



General
Osteopathic
Council

Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education

**A consultation on updated Guidance for Osteopathic
Pre-registration Education and on new Standards for
Osteopathic Education and Training**

Overview

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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.

The consultation

The aim of this consultation is to ensure that the updated [Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education and Standards for Education and Training](#) are fit for purpose, including fully reflecting our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

About GOPRE

The [Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education \(GOPRE\)](#) describes the professional aspects of osteopathic pre-registration education, and the outcomes that graduates are expected to demonstrate before graduation to show that they practise in accordance with the [Osteopathic Practice Standards](#) (OPS). GOPRE is intended to provide support for the OPS and provides a reference point for students, educational providers, patients and others.

The current GOPRE was published in 2015. Since then, the Osteopathic Practice Standards have been updated, and osteopathy has also been recognised as [an Allied Health Profession in England by NHS England](#) opening a wider variety of roles for osteopaths in the future. Therefore this updated version of GOPRE has been amended to take account of these changes.

About the Standards for Education and Training

To date, the GOsC has not set its own standards for education, instead relying on the [Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code for Higher Education](#) which define the standards required of the environment within which pre-registration education is delivered. These new GOsC Standards for Education and Training ensure that standards of delivery of education and training are transparent and explicit for osteopathic educational providers, students, the GOsC statutory Education Committee and Council, as well as for other stakeholders and are consistent with that of other health professional regulators.

About this consultation

We are asking some specific questions on issues to which we are keen to receive feedback, but you are welcome to offer any comments you wish – all feedback will be taken into consideration. There is no requirement to answer all of the consultation questions, though you are welcome to if you wish. We have also prepared a [simplified response form](#) for respondents who wish to provide more targeted feedback.

Please note that to make the documents easier to navigate, the consultation comprises:

- This overview
- The draft Guidance of Osteopathic Pre-registration Education and Standards for Education and Training

And these three forms:

- Summaries of updates and questions on the Guidance for Pre-registration Osteopathic Education setting out the outcomes that graduates must meet before being awarded a 'recognised qualification entitling them to apply for registration and practise as an osteopath. We have called this 'The Guidance'.
- The summaries and questions on the Standards for Education and Training setting out the expectations of the educational environment to ensure that it enables the outcomes in the Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education and the Osteopathic Practice Standards to be met. We have called this 'Standards for Education and Training'.
- A simplified consultation response form – for those who only wish to provide more targeted feedback
- A Diversity Questionnaire

There is more information in [How to respond](#) at the end of this document.

Key issues for consideration

Here we set out some of the issues that we have identified as key areas for consideration:

- **Equality, diversity and inclusion**
We are seeking feedback on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) issues within the GOPRE and the Standards for Education and Training. We have sought guidance on this from people with expertise in EDI, and have taken into account feedback from students, staff, patients and others during the pre-development phase by threading references through the document, but we are keen to receive wider feedback on this approach and views on whether this is sufficient.
- **Clinical hours and necessary clinical experience**
The current GOPRE document sets [1,000 hours and 50 new patients as the clinical experience](#) as a benchmark to meet the Osteopathic Practice Standards, but this is a guideline, not a requirement. The requirement is related to the depth and breadth of experience to meet the Osteopathic Practice Standards. However, this is not well understood. We have expanded reference to this to try to make this clearer and explained how the clinical requirement might be met, and are seeking feedback on this.

- **Maintaining links with others**

The importance of maintaining networks post-graduation (and specific issues for those who may not have had the opportunity to develop networks through their education provider) was stressed. We have strengthened paragraph 11 of GOPRE to give effect to this statement, and added a specific outcome (para 60) about understanding the need for successful transition to post graduate clinical practice..

- **Patient partnership and values**

Feedback has suggested that we need to ensure that commitment to patient partnership, values and listening is threaded throughout and integral to the document. This will be explained further within the consultation document.

- **Research**

Research being described at the right level for all osteopathic students is important. There is a tension between the desire to enhance the research output of the profession and the expectations of an undergraduate. We have added a specific section to the 'Knowledge, skills and performance' outcomes of GOPRE, and are keen to receive wider feedback on this.

- **Education, leadership and management**

In response to feedback, we have added specific sections under 'Knowledge, skills and performance' on leadership and management, and education (paragraphs 27 and 28). We explain this further within this document, and seek further feedback on these sections.

How to respond

The deadline for responses to this consultation is **22 September 2021**.

Please send us your views by emailing your responses to the consultation questions on the [draft Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education and Standards for Education and Training](#) and/or any feedback to standards@osteopathy.org.uk

We are asking a number of specific questions on the [Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education outcomes](#) and separately on the [Standards for Education and Training](#) to which we are keen to receive feedback, but you are welcome to offer any comments you wish (using the [simplified consultation form](#) if preferred) – all feedback will be taken into consideration.

There is no requirement to answer all of the consultation questions, though you are welcome to if you wish.

We would also like to ask some questions about you. We are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and embracing inclusivity, and would like to ask you to complete a [Diversity Questionnaire](#). We ask for this information to help us understand how representative the responses we receive are, and to ensure we are not inadvertently discriminating against any particular group.

When completing the Diversity Questionnaire, please note which of the three forms you have completed: the Guidance, the Standards for Education and Training and/or the Simplified form.

Data collection

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.

We look forward to receiving your comments.