



Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte  
agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh  
Regulating Health +  
Social Care Professionals

## **Election of Members to the Optical Registration Board at CORU**

**Candidate:** Declan John Hovenden

**Registration No:** OP013314

**County of Practice:** Dublin 7

**Nominated in Category 3:** Registrant engaged in the education and training of persons in the practice of the profession of Optometry

### **Personal Statement/ Biography:**

Declan is an optometrist with over 25 years' experience in clinical practice, management and education. A graduate of Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), he practiced for many years in ophthalmology settings specialising in cataract and refractive surgery and ocular surface conditions. In 2009, Declan joined the staff of Optometry department at DIT (now TU Dublin) and is now the Head of Optometry at the university's Faculty of Sciences and Health with overall responsibility for the academic, clinical and research activities of the Optometry discipline. Committed to ensuring the highest possible standards of education and training of optometrists and dispensing opticians of the future, he leads a dedicated academic team who work tirelessly to develop and advance the programmes of education in order to best equip graduates with the knowledge, skills, and attributes that will be required for the practice of these ever-evolving professions in the future.

Declan is a fellow of the Association of Optometrists Ireland and a member of the European Academy of Optometry and Optics. He also sits on the Council of the Association of Optometrists Ireland, is a member of the Medical Advisory Committee of Global Vision and a member of the Editorial board of the journal of Optometric Clinical Practice. He has served one term on the Optical Registration Board of CORU (2019-2023) and hopes to use this experience to serve the best of his ability for a second term.

Passionate about the advancement of the science and practice of optometry, Declan's ongoing objective is, through various roles to contribute to the development of the optometry profession in and to an improved, more integrated and patient centric system of eye care delivery for the benefit of all those in Ireland who have eye care needs.



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**Candidate:** Matilda Biba

**Registration No:** OP025954

**County of Practice:** Dublin 7

**Nominated in Category 3:** Registrant engaged in the education and training of persons in the practice of the profession of Optometry

**Personal Statement/ Biography:**

Matilda graduated as an optometrist in 2002 from City, University of London (UK). After years of clinical and hospital practice, she returned to City, University of London to pursue a PhD in occupational and clinical ophthalmology, awarded in 2014. Matilda was a senior lecturer and Master's course leader in Optometry at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU), Cambridge between 2011-2017, lecturing in paediatric optometry, ocular pathology and advanced investigative techniques, before returning home to Ireland. Matilda holds an Arnold F. Graves postdoctoral research scholarship, working at the Centre for Eye Research Ireland (CERI) in TU Dublin and was the recent winner of the Fighting Blindness Emerging Researcher award (May 2022) and the Women in Vision Early Career Investigator award (October 2022). She has been invited to speak at the upcoming Topcon Educational meeting (March 2023, UK).

Matilda's specific academic and research interest are in preventative eye health interventions for avoidable and non-avoidable causes of blindness and visual impairment, including retinopathy of prematurity, glaucoma, diabetes, age related macular degeneration and refractive error. Matilda has supervised one PhD student to completion and currently supervises several Master (x2) and PhD (x3) students in the field of Myopia, ocular nutrition, cognition and predictive modelling as well as coordinating numerous myopia management clinical trials at CERI.

Matilda is currently contributing to the Undergraduate Optometry final year project module at TU Dublin, supervising two fourth year students and continues to lecture and educate qualified optometrists and students on the new occupational colour vision standard which she proposed during her PhD studies and that were accepted and adopted across the FAA (USA), CAA (UK) and LU (UK) authorities in 2010, followed by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in 2014. Matilda is also a Healthy Eye volunteer and ambassador for the Special Olympics, supervising volunteer student optometrists conduct eye assessments on additional need Olympians. More recently, she has set-up the first regular CPD approved lecture series to run in Ireland, CERI Series, a bi-annual, credited dissemination event where expert speakers in the field of Optometry and Visual Science can engage with student, academic and qualified healthcare professionals. The first event is scheduled for April 2023.