

**GENERAL OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL
Business Plan
April 2021 - March 2022**

**Monitoring report
as at 30 June 2021**

GOsC BUSINESS PLAN 2021-22

1. The General Osteopathic Council has agreed a Strategic Plan for 2019-2024 as an enabling document to provide the overarching approach that Council intends to follow. The Strategic Plan sets out the statutory context within which we operate, a vision statement and four goals for 2024. Further detail is provided below.
2. The statutory context of our operation is as follows:
 - To protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and well-being of the public
 - To promote and maintain public confidence in the profession of osteopathy
 - To promote and maintain proper professional standards and conduct for members of the profession.

3. The vision statement set out within the Strategic Plan is:

A partnership in professional standards that fulfils our statutory duty to protect the public and promote patient safety and well-being through modern regulation which supports and develops osteopaths.

4. Our four goals for 2024 are:

We will support the osteopathic profession to deliver high-quality care, which will protect patients and the public in the context of changes in the dynamic landscape of healthcare.	We will develop our assurance of osteopathic education to produce high-quality graduates who are ready to practise.
We will build closer relationships with the public and the profession based on trust and transparency.	We will be an exemplar in modern healthcare regulation – accessible, effective, innovative, agile, proportionate and reflective.

5. This document, the Business Plan 2020-21, sets out the aims and detailed activities for the period April 2020 to March 2021, in support of each of the themes.

Legend

Status ● On track ● Delayed ● Cancelled/postponed

Change ↑ Positive ↓ Negative

Annex A to 6

Goal one: We will support the osteopathic profession to deliver high-quality care, which will protect patients and the public in the context of changes in the dynamic landscape of healthcare.						
Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Ongoing activities (business as usual)						
Continue to empower osteopaths to undertake the CPD scheme through a programme of ongoing supportive communication and engagement with a particular focus on the peer discussion review.	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			
Continue to collaborate with osteopathic groups and organisations to support osteopaths undertake the CPD scheme including the peer discussion review.	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			
Collect, analyse and report on data about activities undertaken by registrants in their CPD cycle and take appropriate actions based on the evidence.	Registration, Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			
Continue verification and assurance activity based on declarations made by osteopaths when renewing their registration annually and report on findings.	Registration	All year	●			
Update and review CPD equality impact assessment through the implementation period.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
Continue to foster sustainable professional networks and learning communities that support	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			

Annex A to 6

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
professional development and minimise practitioner isolation.						
Support new graduates (UK and Internationally qualified) making the transition into practice through better understanding of the barriers and enablers to building communities, including the development of appropriate resources.	Professional Standards, Registration, Communications	From July 2021	●			
Continue to work collaboratively with the Osteopathic Development Group on initiatives that enhance patient safety and/or quality of patient care.	Chief Executive and Registrar, Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			
Continuing to support the National Council for Osteopathic Research to increase research awareness and research activity to inform practice and patient care.	Chief Executive and Registrar, Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			
Collaborate with professional indemnity insurance providers, the Institute of Osteopathy and the National Council for Osteopathic Research to report on the prevalence of concerns about osteopaths and practice.	Chief Executive and Registrar, Professional Standards, Regulation	All year	●			
To consider the prevalence of concerns and any implications for the sector connected to patient safety and the quality of patient care.	Chief Executive and Registrar, Professional	By October 2021	●			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
	Standards, Regulation, Communications					
Collect, analyse and report on generic case learning points from fitness to practise hearings and consider implications and next steps with all stakeholders, including GOsC Committee members.	Professional Standards, Regulation, Communications	All year	●			
Continue to engage with the Department of Health and Social Care, the four UK governments, and other regulators on the reform of healthcare professional legislation.	Chief Executive and Registrar	All year	●			
New activities introduced in 2021-22						
We will engage with, and listen to, our stakeholders, before analysing and responding to their feedback across the full range of our work.	Professional Standards, Communications, Regulation	From April 2021	●			
We will promote registrants' wellbeing in order to support osteopaths to deliver high-quality patient care.	Chief Executive, Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Further develop and consult on guidance to support registrants who are engaged in adjunctive/complementary therapies to understand the application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards.	Regulation, Professional Standards, Communications	By October 2021	●			
Publish and actively promote guidance on adjunctive and complementary therapies.	Regulation, Professional Standards, Communications	By January 2022	●			

Annex A to 6

Goal two: We will develop our assurance of osteopathic education to produce high-quality graduates who are ready to practise.

Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Ongoing activities (business as usual)						
Work with the Council of Osteopathic Educational Institutions to facilitate strategic thinking and development in order to ensure the sector works together coherently, collegiately and collaboratively.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
Review levels of assurance provided by the existing quality assurance method and explore mechanisms for enhancing assurance and informing QA activities.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
Use findings of the review of the existing quality assurance method to update the risk-based approach to quality assurance strategy 2020 to 2025.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
Removal of RQ dates and publication of conditions and publication of action plans for eligible osteopathic education providers.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
Continue to monitor and enhance the quality of osteopathic education.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
Publish consultation on draft of updated Handbook (alongside updated GOPRE including Standards for Training).	Professional Standards	By June 2021	●			

Annex A to 6

Goal two: We will develop our assurance of osteopathic education to produce high-quality graduates who are ready to practise.						
Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Publish and disseminate findings from public and patient involvement in osteopathic education.	Professional Standards, Communications	From April 2021	●			
Work with patients, educational providers and others to understand and develop best practice for the involvement of patients in osteopathic education and training.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
Continue to embed OPS (2019) within educational provision and quality assurance framework.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
Continue to embed the OPS (2019) within the student community through our ongoing engagement with students at all stages of their training.	Registration, Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			
Ensure we retain a focus on the external horizon to identify any issues relating to education and training which may impact on current objectives and plans.	Professional Standards	All year	●			
New activities introduced in 2021-22						
Explore issues connected to the future sustainability of the profession.	Chief Executive, Professional Standards	All year	●			

Annex A to 6

Goal three: We will build closer relationships with the public and the profession based on trust and transparency.						
Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Ongoing activities (business as usual)						
Review visibility of information to support participants in hearings and publication of decisions.	Regulation, Communications	All year	●			
Continue to collect witness and parties feedback and arrange to evaluate this feedback to enhance our FtP processes.	Regulation	All year	●			
Continue to work with patients and others to identify, review and translate examples of osteopaths and other health professionals working with patients to inform interprofessional working and learning.	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			
Work with patients to promote among osteopathic stakeholders the value of patient involvement in their own work and, encourage use of patient feedback to inform improvements in practice.	Communications, Professional Standards	All year	●			
Work with patients, registrants and others to promote awareness, accessibility and usability of the Register, and to provide assurance about the Register and our registration processes.	Communications, Registration	All year	●			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Increase the numbers within our patient and public reference group including the diversity of patients.	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	●			
As a registered charity, develop greater links with our local community for example, via a work placement scheme.	Chief Executive and CSR working group	From September 2021	●			
Participate actively across the inter-regulatory forums to gather intelligence and build relationships to enhance our approach to regulation.	Chief Executive and all departments	All year	●			
New activities introduced in 2021-22						
We will undertake a comprehensive review of our Fitness to Practise Publication Policy ensuring that any revisions are reflective of best practice within the sector.	Regulation	By November 2021	●			
Consult on and publish the Practice Note on Questioning Witnesses.	Regulation	From June 2021	●			
Consult on and publish the Remote Hearings Protocol.	Regulation	From July 2021	●			
Publish the consolidated Screeners Guidance.	Regulation	By June 2021	●			
We will conduct a review of our implementation of remote hearings and meetings through the	Regulation	From July 2021	●			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
pandemic, ensuring that we take learning forward so that our future work is informed by experience.						
We will introduce a new Fitness to Practise focussed newsletter / bulletin for osteopaths which will provide insights, learning and reflection points from concerns we receive and will augment the FtP webinars.	Regulation, Communications	From April 2021	●			
We will undertake a series of Fitness to Practise webinars with the profession, public and patients to improve understanding and demystify the fitness to practise process.	Regulation, Communications	From April 2021	●			
We will use new forms of content within the ebulletin to help demystify and humanise the work of the GOsC	Communications	From April 2021	●			
We will further enhance our social media presence to include a greater recognition of equality and diversity.	Communications	From April 2021	●			
We will use social media as a tool to engage with our stakeholders creating easier access to our key content in a measurable way.	Communications	From April 2021	●			
We will scope, develop and plan a visible and meaningful patient voice across the full range of our business.	Professional Standards, Communications,	All year	●			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
	Regulation and Registration					
Support our patient group to work in partnership with us to provide their fullest possible contribution to our work.	Professional Standards, Communications	From April 2021	●			

Annex A to 6

Goal four: We will be an exemplar in modern healthcare regulation – accessible, effective, innovative, agile, proportionate and reflective.						
Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Ensure our continued compliance with the Osteopaths Act 1993 and our underpinning Rules.	Chief Executive, Registration, Regulation, Professional Standards	All year	●			
Prepare an Annual Report on activities undertaken in year and submit to Parliament and publish.	Chief Executive, Communications	By September 2021	●			
Submit the Annual Report to Charity Commission.	Chief Executive	By January 2022	●			
Manage the complaints caseload in an efficient, effective, fair and timely way seeking to achieve a target of 12 months for the majority of fitness to practise complaints to reach a hearing.	Regulation	All year	●			
Provide training as required to fitness to practise panellists, including supporting the induction and integration of new members through training in addition to separate annual training days for IC and PCC/HC members.	Regulation	From April 2021	●			
Update and review existing information and support to osteopaths under investigation in our FtP procedures.	Regulation	All year	●			

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Goal four: We will be an exemplar in modern healthcare regulation – accessible, effective, innovative, agile, proportionate and reflective.

Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Seek feedback from those using or applying our registration processes (including registrants, registration applicants and registration assessors) in order to better understand their experiences and improve our registration systems.	Registration, Communications	From April 2021	●			
Monitor activity of individuals removed from the Register during 2019-20 and 2020-21, writing 'cease and desist' letters and prosecuting them as necessary, as described above.	Registration, Regulation	All year	●			
Ensure that the GOsC continues to meet its duties under the Equality Act.	Chief Executive	All year	●			
Monitor revisions to the Welsh Language Act and implement new Welsh Language Standards requirements.	Communications	From May 2021	●			
Support Council in implementing its ongoing development.	Chief Executive, Chair of Council	All year	●			
Provide Council with the information needed to make appropriate resourcing decisions connected to the ongoing financial stability of the GOsC including consideration of reducing/changing expenditure patterns, outsourcing activity, shared services and building estate options.	Chief Executive	All year	●			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Engage with the PSA Performance Review process, through regular data reporting and acting on issues arising from the performance review process and associated audits.	Chief Executive and all departments	All year	●			
Implement IT proposals to enhance and streamline our work.	IT	All year	●			
New activities introduced 2021-22						
Introduce a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2021-24 and associated action plan.	Chief Executive, EDI staff forum	May 2021 - July 2021	●			
Implement the findings from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Audit as articulated in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2021-24.	Chief Executive, EDI staff forum	All year	●			
Develop and begin to implement a data and insight strategy to enhance our capacity for research including data collection, analysis and insight.	Chief Executive, Professional Standards and all departments	All year	●			
Routinise communication with the devolved administrations and establish regular meetings with the four Chief Allied Health Professions Officers.	Chief Executive	All year	●			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 22-23 (if applicable)
Develop and implement an 'Associate Council member' programme for osteopaths.	Chief Executive	From June 2021	●			
Undertake a comprehensive review of the international registration application process.	Registration	From June 2021	●			
Explore a performance review scheme for legal assessors and expand the existing pool of legal assessors.	Regulation	From June 2021	●			
Undertaken a re-tender exercise for external audit services.	Chief Executive	December 2021	●			
We will sign up to 'The Mental Health at Work Commitment', building on the Stevenson/Farmer report, 'Thriving at work'.	Chief Executive, HR Manager	From June 2021	●			
We will build on the results of the staff survey by investing in our people to enhance the talent which exists within the GOsC staff team.	Chief Executive and HR Manager	From June 2021	●			
Develop GOsC approach to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by benchmarking our work against other organisations.	Chief Executive and CSR working group	From September 2021	●			
Review and report on CSR activities undertaken and identify actions to enhance our work.	Chief Executive and CSR working group	By March 2022	●			