the knowledge self-assessment:

1. [Navigate to the Become an Optician website](#)
2. From the menu, select **Evaluating Your Skills**



Doing so will take you to the self-assessment landing page. Here, you can read more about the self-assessment, as well as the competencies and questions included in each section. You'll also find tips for answering the questions.

3. [When you're ready, select either section to begin.](#)



The sections can be completed in either order.

4. [Answer each question by selecting option you think is correct.](#)



Remember to read all parts of the question carefully and consider all of the options before making your choice.

For more guidance on how to answer multiple-choice questions, see [Appendix C](#) in the main PLAR Resource Guide.

5. Ensure that all pages of questions are completed.

Along the top of the page, checkmarks indicate which pages are complete and which still have unanswered questions.



6. When you're ready, use the button at the bottom of the final page to submit your answers.



7. View your feedback.

After submitting your answers, you will immediately see your score (as a percentage). Below the score, you'll find more information about what that score means—whether you might be ready for PLAR or might need to do some more studying or even consider additional education.

You scored 55%

The self-knowledge test is not something that you pass or fail. The purpose of the self-knowledge test is to give you an idea of where your level of knowledge is compared to an "entry level" optician in Canada. Entry level means an optician that has been working in the industry for a few years, they would not have as much knowledge as an experienced optician that has been working for many years. The self-knowledge test compares your knowledge to an entry level optician because the PLAR assessments you will take if you decide to proceed with PLAR will also compare your current level of knowledge to an entry level optician.

If you scored between **73-82%** on the test you scored in the average range of an entry level optician in Canada. This means your level of knowledge is equal to the average level of knowledge of a Canadian optician in contact lenses. You may be ready to pursue PLAR. **results on this assessment are to be used as a guide only and are not a guarantee that you would achieve success in licensure.**

If you scored between **41% - 72%** you scored below the average range of an entry level optician, you may want to review the bridging modules on the NACOR website before you decide to proceed with PLAR. Below is a list of suggested bridging modules to help you study and prepare for your PLAR assessment.

If you scored **40% or less** you may want to consider additional training or upgrading. Accredited programs are available at the following

You will also receive personalized recommendations for bridging modules that might help to address the specific gaps in your knowledge.

Study material

Bridging modules to help upgrade your knowledge are available free of charge on the N

The self-assessment test is meant as one tool to help you prepare for your PLAR assessment. They are available for anyone to use to regard

Available bridging modules to help upgrade your knowledge in **Contact Lenses**.

Module 4	Infection control
Module 6	Equipment use - contact lenses
Module 7	Anatomy - eyeglasses & contact lenses
Module 12	Dispensing contact lenses - Course #1
Module 13	Dispensing contact lenses - Course #2

Finally, you'll have the opportunity to review the correct answers to all of the assessment questions, along with the answers that you selected.

For each question, you'll see an explanation of why the correct answer is correct (and why the incorrect answers aren't).

View your results

This section will display the results from each individual question from the assessment. For each question, you will be able to see if your answer was correct. If your answer was correct, there will be a green checkmark next to your answer. If your answer was incorrect, there will be a red **x** next to your answer. The correct answer will always be highlighted in green. Next, you will be able to see each possible answer with an explanation why each answer was correct or incorrect.

1) What is the most effective way for an optician to stop the spread of infection in the dispensary?

- A: Clean all frames with undiluted bleach. **x**
- B: Clean all equipment weekly with a 70% alcohol solution.

C: Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.

A: Incorrect. Undiluted bleach could be harmful to frames, the optician cleaning them, and the patients trying them on.

B: Incorrect. Equipment should be disinfected between patients.

C: **Correct. The most effective way to prevent the spread of infection is through proper handwashing.**

Take the time to read through all of the questions—the ones you answered incorrectly and the ones you answered correctly. Understanding the logic behind the questions will help prepare you for the CGAs—and it will build your opticianry knowledge too!

Bridging modules

Bridging modules are **online interactive lessons** related to specific opticianry topics. They are ideal for professionals who have already trained and/or worked in the optical industry but may have small “gaps” in their skills or knowledge. This is why they are referred to as **bridging** modules—because they help to **bridge the gaps**.

You may use the bridging modules in two different ways:

- **Before** your CGA(s), to study
The modules are free and publicly accessible, so you can open them and work through them whenever you would like.
- **After** your CGA(s), to address gaps in your knowledge
Depending on your CGA scores, you may be required to complete one or more bridging modules before you can become an optician. See **Bridging** in the main PLAR Resource Guide for more information.

A total of 18 modules are currently available, with topics relating to all three CGAs. Within each module are interactive elements, practice questions, online resources, and links to relevant articles.

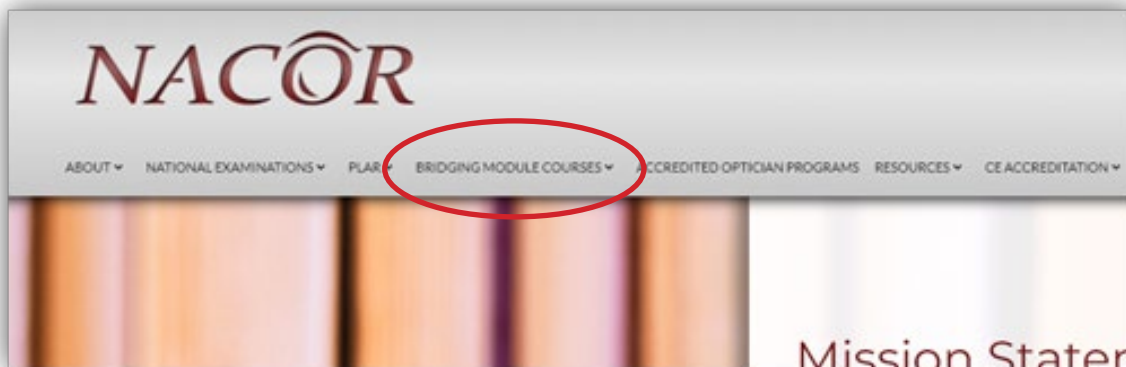
For more information, including a full list of modules, see **Appendix G** in the main PLAR Resource Guide.

Here’s how you can access the bridging modules:

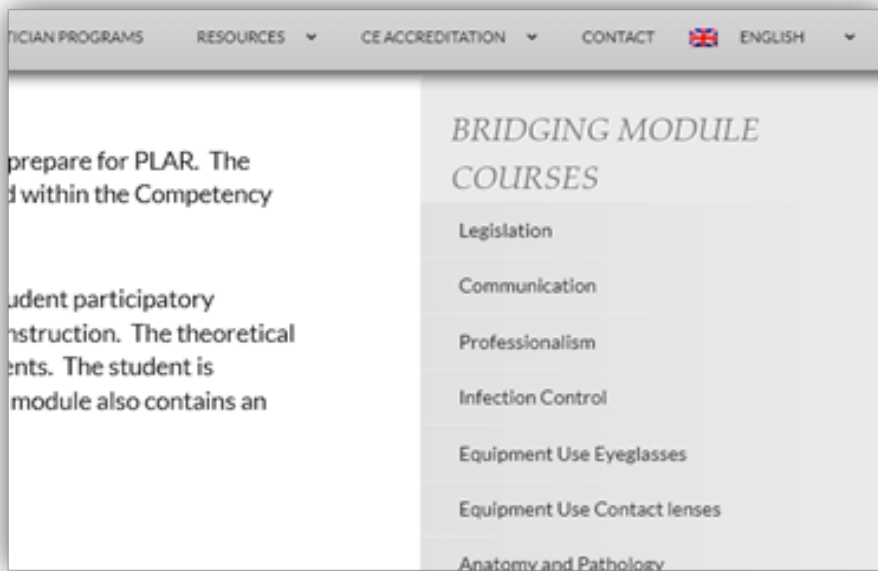
1. Navigate to [the NACOR website](#).

After submitting your answers, you will immediately see your score (as a percentage). Below the score, you’ll find more information about what that score means—whether you might be ready for PLAR or might need to do some more studying or even consider additional education.

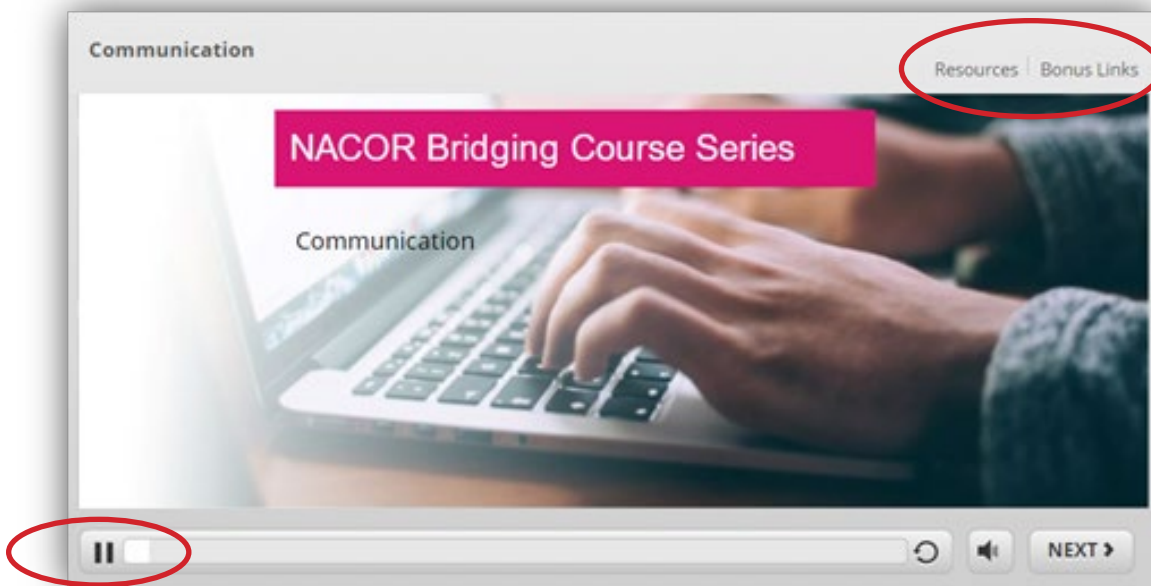
2. From the menu, select **Bridging Module Courses**.



Doing so will take you to the bridging module landing page. Here, you can select whichever module you'd like from the menu.



3. Work through the module, being sure to access all elements and visit all links.



On average, the content of a single module takes 4–5 hours to review.

National competencies for Canadian Opticians

3.9.1	Verify the accuracy of the received order against the patient record.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyzes and verifies the powers to ensure that they are within ANSI tolerance.• Confirms that measurements received are as ordered.• Confirms that correct edge and centre thicknesses were received.• Ensures lens materials and treatments are as ordered.• Verifies lens type is as ordered (e.g., brand, flat top, office lens).
3.9.2	Ensure eyeglasses meet standard tolerances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applies standard tolerance chart to every order received from the laboratory.• Verifies monograms and CSA requirements.• Confirms that correct edge and centre thicknesses were received.• Measures and verifies that the lenses are fabricated and mounted in the eyeglass frame within standard tolerance.• Visually inspects the lens surface for imperfections.
3.9.3	Ensure eyeglasses are in standard bench alignment to ready them for placement on the patient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adjusts frames to standard bench alignment.• Confirms 4-point touch.• Confirms temples open perpendicular to the frame front.

The National Competencies for Canadian Opticians is a document developed by opticians from all across the country. It provides a detailed list of **all of the skills that an optician in Canada is expected to have**.

The questions on the CGAs are based on the National Competencies. The Eyeglasses CGA pulls from both Domain 1 (Professional Practice) and Domain 3 (Eyeglasses & Low Vision). The Contact Lenses CGA relates to Domain 4 (Contact Lenses). The Refracting CGA is based on Domain 2 (Refraction).

While it may not be necessary to read the document in full, you may find it helpful to look over the competency list and the “practice illustrations” provided. Reviewing this document may also be useful in interpreting your PLAR results.

Here’s how you can access and use the knowledge self-assessment:

1. [Navigate to the NACOR website.](#)
2. From the menu, select **Resources**, then **Competencies**.

