



General
Osteopathic
Council

General Osteopathic Council's Annual Report to the Welsh Language Commissioner

April 2024 – March 2025

Contents

Introduction	3
About the GOsC.....	4
Our compliance activities	5
Further information about our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards	7
How to contact us in Welsh	7

Introduction

This annual report explains how the GOsC has sought to comply with the Welsh Language Standards (No.8) Regulations 2022 between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

We are committed to treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, recognising the significance and history of the language and doing our best where possible to facilitate the use of Welsh across our services.

This report provides an overview of the activities we have undertaken to facilitate the use of Welsh both now and in the future. We continue to take a proportionate approach to compliance with the standards, aligned with the size and reach of our organisation, as well as the number of osteopaths and students currently living, studying and practising in Wales.

Wherever possible we look at ways we can improve our Welsh language services to meet the needs of osteopaths, patients, students and members of the public in Wales. We do this through our equality impact assessments and as part of our pre-consultation planning and engagement activity, liaising with stakeholders in Wales where possible and relevant. The provision of Welsh services is part of our vision to be an inclusive regulator, trusted by all.

We continue to encourage feedback from Welsh speakers on the services and information we provide in Welsh. Any feedback we receive will be used to inform how we deliver our services and comply with the standards in the future. If you are a Welsh speaker and would like to contact us in Welsh, you are welcome to email us at: info@osteopathy.org.uk

About the GOsC

The General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) is the regulator for osteopathy in the United Kingdom, including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Osteopaths must be registered with the GOsC to legally practise osteopathy in the UK.

Our overarching objective is to protect the public, maintain public confidence in osteopathy and promote proper professional standards and conduct for osteopaths.

Our responsibilities include:

- keeping a Register of all osteopaths permitted to practise
- working with the public and the osteopathic profession to promote patient safety by registering qualified professionals and setting, maintaining and developing standards of osteopathic practice and conduct
- helping patients with concerns about an osteopath, and removing from the Register any osteopaths who are unfit to practise
- assuring the quality of osteopathic education
- setting the requirements for osteopaths in relation to their continuing professional development

As of 31 March 2024, there are 164 osteopaths living and/or practising in Wales, and 138 students studying and/or living in Wales. Swansea University is currently the only osteopathic education provider in Wales.

The GOsC is a small organisation with less than 30 members of staff and our office is based in London, England. We are governed by our Council which has a statutory requirement to include at least one Welsh member (a person based wholly or mainly in Wales who may be lay or osteopathic) to help us consider and support the needs of Welsh osteopaths, patients and Welsh members of the public when making strategic regulatory decisions.

We currently do not have any Welsh speaking members of staff.

Our compliance activities

Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 our compliance activities focused on the following areas:

- Consultations
- Correspondence
- Promoting our services
- Providing information on our website in Welsh

We did not receive any requests from Welsh-speaking individuals to facilitate hearings in Welsh, or to provide correspondence or information relating to a fitness to practise investigation in Welsh. While we promote these services as part of our correspondence with individuals in these circumstances, the relatively low number of osteopaths in Wales suggests a low likelihood that Welsh-speaking registrants or patients would need to use this service.

Consultations

During this period we received guidance from the Welsh Commissioner on standards 45-47 explaining the need to demonstrate a conscious effort, where possible, when seeking views on the impact of our policy decisions on opportunities to speak Welsh, as part of our consultations. The Commissioner explained the need to demonstrate, as part of our consultation document, how we have assessed the impact on opportunities to speak Welsh and the outcome of our assessment, including any suggested changes to our approach.

This is the approach we took in all public consultations delivered during this period, which included a consultation on our health and disability guidance for students, and a consultation on our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) guidance and Peer Discussion Review template – a template osteopaths are required to use to facilitate a conversation with another healthcare professional. The completed template must be stored as part of an osteopath's CPD records.

When we completed our impact assessment in preparation for the consultation on our CPD guidance and PDR template, we realised that we did not currently provide the template in Welsh, and that doing so would support Welsh-speaking osteopaths to have their conversation with other healthcare professionals using the Welsh language. This was a clear action we suggested taking as part of our consultation outcome to increase or improve opportunities to use Welsh. The revised guidance and templates are due to be published before the end of 2025, subject to approval from our Council.

Correspondence

The Welsh Language Standards require us to provide correspondence in Welsh to those acting in their capacity as residents of Wales, including osteopathy students. To comply, we sent out all four issues of our quarterly student ebulletin during this period in both Welsh and English to students either studying or living in Wales (Swansea University).

During this period we also launched WhatsApp as a method for receiving communication from osteopaths and students. As part of our promotion of this service we specified that messages received in Welsh, whether as texts or voice messages, will receive text responses in Welsh. This is because we do not have a Welsh-speaking member of staff to respond with voice notes, and unless an individual messaging us specifies that they speak Welsh or reside in Wales, we would not be able to identify whether they are a resident of Wales. Our proportionate response was to therefore be clear that we invite and facilitate correspondence in Welsh, without providing this automatically for all.

We received no correspondence (emails, phone calls, letters or WhatsApp messages) in Welsh during this period.

Promoting our services

To be consistent in the way we promote our services, we include a bilingual feature in every monthly ebulletin to our registrants promoting one of our Welsh language services. As engagement on our social media channels is much lower, we promote our services in Welsh less regularly (on average every three months), and we aim to increase this going forward.

We also promote our Welsh language services in our email signatures (specifically inviting correspondence in Welsh), in our online presentations to students in their final year, and on our website.

Providing information on our website in Welsh

During this period we have published the following information in Welsh on our website:

- [Fitness to Practise Annual Report](#)
- [Annual Reports and Accounts](#)
- [Annual report to the Welsh Language Commissioner](#)
- [Guidance for Students on Fitness to Practise and Professional Behaviours](#)
- [Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging framework](#)
- [Our Strategy](#)

We also regularly update the information on the Cymraeg section of our website to mirror updates on our English pages. This included information about our [Council and Committee members](#), [research from the National Council for Osteopathic Research](#) and [our concerns process](#).

Further information about our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

The number of complaints GOsC received from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 that relate to GOsC's compliance with the standards:	None
The number of employees who have Welsh language skills as of 31 March 2025:	None
The number of new and vacant posts that GOsC advertised (excluding governance/non-executive posts) where Welsh language skills were essential:	None
The number of new and vacant posts that GOsC advertised (excluding governance/non-executive posts) where Welsh language skills were essential:	None
The number of new and vacant posts that GOsC advertised (excluding governance/non-executive posts) where Welsh language skills were essential where Welsh language skills needed to be learnt:	None
The number of new and vacant posts that GOsC advertised (excluding governance/non-executive posts) where Welsh language skills were desirable:	None
The number of new and vacant posts that GOsC advertised (excluding governance/non-executive posts) where Welsh language skills were not desirable:	7

How to contact us in Welsh

Queries in Welsh can be sent to GOsC by email, WhatsApp or post and will receive a written response in Welsh. Queries sent to us through any of our social media channels (Facebook, Twitter/X or LinkedIn) will also receive a response in Welsh. We usually aim to respond to emails and contact through social media within 5 working days. On WhatsApp, we aim to respond within 24 hours.

As we do not currently have a Welsh speaking member of staff, we are unable to answer phone calls in Welsh.

If you would like to contact us about our Welsh language services or the content of this annual report, you can do so by emailing info@osteopathy.org.uk