



Interim Joint Committee Health Services

July 30, 2025



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MISSION STATEMENT

Protect the public by developing, administering, scoring, and reporting results of valid examinations that assess competency in optometry.

Kentucky optometry is a leader in optometric scope of practice across the United States

Includes:

- Laser privileges
- Minor surgical procedures
- Injectable Agents
- Controlled substances 2*, 3, 4, 5
- Oral steroids
- Oral immunosuppressives
- Oral antifungals
- Glaucoma medications
- Blood draw

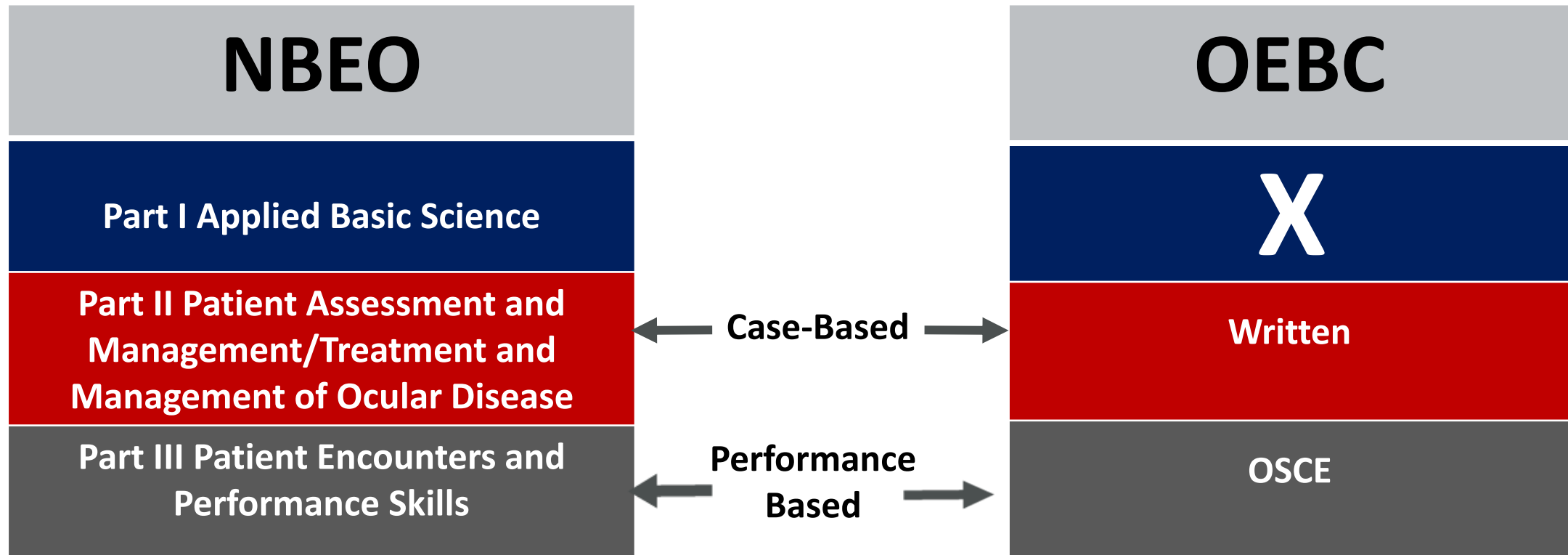


Optometrists are held to the medical standard of care

KRS 320.250 states that applicants for initial licensure (rather than by endorsement) must successfully pass exams approved by the Board, and that “*the examinations ... shall relate to the skills needed for the practice of optometry in this Commonwealth at the time of the examination and shall seek to determine the applicant's preparedness to exercise these skills.*”



**These exams are NOT
equivalent for Kentucky**
*Canadian exams were designed based
on Canadian scope of practice*





*Kentucky Board of Optometric Examiners
wants to use the OEBC written exam for
the NBEO Part I ABS exam*



**THESE EXAMS ARE NOT
EQUIVALENT**

NBEO

Part I Applied Basic Science

**Part II Patient Assessment and
Management/Treatment and
Management of Ocular Disease**

**Part III Patient Encounters and
Performance Skills**

OEBC

X

Written

OSCE



The Canadian exam **does not test**
biomedical science



NBEO Part I ABS

Anatomy

Biochemistry

Physiology

Immunology

Microbiology

Pathology

Optics

Pharmacology

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OEBC Written

Clinical Expertise

Collaboration

Patient Centered Care

Scholarship

Practice Management



Exam Delivery Modality

These exams are **NOT** equivalent in test security



NBEO Part I ABS

OEBC Written



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NBEO PART I ABS ITEMS COVER IMPORTANT CONTENT *RELEVANT TO CLINICAL PRACTICE*

The MOST common endogenous bacterium of the human skin microflora is:

- a. Streptococcus pyogenes
- b. Staphylococcus epidermidis
- c. Staphylococcus aureus
- d. Streptococcus pneumoniae



—Basic Science Testing is Not Unique to Optometry:

Other U.S. Doctoral Health Professions Assess Applied Basic Science

Medicine

- **Step 1** assesses whether you understand and can apply important concepts of the *sciences basic to the practice of medicine*, with special emphasis on principles and mechanisms underlying health, disease, and modes of therapy.
- Emphasis added. Source: <https://www.usmle.org/step-exams/step-1>

Podiatry

- **Part 1 examination** samples the candidate's knowledge in the *basic science* areas of *General Anatomy, including embryology, histology, genetics, and geriatrics; Lower Extremity Anatomy; Biochemistry; Physiology; Microbiology and Immunology; Pathology; and Pharmacology*.
- Emphasis added. Source: <https://www.assessments.meazurelearning.com/programs/national-board-of-podiatric-medical-examiners/>

Chiropractic Medicine

- **Part I** is a computer-based test, covering the *basic sciences. General Anatomy, Spinal Anatomy, and Physiology. Chemistry, Pathology, and Microbiology*
- Emphasis added. Source: <https://www.mynbce.org/part-i/>

Dentistry

- Foundation Knowledge Area...*Gross and Head and Neck Anatomy, Regional Anatomy, Dental Anatomy, Gnathology, Occlusion (including TMJ), General and Oral Histology, Embryology, Physiology, Cell Biology, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Genetics, Neuroscience, Nutrition, Oral Biology, General and Systemic Pathology, Cancer Biology, etc.*
- Source: <https://www.jcnde.ada.org/inbde>

Licensure standards protect the public

This proposed regulatory amendment lowers standards for optometric licensure and puts patient care at risk

Kentucky deserves optometrists who meet the same standards as every other state

Licensure should be about competency not convenience



NATIONAL BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTOMETRY

[optometry.org](https://www.optometry.org)