



Timeline Strategy for Taking the OAT

The OAT is given at Prometric Testing Centers, with many different locations. You may schedule to take the OAT at your convenience.

At the time you take the OAT, you will be instructed to specify an institutional code to designate which schools will get access to your OAT scores. Make sure you specify the **correct code for SCCO (Southern California College of Optometry)**. A common mistake made by OAT test takers is using the code for the Southern College of Optometry and not **Southern California College of Optometry**. If you have already taken the OAT and did not designate SCCO to receive your scores, you will need to contact the testing company to release your scores to SCCO.

Some notes about the OAT:

- The last date to take the OAT within any admissions cycle is April 1st.
- Should you need to retake the OAT, there is a mandatory 90-day wait.
- OAT scores do expire after 2 years. It is required that your OAT test date be no more than 24 months prior the beginning of the application season, which begins on July 1st of any given year. For example, if you apply for the 2017-18 admissions cycle, you must have taken the OAT in the time period of 24 months prior to July 1, 2015 for your OAT test scores to be valid.
- You will not be eligible for an interview invitation without OAT scores. However, because OAT scores are reported directly to OptomCAS from the testing company, you may apply through OptomCAS without having taken the OAT.

Timeline Strategy:

- SCCO used Rolling Admissions which means we begin the interview process as soon as we receive applications from applicants who have met the academic qualification. It is advised that you take the OAT prior to the opening of the admissions cycle on July 1st.
- It takes OptomCAS approximately 3-4 weeks to process your application and get it out to the various optometry schools. It is advised that you apply early, even before you take the OAT if necessary.
- The first time you take the OAT, it takes roughly 3-4 weeks from the date of your test for the scores to populate in OptomCAS. After a retake, it takes roughly 1-2 weeks from the date of your test for the scores to populate in OptomCAS.
- If your application is received before OAT scores are released, your application will be placed on hold. As soon as the scores are populated in the application we will automatically release the hold and proceed with your application review.
- With this strategy, should you find it necessary to retake the OAT and accommodating the mandatory 90 day waiting period, there will still be plenty of time to retake the OAT and still be on time for the rolling admissions format.

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