General
Osteopathic
Council

Consultation on registration fees: Financial annex

6 August 2026

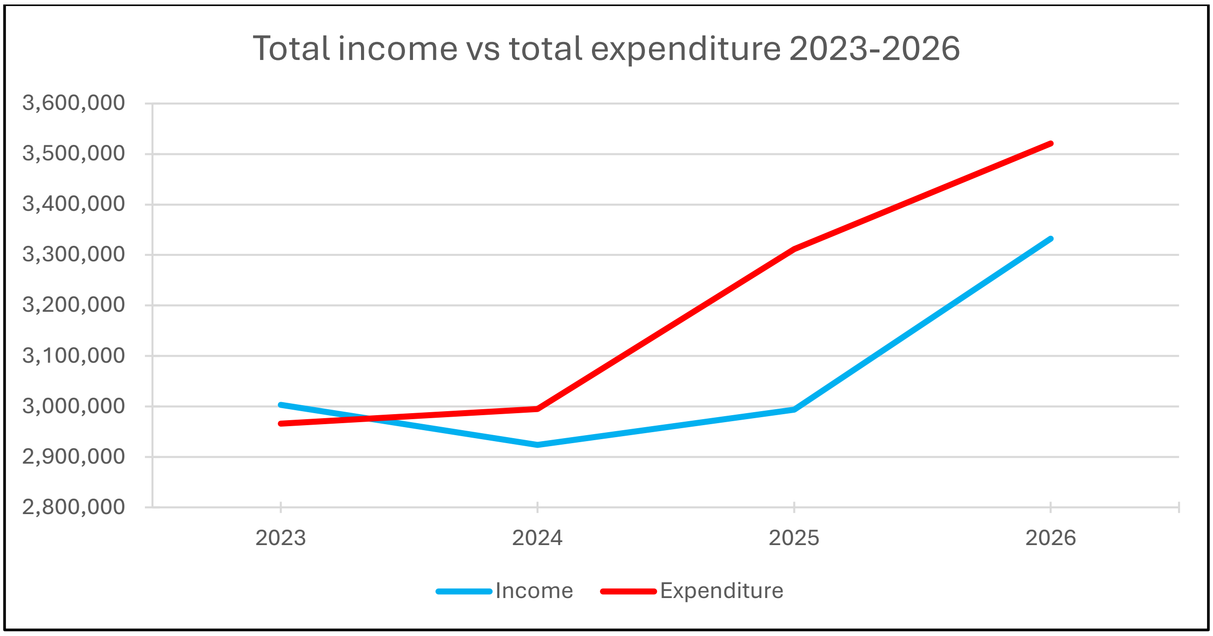
Contents

Why is Council increasing fees?

There are a number of reasons for this increase in registration fees. As background it is important to remember that registration fees have remained unchanged since 2014, despite ongoing inflationary pressures and rising demands for the regulation sector.

The key factor is that **our expenditure now exceeds our income**. During the period 2023-26, expenditure has outstripped income by £540k. This is not a sustainable position and Council as stewards of the organisation, demonstrating good financial management, have a duty to act.

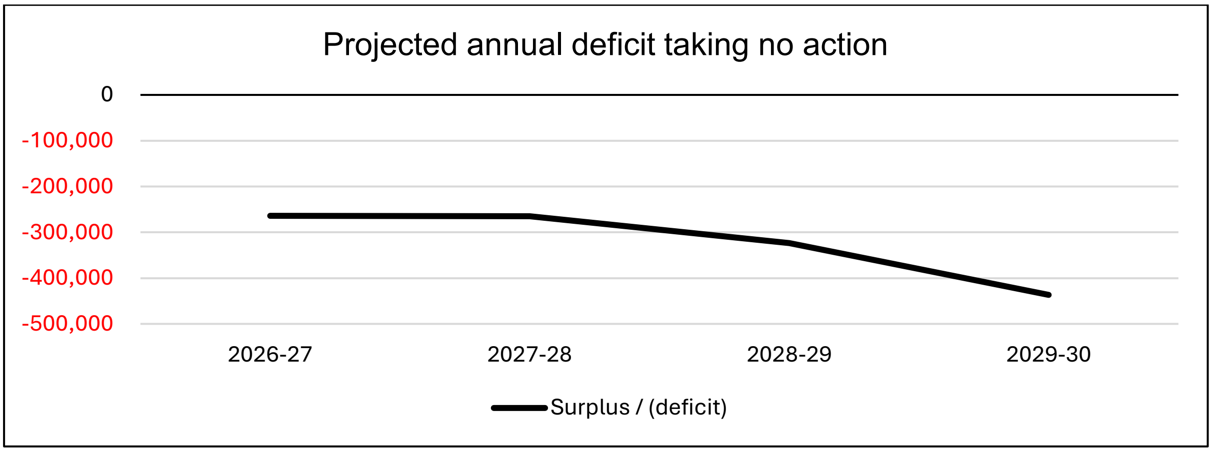
Table 1: Total income v total expenditure in the period 2023-26



It is important that we act now to ensure we continue to meet our statutory responsibilities and protect the public for the long term.

If we continued to allow ongoing deficits we would be putting public protection and the delivery of statutory functions at significant risk.

Table 2: Projected annual deficits through to 2030 if no action is taken



Increase in concerns

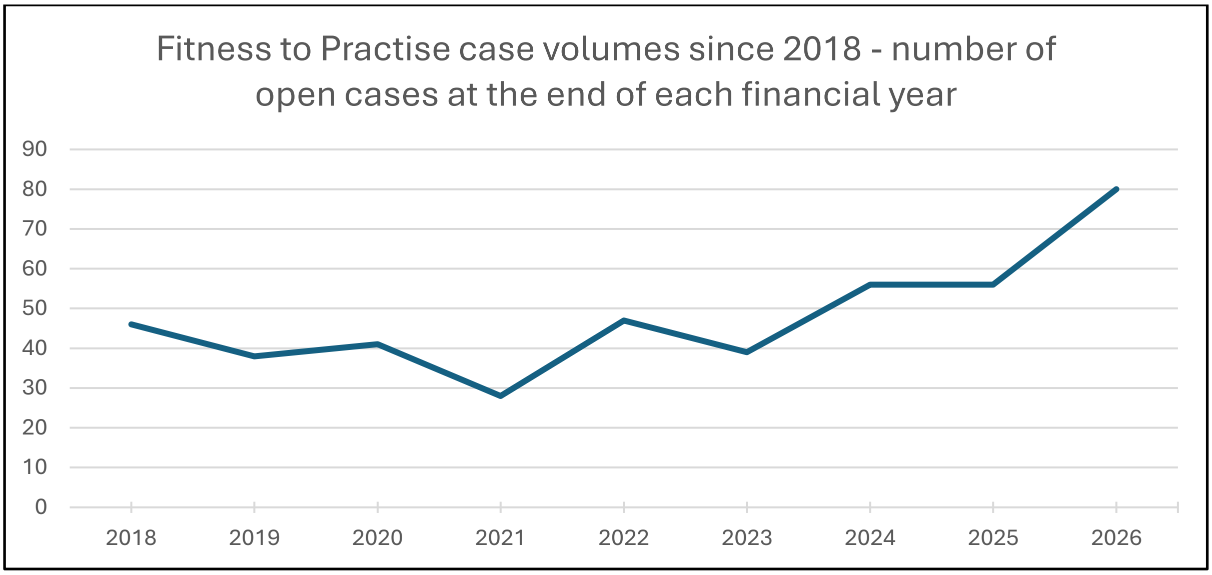
The key reason for the high increase in our expenditure is that there has been a substantial increase in the number of concerns made against osteopaths. There has been an associated increase in the expenditure needed to resource this area of our work.

This increase is in line with the experience of most other healthcare regulators so this is not a reflection on the osteopathic profession but a reflection of a changing regulatory environment.

However, even if the fitness to practise caseload was to plateau or reduce this would not translate into immediate cost savings meaning deficits would continue as expenditure is outstripping income.

Compared to 2018 levels, our fitness to practise caseload has increased by 74%

Table 3: Number of open cases since 2018 to 2026



At present, over 40% of our caseload relates to incidents of crossing professional boundaries. Cases related to crossing professional boundaries are more complex, take longer to resolve, and incur higher costs. And with an increased caseload the costs will be incurred into future financial periods as it takes time for these cases to move through our fitness to practise processes.

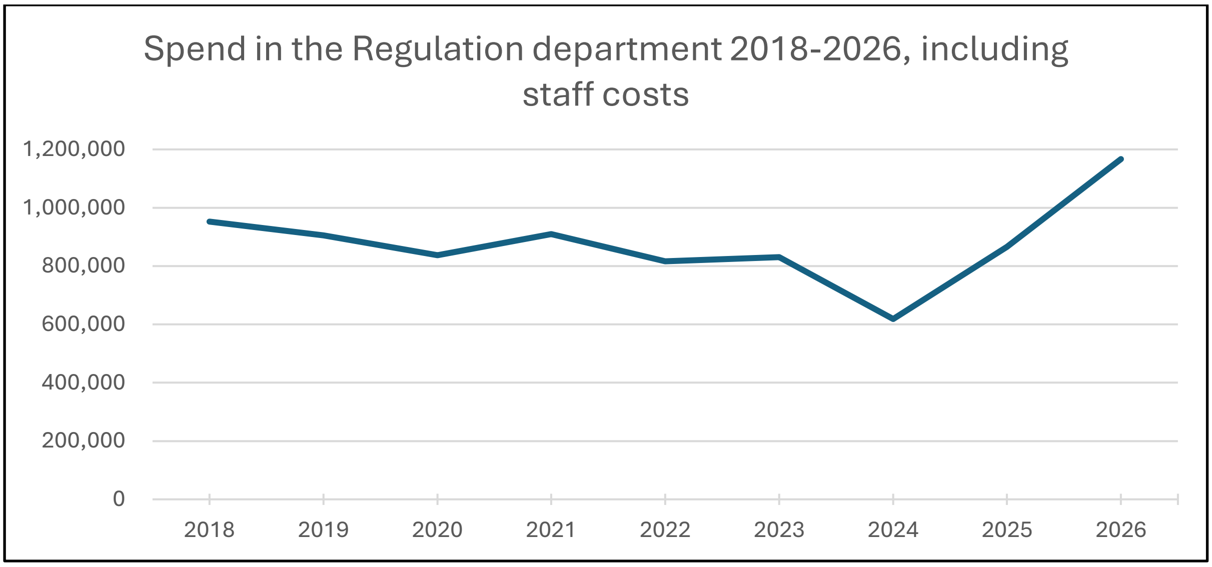
It is worth noting that this reflects broader trends in healthcare regulation, including changes in public expectations and reporting, rather than a deterioration in professional standards within osteopathy

An added challenge is that in managing our fitness to practise cases, we have **legislation which is outdated, prescriptive and inefficient**, making this task more difficult**.** For example, when the Investigating Committee applies an interim suspension order provision, it can only do so for 2 months, meaning that a separate Investigating Committee meeting is required within this short window of time to consider referral to the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC). If referred, the PCC have to meet to consider if a suspension order should continue until the case is concluded. This requires three separate meetings/hearings in a short window, all incurring costs, to ensure patient protection. Other regulators have legislation that is not as prescriptive meaning they can be more cost efficient.

Changing the legislation is a matter for Government and outside of the GOsC control. Despite this, the Professional Standards Authority has recognised our fitness to practise work as appropriate, with our timeliness for processing concerns among the fastest across the healthcare regulators.

We have endeavoured, for example, to keep fitness to practise costs down as far as possible through paying fees at a fixed rate to Committee members, legal assessors, external legal advice and other professionals.

Table 4: Fitness to practise expenditure, incl. staff costs 2018 and 2026



The best mitigation of harms for patients and osteopaths is to avoid concerns being raised in the first instance.

This is why we have done work to raise awareness of the issues that arise in our fitness to practise process, but despite this, we are continuing to see concern levels increasing, especially in the area of crossing professional boundaries.

Our work includes:

- Publishing and disseminating our annual NCOR complaints and concerns report.
- Funding a PhD student (who is also an osteopath) to look specifically at what drives these cases in osteopathy and to make recommendations to support osteopaths and patients to reduce the number of concerns.
- Making boundaries and inclusive practice, as well as communication and consent, mandatory CPD from 2026 to support driving down these concerns.

- Providing free CPD and resources in these areas to support osteopaths to run their own sessions.
- Writing blogs and articles on the GOsC website, and in the professional membership body the Institute of Osteopathy magazine, with hints and tips about how best to avoid concerns.
- Supporting the Institute of Osteopathy with materials to run sessions on boundaries as part of their 2026 roadshows.
- Commencing a review of our core standards of ethics and competence: the Osteopathic Practice Standards.

Fees have never increased

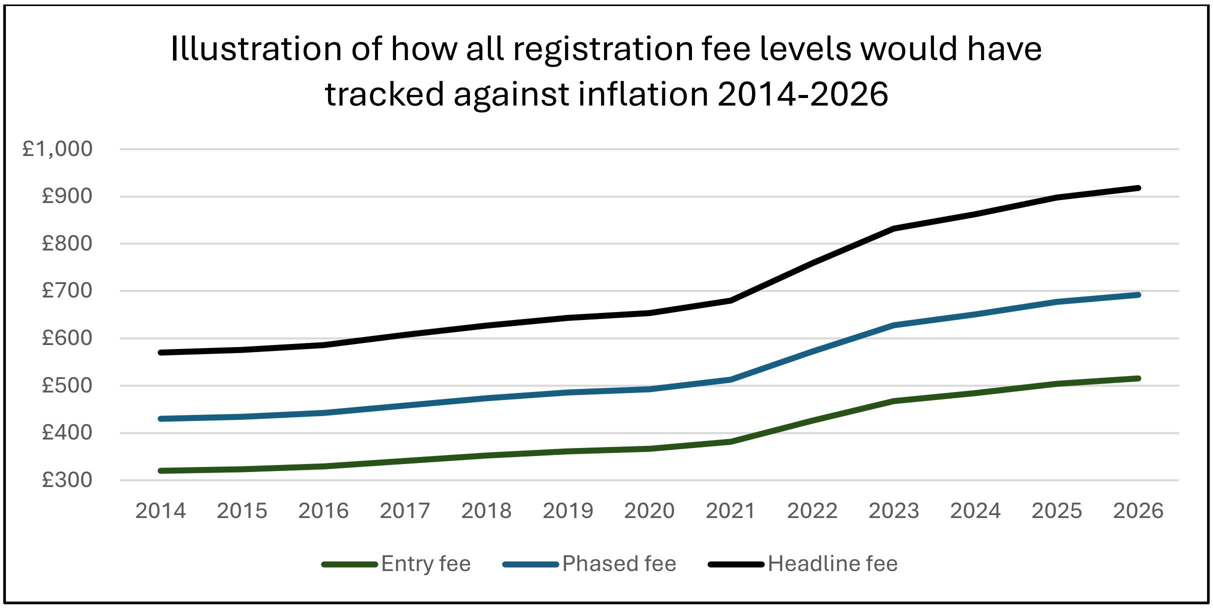
Osteopaths registration fees have never increased and in fact were **reduced** from £750 to £570 in 2014, where they have remained since, despite sustained inflationary pressures and increasing regulatory demands.

Had the registration fee increased in line with inflation, in 2026 it would now be £918

Table 5: Registration fee levels tracked against inflation

Year	Registration fee	If increased with inflation
Entry to the Register – year 1	£320 (entry fee)	£515
Renewal – year 2	£430 (phased fee)	£692
Renewal – year 3 and thereafter	£570 (headline fee)	£918

Table 6: Registration fee levels tracked against inflation – 2014 to 2026



The result of not increasing registration fees in line with inflation means that in financial year 2025-26 alone, income would have been c£1.84m higher.

We must increase registration fees to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the GOsC and ensure we continue to protect the public through delivery of our statutory responsibilities.

Our value proposition

We consider our value proposition to have three components:

1. Ensuring public protection
2. Supporting professional standards and development
3. Delivering robust governance

- **Component one: Ensuring public protection**

  This area focuses on our work to ensure patient and public protection and maintaining public confidence in the profession. Our activities to ensure public protection include:

  - the quality assurance of education and training
  - developing, setting, and maintaining Osteopathic Practice Standards
  - maintaining the integrity of the statutory Register of osteopaths
  - managing concerns through our fitness to practise processes

  Public protection is central to the work we undertake, and this is reflected by the activities under this component which cover the full range of our business.

  In the financial year 2025-26, we spent £1.91m on our activities to ensure public protection (2025: £1.68m). This was equal to 53% of our total budget (2025: 51%) and means that for every £570 registration fee we receive, we spend £302 of that on ensuring public protection (2025: £290).

- **Component two: Supporting professional standards and development**
  This area focuses on our work to ensure we develop and provide appropriate support for the profession to be able to maintain high quality patient care. Our activities to develop the profession include:
  - Supporting osteopaths to maintain and develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the Osteopathic Practice Standards.
  - Contributing funding to the National Council for Osteopathic Research which supports research and insight that informs standards and improvements to patient care.
  - Funding a profession-wide subscription for the International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine (IJOM) and other research journals that support high-quality practice and continuing professional development.
  - Listening to and engaging with osteopaths, patients and sector partners to ensure regulation remains informed, proportionate and responsive to the realities of osteopathic practice.

In the financial year 2025-26, we spent £0.76m on our activities to ensure we developed and supported the profession (2025: £0.80m). This was equal to 21% of our total budget (2025: 24%) and means that for every £570 registration fee we receive we spend £120 of that is spent on developing the profession (2025: £137).

These activities contribute to public protection by helping osteopaths maintain standards, supporting improvements in practice, informing regulatory decision-making and strengthening patient confidence in the profession.

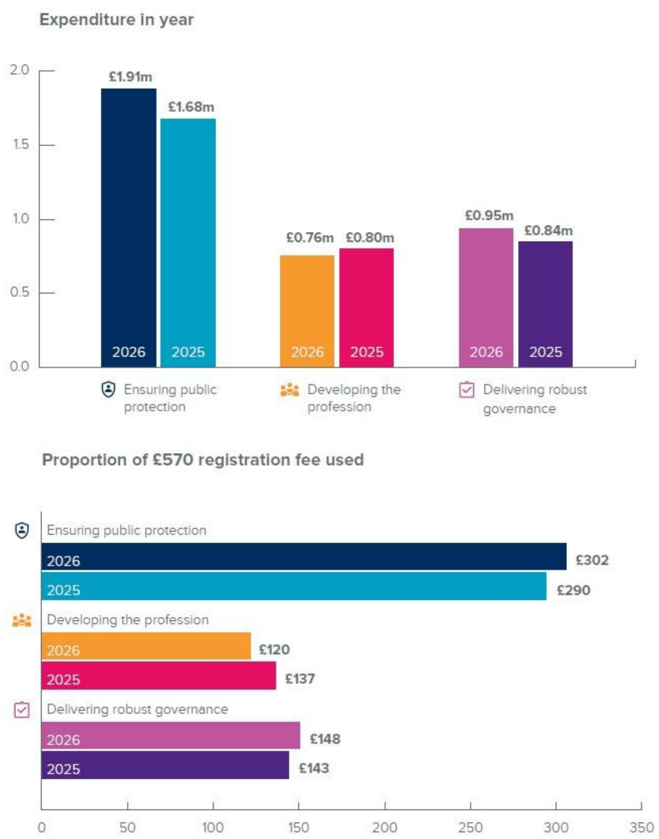
- **Component three: Delivering robust governance**

  Delivering robust governance should ensure an organisation remains stable, productive and manages risks appropriately. Our activities to deliver robust governance include:

  - appointing, training, and maintaining a governance structure that consists of Council, the Policy and Education Committee, the Audit Committee, and the People Committee
  - holding Council meetings in public and making the meeting papers available on our website in advance
  - investing in our IT infrastructure and new digital ways of working
  - subjecting our work to independent audits and review

  In the financial year 2025-26, we spent £0.95m on our activities to ensure we delivered robust governance (2025: £0.84m). This was equal to 26% of our total budget (2025: 25%) and means that for every £570 registration fee we receive we spend £148 of that on delivering robust governance (2025: £143).

What does the registration fee fund by value proposition?
The headline registration fee of £570 is broken down to show the amount of spend across the GOsC value proposition in 2025-26.



Sector context

The challenges which GOsC are facing are not unique to osteopathy. Across the healthcare system there are pressures on student numbers; there are significant increases in the number of fitness to practise concerns received; costs are increasing and Councils are raising registration fees.

In recent years, it is only the General Osteopathic Council and the General Chiropractic Council who have not increased registration fees

The table below shows by regulator: the number of registrants, the maximum registration fee paid by their registrants, when their registration fee was last increased and the level of that increase.

Table 8: Summary of registrants, headline fee, date of last fee increase and amount of increase per regulator

Regulator	Number of registrants	Headline fee £	Date of last increase	£ Last increase
General Chiropractic Council	4,041	800	—	—
General Dental Council	125,736	698	2026	77
General Osteopathic Council	**5,653**	**570**	**—**	**—**
General Medical Council	393,357	481	2025	8
Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland	2,984	477	2025	79
General Optical Council	34,895	405	2026	10
General Pharmaceutical Council	92,705	310	2026	17
Health and Care Professions Council	356,104	123	2025	7
Social Work England	104,857	122	2025	30
Nursing and Midwifery Council	853,707	143	2026	23

NB the other regulators have increased registration fees multiple times since 2014, whereas GOsC has never increased registration fees.

It may be helpful to compare across the regulators, for example we can see the following from the table:

- The General Chiropractic Council has 29% fewer registrants compared to GOsC, and their headline fee is 40% higher.
- The General Dental Council has 2,124% more registrants compared to GOsC, and their headline fee is 22% higher.
- The General Medical Council has 6,858% more registrants compared to GOsC, however, their headline fee is only 16% lower.
- The General Optical Council has 517% more registrants compared to GOsC, however, their headline fee is only 29% lower.

What will happen to the proceeds arising from the sale of the headquarter building?

The proceeds from the sale of the headquarter building will go into the GOsC's reserves to ensure we have a sufficient buffer against future uncertainty, and to allow us to face future challenges and unforeseen circumstances.

As a charity we need to maintain reserves for our core purposes, and this aligns to the expectations of the Charity Commission including:

Operational continuity	Maintaining essential statutory activities during short-term income disruption.
Income volatility	Manage risks arising from fluctuations in registrant fee income, investment returns and/or external funding.
Risk mitigation	Provide financial capacity to respond to: • Legal challenges • Regulatory changes • Major IT or operational changes • Unexpected costs.
Strategic flexibility	Enable investment in transformation, improvement, or public protection initiatives
Orderly wind-down (worst case scenario)	Ensure liabilities (eg. staff costs, contractual obligations) can be met responsibly.

We will maintain an appropriate level of reserves to:

- Manage financial uncertainty.
- Ensure continuity of statutory functions.
- Maintain public confidence and support osteopaths to deliver high-quality care.
- Support strategic flexibility and respond to opportunities.

Our reserves policy aims to:

- Support the long-term sustainability of the organisation.
- Ensure the continuity of statutory regulatory functions.
- Provide financial resilience against unforeseen risks or income fluctuations.
- Enable informed decision-making by Council and the Senior Management Team.

Where reserves are above the target level we will need to consider investment in our strategic priorities and/or designation of funds for future commitments. However, we will take a prudent approach because reserves can only be used once.

Historical context

When GOsC was established, the standard registration fee was £750 (2000-2012) before being reduced over three years between 2012-14, to its current level of £570. This was a 24% reduction with fees remaining unchanged for the next 12 years.

Reductions were also applied to the entry fee and phased fee of c.14%-15%.

Table 9: current fee levels

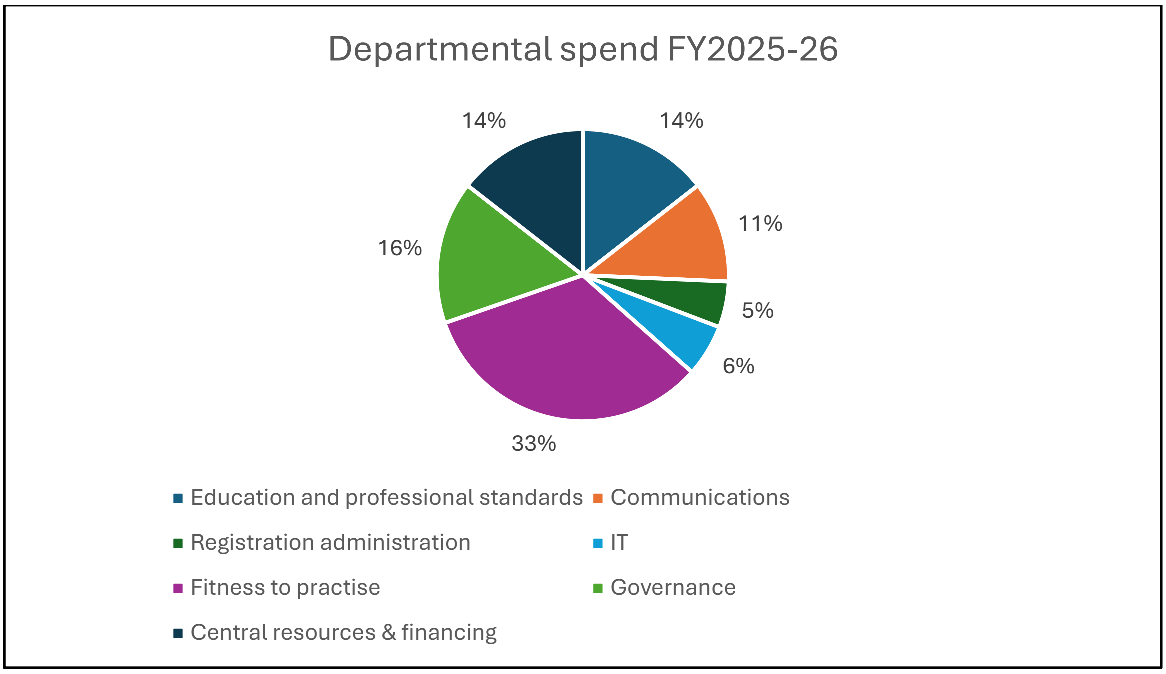
Year	Registration fee
Entry to the Register – year 1	£320 (entry fee)
Renewal – year 2	£430 (phased fee)
Renewal – year 3 and thereafter	£570 (standard fee)

NB There are reduced fees for year 2 and beyond if you are non-practising or live/work overseas for three months or more.

Current context

While GOsC has held registration fee levels constant since 2014, this has been in the face of increasing cost pressures. Our expenditure per area of activity is shown on the pie chart below, with fitness to practise incurring 33% of the budgeted expenditure, followed by governance (16%) and education and professional standards (14%).

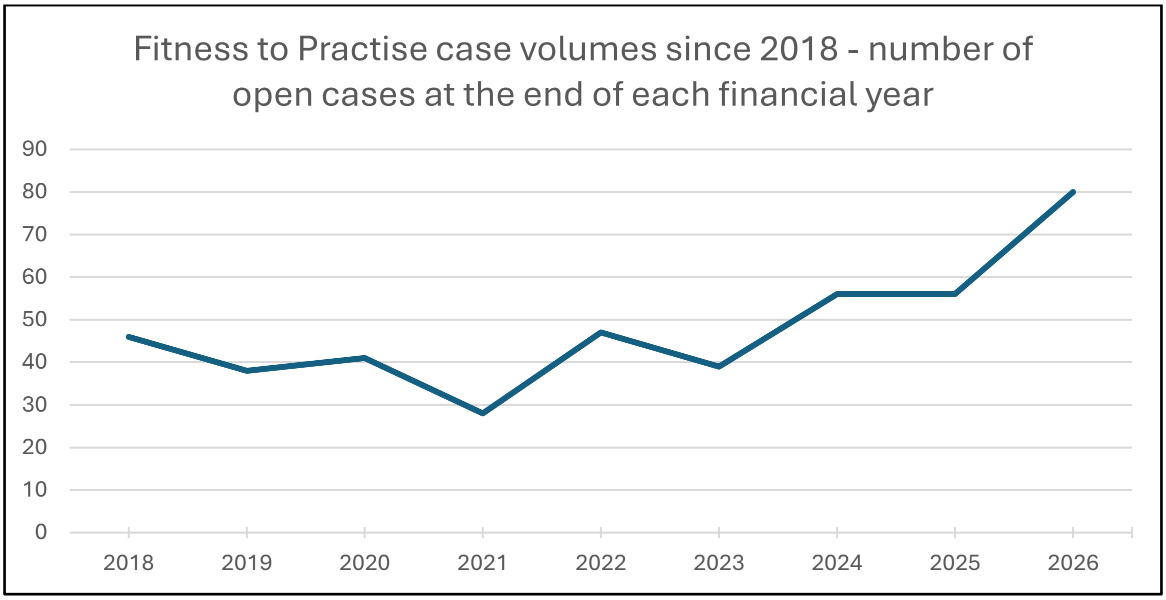
Table 10: Analysis of department expenditure in financial year 2025-26



Operating expenditure, inflation, and caseload pressures within fitness to practise, have increased substantially. For example, compared to 2018 levels, our fitness to practise caseload has increased by 74%.

This is shown in the graph below alongside the expenditure on fitness to practise across the same period, which demonstrates the unpredictability of this area of our work.

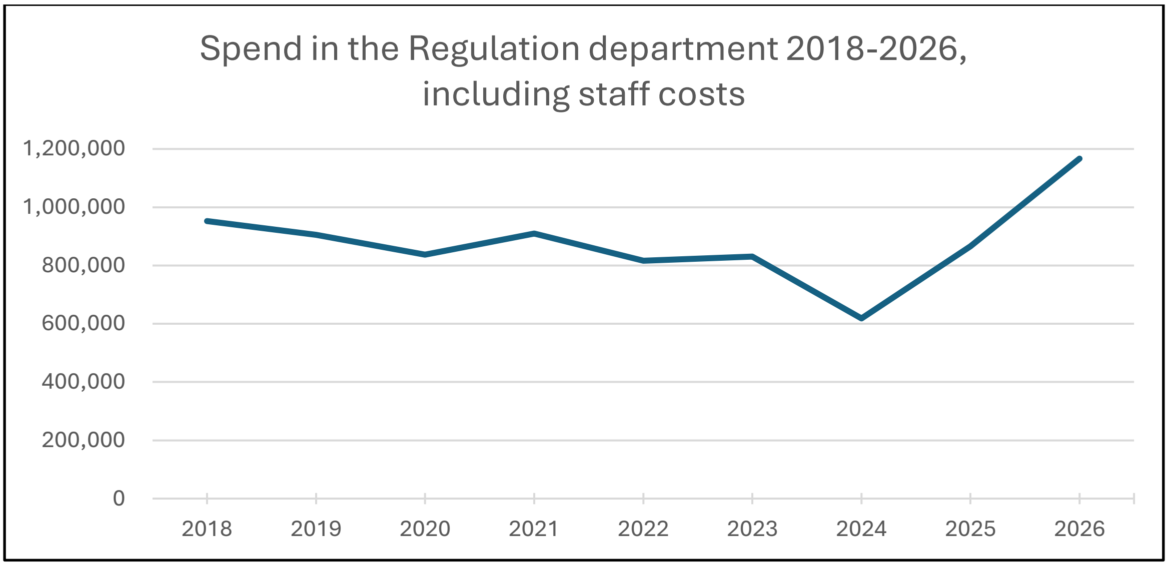
Table 11: Number of open cases since 2018 to 2026



Fitness to Practise spend is not linear; it depends greatly on the volume received, and is linked to the complexity of each individual case. Cases related to crossing professional boundaries are more complex, take longer to resolve, and incur higher costs. At present, we have over 40% of the caseload related to incidents of crossing professional boundaries.

Our legislation is outdated, prescriptive and inefficient. Despite this we have endeavoured to keep costs down as far as possible through paying fees at a fixed rate to Committee members, legal assessors, external legal advice and other professionals. However, the relatively fixed cost of hearings has been impacted by the increase in the volume of cases.

Table 12: Fitness to practise expenditure, incl. staff costs 2018 and 2026



The best mitigation of harms for patients and osteopaths is to avoid concerns being raised in the first instance. However, despite undertaking work to raise awareness of the issues that arise in our fitness to practise process, we are continuing to see concern levels increasing, especially in the area of crossing professional boundaries. The increase in the caseload is consistent across all healthcare regulators and is not unique to osteopathy.

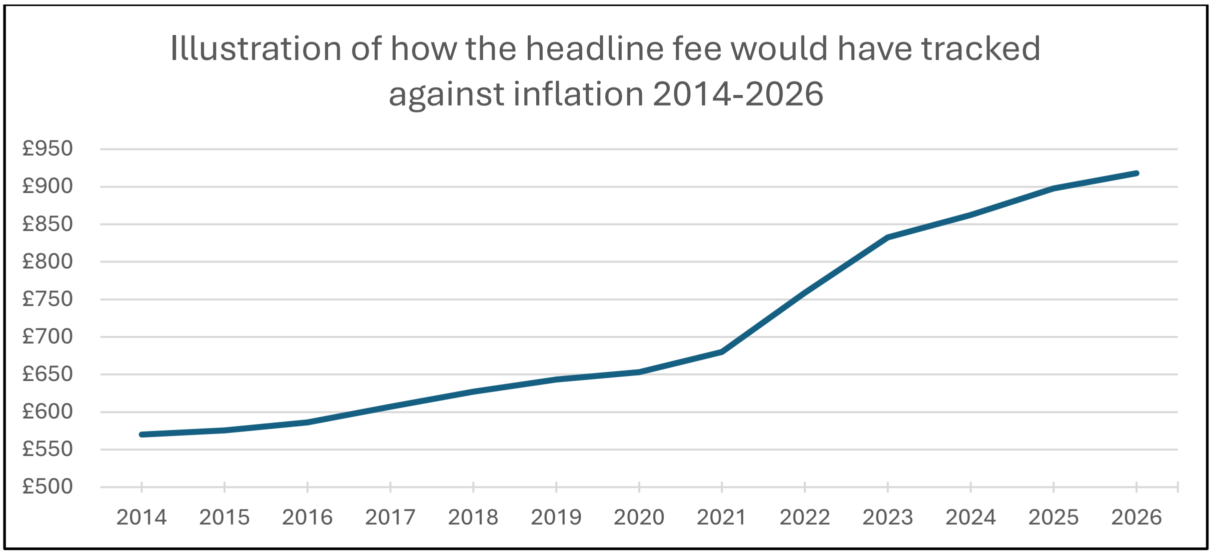
Our work to raise awareness of the issues arising in fitness to practise, include:

- Publishing and disseminating our annual NCOR complaints and concerns report.
- Funding a PhD student and osteopath to look specifically at what drives these cases in osteopathy and to make recommendations to support osteopaths and patients to reduce these concerns.
- Making boundaries and inclusive practice, as well as communication and consent, mandatory CPD from 2026 to support driving down these concerns.
- Providing free CPD and resources in these areas to support osteopaths to run their own sessions.
- Writing blogs and articles on the GOsC website, and in the Institute of Osteopathy magazine, with hints and tips about how to avoid concerns.
- Supporting the Institute of Osteopathy with materials to run sessions on boundaries as part of their 2026 roadshows.
- Commencing a review of our core standards of ethics and competence, the Osteopathic Practice Standards.

Inflationary impact on registration fees

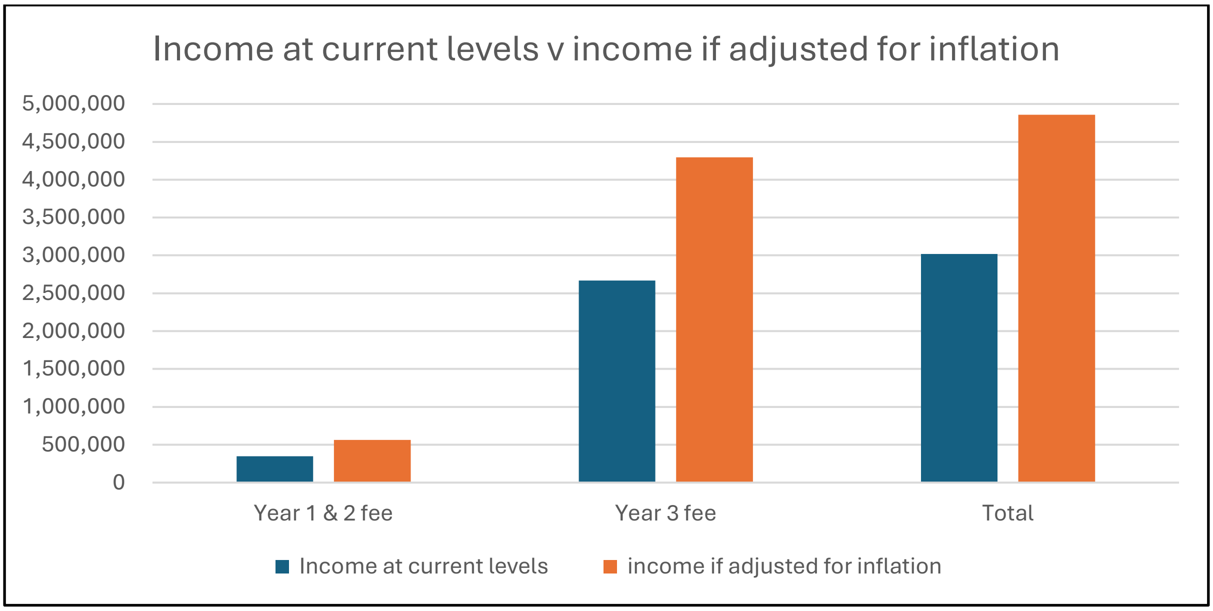
Had the headline fee increased in line with inflation, in 2026 it would now be £918. Using the same inflation rates, the entry fee would be £515, and the year 2 phased fee would be £692. In 2026, just under 92% of registrants pay the headline fee.

Table 13: Headline registration fee tracked against inflation 2014 to 2026



The result of not increasing registration fees in line with inflation means that in financial year 2025-26 alone, income would have been c£1.84m higher.

Table 14: Registration income adjusted for inflation



Future context

The Council is clear that operational expenditure should be covered by operational income. However, during the period 2023-26, expenditure has outstripped income by £540k. We need to act now as a continuation of this situation is not sustainable.

Table 15: Total income v total expenditure in the period 2023-26

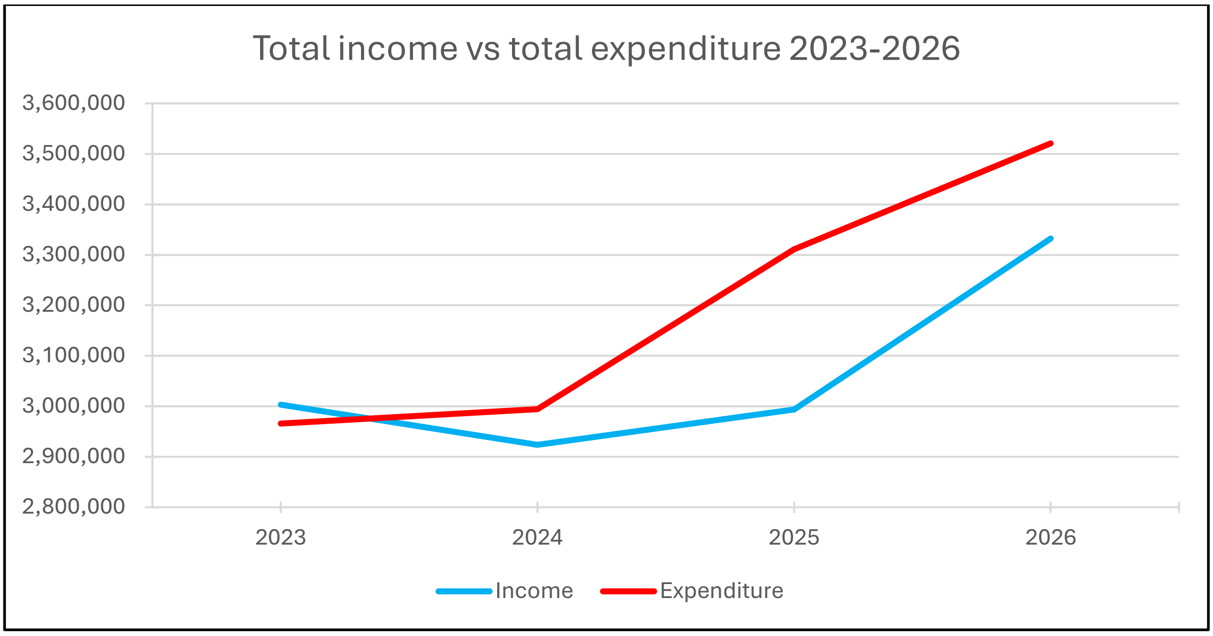
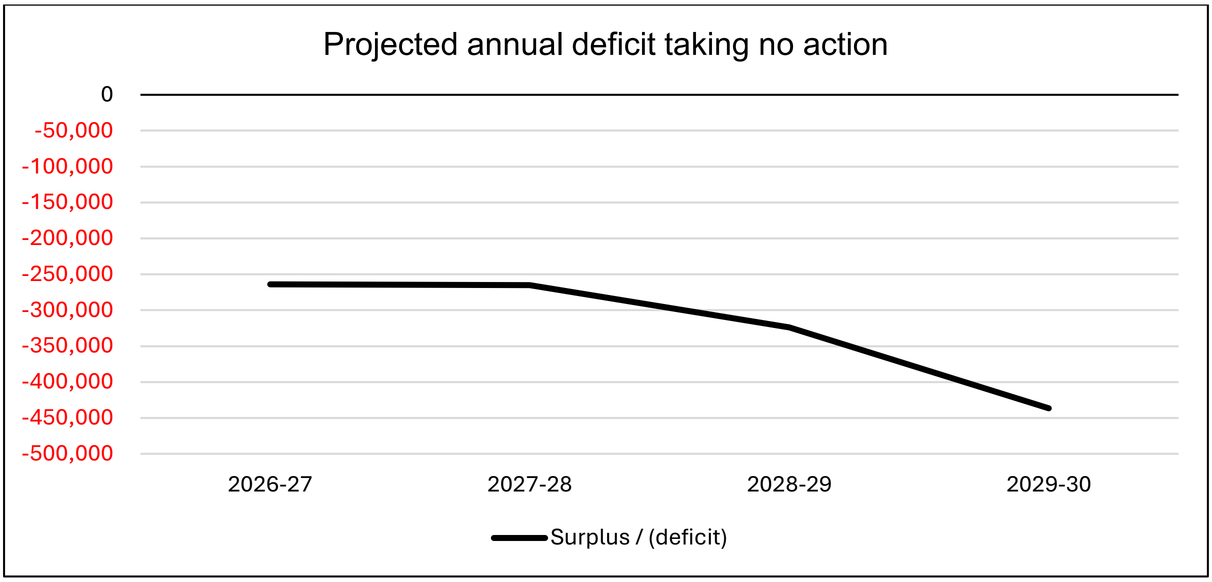


Table 16: Projected annual deficits through to 2030 if no action is taken



We have, for many years, been able to avoid raising fees. As set out in this consultation document we are now in the situation where we need to do this to ensure the financial sustainability of the GOsC.

Every year Council members have considered fee rises and have chosen not to seek fee rises recognising that this means GOsC has been losing income on an annual basis.

Council members, in their role as Trustees, will continue, on an annual basis to monitor registration fees paid by registrants. This does not mean registration fees increase every year. Any future increase would require a separate consultation and the necessary legislative approval.

We have looked carefully at where we can reduce our outgoings and increase our income. The findings of this exercise are contained in the Financial and Asset Framework.

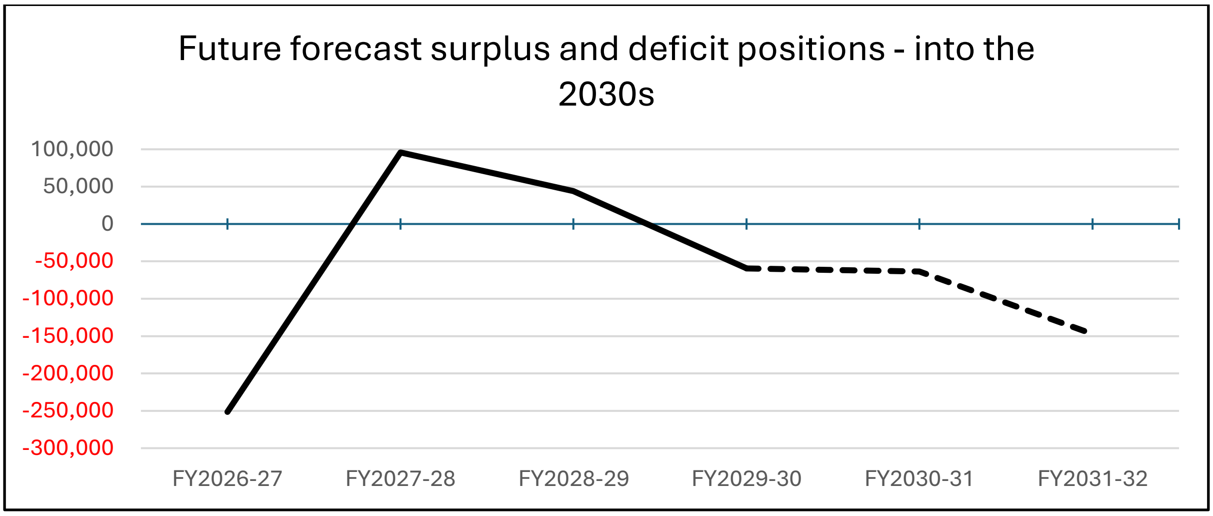
The Financial and Asset Framework identifies actions that GOsC plans to take to reduce expenditure and increase income, which include:

- The sale of the headquarter building which will eliminate maintenance and other associated costs.
- Alternative employment/staffing requirements as a result of a different operating model post the sale of the headquarter building, most notably around facilities/estates and the introduction of the new CRM (records management) system.
- Increased investment income arising from higher returns post the sale of headquarter building.

These are in addition to measures we have already taken to reduce expenditure.

We have forecast that these measures, if enacted in full during financial year 2026-27, would bring expenditure within income in the next two financial years (2027-28 and 2028-29) before GOsC slipped back into deficit.

Table 17: Future forecast financial positions into the 2030s



Therefore, while we will continue to explore measures for reducing expenditure, Council have concluded that GOsC also needs to generate additional income.

How much additional income is generated by a registration fee increase?

Every £10 increase in the registration fee (across the board) would raise approximately £55,960 with a £50 increase generating slightly less than £300k.

The table below summarises what registration fee increases would mean in terms of additional income generated and what the impact would be per registrant, per week for those who pay the headline registration fee.

Table 18: Analysis of registration fee increase, additional income generated and the impact per week based on the headline registration fee

Fee increased by	Additional income generated	Impact per week for registrants paying the standard fee (£570)
£50	£279,800	£0.96
£75	£419,700	£1.44
£100	£559,600	£1.92

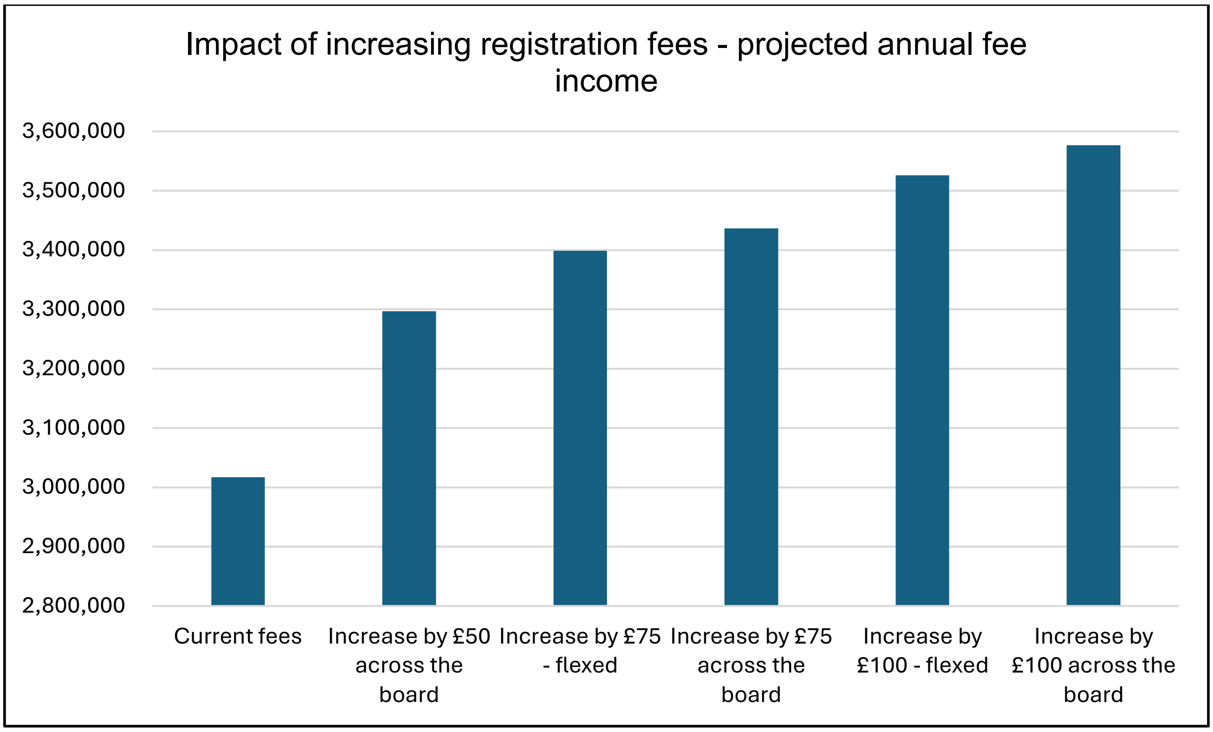
NB: registration fees can be claimed as an allowable business expense.

Table 19: Headline impact of registration fee increase by amount

Descriptor	Impact
£50 increase	Increases income by just under c.£300k annually Eliminates projected future deficits Increase may be seen as manageable to registrants at an additional £0.96 per week Delivery of statutory functions maintained This increase is anticipated to result in a further 2% loss of registrants beyond normal leaver numbers
Increase of £75 or £100	Raises c.£420k-£560k annually Eliminates projected future deficits more quickly Likely to be viewed unfavourably by registrants Delivery of statutory functions financially secure Higher increase will be scrutinised by Department of Health and Social Care This increase is anticipated to result in a further 3-4% loss of registrants beyond normal leaver numbers

NB: the current drafting of our legislation does not give us the autonomy to raise registration fees in line with inflation or introducing new categories of fees for osteopaths who work part time, and so this has not been included in the analysis.

Table 20: Analysis of projected annual fee income from increasing registration fees



The table shows that an across the board increase of £50 will generate income of c.£3.3m, compared to c.£3.6m if it was a £100 increase.

The flexed options – a higher increase to the headline fee with lower increases for entry to the register and for those who are non-practising – generates c.£3.4m if the headline fee is £75 and the increase for lower rates is £35 or c.£3.5m if the headline fee is £100 and the increase for lower rates is £50.