

GENERAL OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL

Business Plan

April 2023 - March 2024

Annex A to 6

GOsC BUSINESS PLAN 2023-24

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 Monitoring Report 2023-24, sets out the detailed activities in support of each of the goals and our progress against each.

Legend

Status ■ **On track** ■ **Delayed** ■ **Cancelled/postponed**

Change ↑ **Positive** ↓ **Negative**

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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 24-25 (if applicable)
New activities introduced in 2023-24						
Commission work to understand the needs of registrants in relation to health and wellbeing to support good professional practice and to make recommendations about how these needs could be met by the sector and in particular GOsC.	Professional Standards	All year	■	Scoping stage.		
Consider the potential for scoping and developing filmed/animated resource which explores professional boundaries through scripted scenarios and case studies.	Regulation, Professional Standards, Communications	November 2023	■	Stories being developed to inform scoping.		
Host a roundtable with insurance providers to understand any emerging issues in relation to osteopaths and their delivery of high-quality care.	Regulation, Professional Standards, Communications	November 2023	■	Date to be agreed with providers and NCOR.		
Carry out exploratory workshop with osteopaths to help us gather more information about current understanding of issues related to professional boundaries and whether their	Professional Standards, Communications	May 2023 to July 2023	■	Paper considered by PEC in June 2023. Scoping out exploratory		

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understanding has been affected by our communications.				osteopath workshops and considering plans for stakeholder workshop but one-to-one meetings likely to be held ahead of any stakeholder organisation workshop.		
Run online event inviting all regional osteopathic group leads to provide opportunity for professional networking and peer support, helping us gather insight and share information with the leads.	Communications, Professional Standards, Regulation	All year	■	Scoping out stage.		
Ongoing activities						
Continue to support new graduates (UK and Internationally qualified) making the transition into practice through better understanding of the barriers and	Professional Standards and Communications	All year	■	Paper reporting results of focus groups and qualitative		

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enablers to building communities, including the development of appropriate resources.				survey reported to PEC in June. Next steps being further refined and likely to include introductory conversations with stakeholders ahead of main event.		
Continue work to develop resources, support and guidance to apply the Osteopathic Practice Standards to real life situations to develop professional judgement and decision making by publishing reports, case studies, guidance and ongoing engagement with osteopaths.	Professional Standards and Comms	All year	■	Case studies developed and interactive sessions run with regional groups including, East of England, Kent and East Sussex Osteopaths and Cheshire. More groups planned through the year.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Continue to enhance awareness of boundaries issues and how these might be appropriately managed through the promotion of existing, and new, resources.	Professional Standards and Comms	All year	■	Ongoing promotion in ebulletin and also stakeholder event planned later in the Autumn to share research and explore sector response collaboratively.		
Continue to collect, analyse and report on data about activities undertaken by registrants in their CPD cycle to inform evaluation of the impact of the overarching CPD scheme objectives.	Professional Standards with Registration	All year	■	CPD Evaluation Survey is developing and is planned for later in the year.		
Continue to collaborate and engage with regional and local osteopathic groups to understand their needs and respond accordingly.	Professional Standards and Communications	All year	■	Ongoing and includes iO regional lead meeting and Cheshire group meeting in April. Autumn meetings planned with Dorset group.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
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.	Professional Standards, Regulation	November 2023	■	Date to be agreed with providers and NCOR. (See above)		

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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 24-25 (if applicable)
New activities introduced in 2023-24						
To explore the implementation of the principles of consent in the student environment and consider whether additional guidance and resources are necessary to support the implementation of the Osteopathic Practice Standards.	Professional Standards	October 2023	■	Survey for educators and students has been developed on their experience of consent implemented in the classroom closing date will be September. This will inform subsequent workshop later in the year.		
Consider the extension of the Quality Assurance service provider contract with Mott MacDonald (which expires in July 2023).	Professional Standards	May 2023	■	Contract extension signed.		
Develop a plan to undertake a full tender process in 2024 for Quality Assurance services (contract to commence 2025).	Professional Standards	March 2024	■	Ongoing		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Ongoing activities						
Provide further support to education providers in the effective implementation and evaluation of the Graduate Outcomes and SET.	Professional Standards	All year	■	Ongoing we have prepared an additional resource to support more explicit reflection and evaluation and reporting against standards. Programme stream of good practice involving stakeholder events and webinars planned for 23/24.		
Promote the effective use of the OPS as a framework for decision making with students and educators.	Professional Standards	All year	■	Part of the ongoing work above with students and educators and also student		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
				presentations and sessions across OEIs.		
Continue to monitor and enhance the quality of osteopathic education - RQ visits - Sharing of good practice via quality assurance workshops - Annual report monitoring	Professional Standards	- Oct '23 - Jun '23 - Mar '24	■	Ongoing. Annual reports were agreed in June by PEC along with additional supporting resources. RQ visits took place in May 23. RQ visits are planned in November 23. QA workshops programme planning for 23/24 ongoing with prospectus being developed.		
Complete review of Student Fitness to Practise Guidance for students and education providers.	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	■	Initial feedback phase completed and analysis of feedback ongoing. Next stage is		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
				development of first consultation draft.		
Complete review of Health and Disability Guidance for students and education providers (in each case involving stakeholder collaboration and a consultation)	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	■	Initial feedback phase completed (including from equality consultant). Next stage is development of first consultation draft.		
Review Quality Assurance Policy as referenced within Mott MacDonald/GOSC QA Handbook	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	■	Management of concerns policy review ongoing.		
Implementing agreed changes to our QA risk-based framework	Professional Standards	All year	■	Framework agreed at March PEC. Publication planned. Implemented through visitor training in July and ongoing engagement with OEIs.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
To work with Mott MacDonald to support the increase and diversity of the Education Visitor Pool through the use of accessible support, recruitment, training and appraisal of Visitors.	Professional Standards	All year	■	Ongoing discussions.		
Work with patients, educational providers and others to understand and develop good practice for the involvement of patients in osteopathic education and training.	Professional Standards	All year	■	See paper on July Council agenda.		

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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 24-25 (if applicable)
New activities introduced in 2023-24						
Undertake a registrant and stakeholder perceptions survey to enable our registrants and stakeholders to inform us how we are perceived by them, their needs, and how we might better meet those needs as a baseline for the implementation of our communications and engagement strategy.	Professional Standards and Communications	All year	■	Tender document agreed by Council, May 2023. Tender advertisement planned for July with selection in Autumn.		
Develop greater understanding of student needs to enable more targeted support.	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	■	Transition into practice paper to PEC in June. Work programme ongoing.		
Consult on then publish amended Fitness to Practise Publication Policy.	Regulation, Communications	June 2023	■	Published.		
Consult on then publish amended Guidance on Imposing Interim Suspension Orders and the Undertakings Practice Note.	Regulation, Communications	July 2023 - September 2023	■	Consultation launched on 3 July and closes on 3 October 2023.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Develop an agreed approach to ensuring patient involvement in governance and strategy.	Professional Standards	March 2024	■	Paper considered by PEC in June 2023. Discussion planned for July 2023 Council meeting.		
Undertake a review of the international registration application process.	Registration	December 2023	■			
Consider the GOsC approach to Environmental Social Governance reflective of our role as a registered charity	Resources and Assurance	December 2023	■	Commitment included in draft Strategic Plan, towards 2030.		
Ongoing activities						
Encourage and support shared decision making and the use of resources among patients, practitioners, and educators to enhance the patient experience and delivery of care.	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	■	Ongoing promotion of resources in ebuletin and via social media, Conference presentation, regional group engagement. Evaluation ongoing.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Maintain, enhance and support our Patient Involvement Forum through use of ongoing communications and news, relationship building and participative involvement in a range of projects across the GOsC to enable the fullest partnership in our work.	Professional Standards	All year	■	Ongoing		
Ensure meaningful involvement from patients in relation to the development of policies and guidance.	Professional Standards	All year	■	Ongoing recent examples include patient involvement in the response to the regulatory reform consultation, the questioning witnesses practice note consultation and items on this agenda.		
Review and improve usability of information to support participants in hearings and publication of decisions and those wishing to raise a concern.	Professional Standards, Regulation and Communications	All year	■	Ongoing. Plans being developed for improving usability of this information.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
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	■	Ongoing. Continued promotion of the Register through SEO optimisation and ongoing promotion and provision of Registration Marks.		
Continue to work with patients and others to identify examples of osteopaths and other health professionals working together to inform interprofessional working and learning.	Professional Standards	All year	■	Ongoing promotion of blogs		
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.	Professional Standards	All year	■	Ongoing – primarily through patient feedback and shared decision making resources and work with OEIs.		

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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 24-25 (if applicable)
New activities introduced in 2023-24						
Develop and publish a new Strategic Plan which is informed by stakeholder feedback.	Chief Executive and all teams	April 2023 - January 2024	■	Agreement to launch public consultation sought at July 2023 Council meeting.		
Undertake the recruitment of new non-executive positions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of Council • x3 lay members of Council • x1 registrant member of Council • x1 Council Associate (registrant) • x2 lay members of the Investigating Committee • x2 registrant members of the Investigating Committee 	Chief Executive, Human Resources, Communications	All year	■	Chair of Council and PCC recruitment process now closed. Shortlisting in progress. Plans for future campaigns (Council, Council Associate, IC) in place and overseen by People Committee.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • x3 lay members of the Professional Conduct Committee • x3 registrant members of the Professional Conduct Committee 						
Commence and conclude the reappointment for members of the governance structure eligible for reappointment in 2024 including: members of Council and Professional Conduct Committee panellists.	Chief Executive, Human Resources	All year	■	Reappointment processes underway including liaison with PSA and Privy Council.		
Undertake a market options analysis and develop a resourced plan for the upgrade of the GOsC CRM database.	Chief Executive, IT, Resources and Assurance	July 2023	■	Paper scheduled for Private meeting of Council, July 2023.		
Implement any actions arising from the market options analysis in relation to the upgrade of the GOsC CRM database.	Chief Executive, IT, Resources and Assurance	August 2023 - March 2024	■			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Review GOsC approach to cyber-security and penetration testing	IT, Resources and Assurance	July 2023	■	Strategic plans underway with roadmap to Cyber-Essential Plus certification. Reviewed by Audit Committee.		
Implement any actions arising from the review of the Building Estate project commenced in the previous Business Plan year.	Chief Executive	July 2023	■	Under consideration by Council.		
Develop an action plan for the implementation of new Welsh Language Standards which come into effect in 2023.	Chief Executive, Communications	April 2023 - November 2023	■	Internal planning / work underway. Cross team implementation group is meeting regularly.	Deadline is now December 23 for majority of the Standards. Dec 24 for one Standard.	
Commence the implementation of actions arising from the plan to implement the new Welsh Language Standards.	Chief Executive, Communications	All year	■	Work is underway. Cross organisational implementation group is meeting regularly.	Deadline is now December 23 for majority of the Standards. Dec 24 for one Standard.	

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Review information on our website aimed at osteopaths regarding our fitness to practise processes and collate so it is easy to find. Assess any gaps and consider whether creation of new resources, guidance or web pages is suitable and relevant to osteopaths.	Communications, Regulation	All year	■	Creation of new FtP section on public website is currently underway.		
Develop strategic communications plan to ensure consistent communications for osteopaths to reinforce our key messages on fitness to practise and reassure osteopaths of the support available.	Communications, Regulation	All year	■			
Consider the implications arising from the proposals to reform the legislation of the healthcare regulators and advise registrants and stakeholders accordingly.	Chief Executive and all departments	All year	■	GOsC consultation response submitted and published online. Patient focus group and stakeholder briefing session held prior to		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
				response being submitted.		
To scope out, agree and implement a strategy for review of web pages promoting EDI.	Communications, Professional Standards	September 2023	■	Complete with ongoing updates: EDI web pages have been reviewed in line with house style and accessibility guidelines, and to incorporate work completed on 2022 EDI pilot. New section added and being updated listing actions we have taken to progress pilot findings report recommendations.		
Engage with, and undertake, our first Periodic Review year as part of the revised PSA Performance Review three-year process.	Chief Executive and all departments	All year	■	PSA dialogue meetings underway.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Implement any actions arising from the staff survey conducted in the previous business plan year.	Chief Executive, Human Resources	July 2023	■	All staff meeting held. Feedback to People Committee provided.		
Data insight and modelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing findings of the modelling report with key stakeholders (COEI, iO) • Consideration of the report's recommendations and engagement with stakeholders to address these and identify solutions • Further explore registrant's reasons for leaving the register 	Professional Standards	All year	■	Paper went to PEC in June to agree plan to standardise collection of data and clean data.		
Undertake a banking tender exercise	Resources and Assurance	September 2023	■	Defer to later within financial year to allow assessment of resources.	January 2024	

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Ongoing activities						
Ensure our continued compliance with the Osteopaths Act 1993 and our underpinning Rules.	Chief Executive, Registration, Regulation, Professional Standards	All year	■	Ongoing		
Prepare an Annual Report on activities undertaken in year and submit to Parliament and publish.	Chief Executive, Resources and Assurance, Communications	September 2023	■	Annual Report and Accounts on the July 2023 Council agenda.		
Submit the Annual Report to Charity Commission.	Chief Executive, Resources and Assurance	January 2024	■			
Prepare an Annual Fitness to Practise Report on activities undertaken in year and publish.	Regulation and Communications	December 2023	■			
Manage the complaints caseload in an efficient, effective, fair and timely way seeking to achieve a target of 12 months for the	Regulation	All year	■			

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
majority of fitness to practise complaints to reach a hearing.						
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	November 2023 - December 2023	■	The IC training day is scheduled for 4 December 2023. The PCC training day is scheduled for 11 January 2024		
Expand the existing pool of legal assessors.	Regulation, Human Resources, Communications	July 2023	■		December 2023	
Monitor activity of individuals removed from the Register, writing 'cease and desist' letters and prosecuting them as necessary, as described above.	Regulation, Registration	All year	■			
Ensure that the GOsC continues to meet its duties under the Equality Act including delivering the actions outlined in the	Chief Executive	All year	■	Paper on the July 2023 Council agenda.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2021-24.						
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, and shared services.	Chief Executive, Resources and Assurance	All year	■			
Promote the Welsh Language in our regulatory policy development and activity.	Communications	All year	■	Ongoing. Questions about impact on the Welsh language are included in our consultations.		
Ensure training as required to registration assessors, including supporting the induction and integration of new members.	Professional Standards, Registration	September 2023	■	Scoping in progress.		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
Continue to develop and implement a data and insight strategy to enhance our capacity for research including data collection, analysis and insight, with particular emphasis on EDI data to inform our public sector duty in relation to all activities.	Professional Standards, Communications	All year	■	Paper considered by PEC, June 2023, on this matter.		
Demonstrate our commitment to inclusion, diversity and equality by ensuring regular and ongoing promotion of diversity in our communications.	Chief Executive, Communications	Ongoing	■	Attendance at Pride in London, July 2023, a first for the GOsC. Continued to ensure ebuletin and social media are accessible, inclusive and promote inclusivity through the celebration on our channels of a range of annual cultural and religious events. An		

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Activity	Lead	Original timing	Status	Comments	Revised timing (if applicable)	Defer to 24-25 (if applicable)
				accessibility audit of CPD and OPS website has been undertaken and findings are being implemented. An accessibility review of public website and o zone to follow.		