

GENERAL OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL

Business Plan

April 2024 - March 2025

GOsC BUSINESS PLAN 2024-25

Our vision is to be an inclusive, innovative regulator trusted by all. And we recognise that to achieve our vision we need to make progress each year against the three strategic priorities agreed by Council which are:

- **Strengthening trust**
- **Championing inclusivity**
- **Embracing innovation**

We see these strategic priorities as being necessary to deliver our core statutory objective of public protection. We will continue to set standards and quality assure education and training; we will continue to maintain the integrity of the statutory register of osteopaths; we will continue to set and maintain standards in practice through our continuing professional development scheme; and we will continue to protect patients and the profession by taking appropriate and proportionate action to remove or restrict registration when standards are not met.

Central to our work is communication and engagement and throughout all our activities we are listening, gathering insight and identifying actions we can take to progress our work. We see communication and engagement as a core thread of the GOsC Strategy and underpinning our Business Plans. To that effect, there is not a separate communications and engagement strategy but this is woven into our work.

The 2024-25 Business Plan focuses on those key activities which we believe will progress the strategic priorities of Council in the next twelve months. The Business Plan does not report on many day-to-day operational activities which are overseen by the Senior Management Team. We believe this approach will allow Council to maintain its strategic oversight and ensure a clear focus on strategic delivery.

Underpinning the Strategy are the GOsC organisational values and the Nolan Principles. These are:

Our values	We work Collaboratively to be an Influential and Respectful regulator with an Evidence-informed approach.
Collaborative	We work with our stakeholders to ensure patients and osteopaths are at the centre of our approach to regulation.
Influential	We seek to support and develop those we work with to enhance public protection.
Respectful	We seek to hear, understand and consider the views of the people with whom we engage.
Evidence-informed	We use a range of evidence to guide our work to ensure the best outcomes for patients and the public.

Annex A to 9

Nolan Principles	
Selflessness	Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
Integrity	Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
Objectivity	Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
Accountability	Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
Openness	Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
Honesty	Holders of public office should be truthful.
Leadership	Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

This document, the Business Plan 2024-25, sets out how we intend to work towards meeting the strategic priorities in the year April 2024 to March 2025.

Annex A to 9

Strengthening trust: We will work to enhance/improve our relationships with those we work with so together we can help protect patients and the public			
Activity	Measurable actions	Timeline	Lead
Using the registrant and stakeholder perceptions survey to explore barriers to trust.	Present findings of the perceptions survey to Council with identified actions.	From May 2024	Chief Executive, Professional Standards, Fitness to Practise, Registration
Further develop and implement plans for a collaborative Strategic Patient Partnership Programme at Council level.	Agree specification to measure success of pilot	July 2024	Professional Standards
	Begin recruitment of patient representatives to inform decisions but without decision making rights.	From November 2024	Professional Standards
Enhance the experience of students, osteopaths and patients who engage with our services for example in registering, renewing registration and undertaking CPD and accessing or delivering high quality osteopathic care.	Developing our approach to student engagement through collecting and reviewing of insight and finalising a student engagement plan for 25/26	March 2025	Communications
	Facilitating of three student focus groups to collect insight	April 2024	Communications
	Publish three student ebulletins	May, Oct, December 2024	Communications
	Undertake comprehensive tone of voice review of registration renewal reminder letters (1 st stage by summer 2024).	March 2025	Communications, Registration
	Meaningful patient involvement in policy development and all consultations	All year to March 2025	Professional Standards

Annex A to 9

	<p>Publish evaluation and impact of patient involvement to date.</p> <p>Encourage use of patient resources to support high quality care as part of implementing our EDIB guidance and through the CPD scheme.</p>	<p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p>	<p>Professional Standards, Communications</p> <p>Professional Standards, Communications</p>
Publish an invitation to tender to scope out our new public website.	Invitation to tender published.	October 2024	Communications
Enhance how we develop and use our people (executive and non-executive) so we maximise the talent at our disposal.	Develop a People Strategy which is grounded in its use of data and insight.	November 2024	Chief Executive, Human Resources, Professional Standards
To support students and osteopaths to practise to high standards in accordance with the Osteopathic Practice Standards	<p>Publish NCOR Concerns Report collaborating with NCOR, iO and insurers.</p> <p>Consult on and publish Guidance on Professional Behaviours and Student Fitness to Practise.</p> <p>Progress boundaries project including strengthening guidance publication of resources and guidance and ongoing sector work raising awareness of impact of boundary breachers and common messaging.</p> <p>Publishing CPD evaluation and updating CPD Guidance and resources.</p> <p>Ongoing quality assurance activity.</p>	<p>February 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>July 2024 and November 2024</p> <p>All year to March 2025</p>	<p>Professional Standards</p> <p>Professional Standards</p> <p>Professional Standards</p> <p>Professional Standards</p> <p>Professional Standards</p>

Championing inclusivity:

It is important to us that people who interact with us, or who work for us, can be their true selves and that we understand and break down any barriers which prevent them from doing so

Activity	Measurable actions	Timeline	Lead
Collect, analyse, publish equality, diversity and inclusion data to demonstrate changes made, or mitigations put in place, where we have identified there is an undue impact on those with protected characteristics.	Publish information, throughout the year, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Registration renewal - Governance and appointments - Fitness to practise - registrants and complainants - Equality Impact assessments for all policies and processes which allow GOsC to demonstrate changes made or mitigations put in place. 	From April 2024	Chief Executive supported by Professional Standards, Regulation, Communications, Registration, Resources and Human Resources
Promote inclusivity in osteopathic education and practice for students, patients and osteopaths.	Publish draft health and disability guidance for consultation. Publish final version of health and disability guidance. Promote Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging guidance and resources and encourage inclusion as part of the CPD scheme. Signpost, develop and promote resources to support registrants wellbeing. Promote use of patient values resources.	July 2024 March 2024 All year to March 2025 All year to March 2025 All year to March 2025	Professional Standards, Communications Professional Standards, Communications Professional Standards, Communications Professional Standards, Communications Professional Standards, Communications

Annex A to 9

Championing inclusivity:

It is important to us that people who interact with us, or who work for us, can be their true selves and that we understand and break down any barriers which prevent them from doing so

Activity	Measurable actions	Timeline	Lead
Promote our Equality Duty responsibilities and the actions we intend to take to further our commitment to Championing Inclusivity.	Publish a new Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Framework 2024-30.	August 2024	Chief Executive, Communications
Conduct a comprehensive review, and make amendments, of all Fitness to Practise guidance both at the initial stages and hearings stage of the Fitness to Practise process to ensure the guidance adequately address allegations that involve racist and discriminatory behaviours.	Revise, consult and publish relevant Fitness to Practise guidance.	From July 2024	Regulation

Annex A to 9

Embracing innovation: We will continually seek and take opportunities to improve what we do and how we do it, so we continue to improve as an organisation			
Activity	Measurable actions	Timeline	Lead
Conduct a comprehensive review of the GOsC Threshold Criteria for Unacceptable Professional Conduct taking into account developments within wider regulation and regulatory reform and feedback from Internal and External Stakeholders.	Revise, consult and publish the GOsC Threshold Criteria for Unacceptable Professional Conduct.	From July 2024	Regulation
Implement a new CRM system within GOsC and ensure a smooth transition for internal and external users.	New CRM system implemented and assurance reports provided to Audit Committee and Council.	December 2024	Chief Executive, Communications, Registration, IT
Support workforce and retention with the profession to support osteopaths to practice to high standards in accordance with the Osteopathic Practice Standards	Support research to better understand factors impacting on recruitment and retention in osteopathy.	July 2024	Professional Standards, Regulation, Registration
	Complete research into experiences of transition into practice.	July 2024	Professional Standards
	Discuss findings with sector and collaborate on recommendations.	November 2024	Professional Standards
	Agree role and approach to mutual recognition.	July 2024	Professional Standards, Registration, Chief Executive
	Progress discussions to raise awareness of osteopathic qualifications and regulation and to explore barriers to recognition.	March 2025	Professional Standards, Chief Executive

Annex A to 9

Embracing innovation:

We will continually seek and take opportunities to improve what we do and how we do it, so we continue to improve as an organisation

Activity	Measurable actions	Timeline	Lead
	Refining and publishing data on enrolment, progression in education and joining and leaving the register to provide an authoritative source of data for the wider health sector about the osteopathic workforce.	November 2024	Professional Standards
	Explore readiness of current quality assurance model to assess different models of delivery of osteopathic education.	March 2025	Professional Standards
Scope and develop a financial, asset and environmental strategy which underpins GOsC business continuity and sustainability.	Financial, asset and environmental strategy agreed by Council following in-year engagement.	From July 2024	Chief Executive, Resources
Review the impact of artificial intelligence on osteopathic education and osteopathic care and the use of artificial intelligence in health care for patients and to consider impact on osteopathic standards and regulation.	Scoping report.	July 2024	Professional Standards
	Immediate implications, recommendations and actions	November 2024	Professional Standards
	Longer term recommendations and actions	March 2025	Professional Standards

GOsC metrics to help ensure we are delivering efficient and effective regulation.

In 2024-25 we expect to:

- process c.5,750 registration forms (UK and International applicants and annual renewal of registration forms) and c.5,000 reminder notices.
- Support c.220 first-time applicants to join the UK Register (including applications from internationally qualified applicants and from UK qualified graduates).
- receive c.200 queries from patients, members of the public, registrants and other healthcare professionals, leading to c.75 fitness to practise cases being opened, of which c.30 will be referred for investigation leading to c.12 being referred for a final determination hearing.
- undertake c.500 CPD verification and assurance audits.
- undertake quality assurance processes with 7 osteopathic educational providers including analysis of 7 annual reports and undertaking visits to four osteopathic educational providers.
- holding 3 good practice events and continue to engage on a 1:1 basis with all osteopathic educational providers during the year.
- respond to c.2,000 enquiries into our osteopathic information support service for osteopaths, patients and the public; c.60 policy and ethical queries related to our standards; c.4,600 registration queries and c.650 student queries.
- send out 12 monthly ebulletins to registrants achieving an open rate of c60%.
- send out 4 quarterly English student ebulletins to 446 students (penultimate and final year) achieving an open rate of c40%.
- send out 4 quarterly Welsh student ebulletins to 70 students living in Wales (penultimate and final year) achieving an open rate of c30%.
- receive and fulfil 150 requests for personalised Registration Marks
- attend and participate in upwards of 25 osteopathic sector meetings, webinars and regional events engaging with osteopaths, students, patients and osteopathic organisations and other stakeholders reaching approximately 250 students and 500 osteopaths.
- ensure the patient voice informs the work of the GOsC through at least 100 interactions (formal and informal) with members of the patient involvement forum.
- receive and process c.300 applications for non-executive vacancies relating to Council, Policy and Education Committee, Investigating Committee and Professional Conduct Committee.

Annex A to 9

- host 2 recruitment webinars attracting c.200 attendees including c.80 osteopaths and engage with c.150 interested applicants for our independent fitness to practise panel positions.
- continue to regularly receive feedback after our webinars and events that attendees have shifted their perceptions in a positive way e.g. are less fearful and have a deeper understanding about the topic
- ensure Council and committee scrutiny and oversight of our work through servicing 15 meetings.
- provide training, development and strategy opportunities for c.50 members of the GOsC governance (decision making) structure, as well as those who advise on our statutory decision making including 12 education visitors and 8 registration assessors.
- provide training and development opportunities for our 27 member staff team.