



General Osteopathic Council

29 January 2014

Registration fees and amendments to fee rules

Classification	Public.
Purpose	For decision.
Issue	To agree the level of fee reduction and the process for agreeing the amended fees rules.
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To note the response to the fees consultation as set out in Annex A.2. To make the new fees rules attached at Annex B to come in effect on 1 May 2014.
Financial and resourcing implications	These are set out in the paper.
Equality and diversity implications	These are set out in the paper.
Communications implications	The fee reduction and collection process will be communicated to all registrants.
Annexes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Draft fees rulesB. Fee consultation response
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Background

1. In October 2013 Council approved the principle that cost reductions identified in the budget for the financial year 2014-15 should be passed back to registrants via a fee reduction.
2. The budget strategy paper considered at that meeting set out the position that registration fees could be cut for the third year in a row, while GOsC budgeted for a small surplus to allow for any mid-year variations. This has been the consistent approach of the GOsC to the challenge which was set out in the Government White Paper *Enabling Excellence* in 2011.

Discussion

Fee levels

3. When discussing the budget strategy paper Council was clear that it wanted the fee reduction to benefit all registrants, and to that end, favoured an across the board reduction. Council also noted that the differential between a reduction 'across the board' against a reduction in the 'headline fee only' was immaterial.
4. The registration fee levels set out in the budget strategy paper, and which Council will be asked to agree, are as follows:

Registration levels	Current fee levels	Across the board reduction
Year 1 (entry)	£340	£320
Year 2 UK	£455	£430
Year 2 reduced rate	£230	£215
Year 3 UK	£610	£570
Year 3 reduced rate	£340	£320

Effective date of fee reduction

5. Consistent with prior years, the effective date of the fee reduction will be 1 May. This date has been chosen for two reasons: first, there needs to be an adequate period of time between the Council meeting in December and the introduction of the new rules to obtain Privy Council approval; second, over 2000 registrants have an annual renewal date of 9 May with the remaining majority renewing in the following months, so for the maximum benefit, this is the latest preferred date for the change to take place.

Consultation

6. We have undertaken a six week consultation with the profession to determine whether they agree with a reduction in fees and whether they agree that a reduction should be 'across the board'. The response to the consultation is set out in Annex A.

Amendment to the fee rules

7. The Department of Health Legislative Programme Board has agreed that the GOsC can introduce new rules effective in time for the planned reduction and has allocated resources to enable this work to be carried out.
8. The proposed new fees rules are attached at Annex B.

Recommendations:

1. To note the response to the fees consultation as set out in Annex A.
2. To make the new fees rules attached at Annex B to come in effect on 1 May 2014.

Fee consultation results 2014-15

The fee consultation ran from 1 November 2013 until noon on 13 December 2013. The fee consultation asked two questions:

Question 1: do you agree that the GOsC should pass identified cost reductions back to the profession via a fee reduction?

Question 2: do you agree that the fee reduction should be spread across all registration fee levels?

Responses to the consultation were received via the public website and the **ozone** with a few responses submitted by email. The results of the fee consultation are as follows:

Number of responses: 224. This was a lower number of responses than in previous years; however, this is unsurprising as this is now the third consecutive fee reduction consultation held by GOsC.

Of the 224 responses, six were written responses only. We have published the written responses with a GOsC answer to each on the **ozone**.

Question 1: do you agree that the GOsC should pass identified cost reductions back to the profession via a fee reduction?

Yes	204	91.07%
No	6	2.68%
Not answered	14	6.25%

Question 2: do you agree that the fee reduction should be spread across all registration fee levels?

Yes	169	75.45%
No	41	18.30%
Not answered	14	6.25%