



General
Osteopathic
Council

Consultation - Guidance about professional behaviours and student fitness to practise in osteopathic education

Date

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About the General Osteopathic Council

The General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) is the regulator for the osteopathic profession in the UK. Our role is to develop and regulate the profession of osteopathy which we do by setting standards of education, training, conduct and competence and keeping a Register of those who have qualified and met those standards. By law, osteopaths must be registered with us in order to practise in the UK; there are currently around 5,400 osteopaths.

One important aspect of our work is dealing with concerns and complaints about osteopaths. We have legal powers with clear and transparent processes to investigate and deal with osteopaths who may fall short of the standards we have set. When we refer to 'fitness to practise' we mean whether an osteopath has the knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to practise as an osteopath.

Another key aspect of our work is the quality assurance of osteopathic pre-registration education. By pre-registration, we mean education programmes that lead to graduates being eligible to apply to join the register and practise as osteopaths in the UK. It is important that graduates are able to meet the [Osteopathic Practice Standards](#) at the point of graduation. We publish [Graduate Outcomes](#) which set out the outcomes graduates are expected to achieve in order to meet the standards.

Student Fitness to Practice and Professional Behaviours

It is important that students are taught about professionalism and professional behaviours throughout their training, and that education providers have processes in place for managing situations where a student's fitness to practice may be called into question. In 2016 we published guidance on this, aimed at both students and at educational institutions. This is available on our [website](#).

We have now reviewed this guidance, and are seeking feedback on the revised version.

What has changed?

- We have combined the guidance into one document aimed at both students and education providers. There is a degree of cross-referencing between the two current documents (one aimed at students, and one at education providers) and we are keen to explore the impact of combining these into one document. Combining the guidance in this way has enabled us to reduce considerable repetition between the current documents.
- Ensuring the guidance reflects the 2019 version of the [Osteopathic Practice Standards](#) (OPS). We have further developed the professional behaviour aspect of the document, and replaced the table in the current version with a more integrated reference to the standards in each theme of the OPS, with examples of what is expected, as well as types of behaviours which might raise concerns in relation to each.

- A review of the procedural section regarding the management of fitness to practice cases, including the context within which they take place, and placing this in an Annex rather than in the main body of the guidance. The aim is to focus more on professional behaviours than on process, but to retain this as an Annex to support institutions and students.
- Unless there is a purpose to gender being referenced in case studies, we have made these gender neutral

The consultation

In this consultation, we are inviting views on our draft Guidance about Professional Behaviours and Fitness to Practise for Osteopathic Students and Educational Providers.

Our current guidance for students and educational institutions on student fitness to practise and professional behaviours was published in two separate documents in 2016:

- [Guidance about Professional Behaviours and Fitness to Practise for Osteopathic Students.](#)
- [Student Fitness to Practise: Guidance for Osteopathic Educational Institutions.](#)

Please read the draft guidance note before answering the consultation questions below.

How to respond

The deadline for responses to this consultation is XXXXXXXXXXXX 2024

You can send us your views by:

- emailing your [responses to the consultation](#) question to: standards@osteopathy.org.uk or

Information in responses, including personal information, may need to be published or disclosed under the access to information regimes (mainly the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). We will publish a report about the consultation and the responses we have received. If you would prefer your name not to be made public, please indicate this when sending us your views.

The GOsC is a data controller registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. We use personal data to support our work as the regulatory body for osteopaths. We may share data with third parties to meet our statutory aims and objectives, and when using our powers and meeting our responsibilities under the Osteopaths Act and the associated rules made under the Act. We may use personal data to update the Register, administer and maintain the Register, process complaints, compile statistics and keep stakeholders updated with information about our work.

Consultation questions

Draft Guidance Note on non-osteopathic treatment or other work

1. Your name or your organisation if replying on behalf of an organisation (optional)

2. Did you find the draft Guidance clear and accessible?

Yes No

Please provide any suggestions about how the draft guidance might be made clearer

3. Do you find the case scenarios helpful in explaining the issues outlined in the guidance?

Yes No

Please provide any additional comments regarding the case scenarios below:

4. Do you think that anything is missing from the draft guidance?

Yes No

If so, please let us know below what you think should be added:

5. Do you think that the guidance could be enhanced in any way?

Yes No

If so, please provide suggestions below:

6. Do you consider that the approach proposed in this consultation supports our overarching objective of public protection? This includes:

- a. protecting, promoting and maintaining the health, safety and well-being of the public
- b. promoting and maintaining public confidence in the profession of osteopathy
- c. promoting and maintaining proper professional standards and conduct for osteopaths

Yes No

Please provide additional comments below

7. Do you feel the separate guides being combined adequately addresses the needs and concerns of both students and educational institutions?

Yes No

Please provide additional comments below

8. Is the language clear and easy to understand?

Yes No

Please provide additional comments below

9. Does the guidance adequately address ethical considerations in relation to fitness to practice issues?

Yes No

Please provide additional comments below

10. Are the communication and reporting processes between students, education providers and the GOsC clear?

Yes No

Please provide additional comments below

11. Does this policy cause any adverse impact for people with specific protected characteristics?

Yes No

Please provide additional comments below

12. Are there additional ways that we could promote inclusion and diversity within our guidance?

Yes No

Please provide additional comments below

13. Are there any ways in which we could promote the Welsh Language in this guidance or in its implementation?

Yes No

Please provide additional comments below

As set out above, we are asking some specific questions that we would like responses to, but you are welcome to offer any other comments you wish.

All feedback will be taken into consideration.

Diversity questionnaire

We would like to ask some questions about you. Completing the diversity questionnaire is optional but we would welcome information about our respondents. We ask for this information to help us analyse the consultation responses to help ensure we are not inadvertently discriminating against any particular group. We are also required as an organisation to monitor diversity.

It would be very helpful to us if you would provide this information. You can skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

Please complete the [diversity questionnaire](#)

Thank you for your response to this consultation