

About the General Osteopathic Council

The GOsC regulates the practice of osteopaths in the UK. It has **5,519** professionals on its register (as at 31 March 2024).

Snapshot 2023/24

General Osteopathic Council | Annual review of performance

About the GOsC's performance for 2023/24

For this review, the GOsC met 18 out of 18 of our Standards of Good Regulation. These Standards provide the benchmark against which we review performance. Meeting or not meeting a Standard is not the full story about how a regulator is performing. Our report provides more detail about the GOsC's performance this year.

Standards of Good Regulation met for 2023/24 performance review

	General Standards	5 out of 5
	Guidance and Standards	2 out of 2
	Education and Training	2 out of 2
	Registration	4 out of 4
	Fitness to Practise	5 out of 5

Total Standards 18 out of 18

Standards met 2021-23

2022/23 18 out of 18

2021/22 18 out of 18

Highlights

● Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

This year, we have used a new approach to assessing regulators against this Standard. In order to meet the Standard, regulators must assure us they are delivering the four high-level outcomes supported by our new evidence matrix. The GOsC has met the Standard and has demonstrated good practice in taking action to secure external input into its policy work and in the clear EDI focus of the standards required for registrants, students and Osteopathic Education Institutions (OEs).

The GOsC has plans in place to increase the amount of EDI data it holds on registrants and to review its fitness to practise guidance to ensure that it addresses allegations of racist and discriminatory behaviour. We will monitor the GOsC's activities and progress in these areas.

● Early stage decision-making in Fitness to Practise

This year we reviewed a sample of the GOsC's fitness to practise cases to evaluate the quality of its early-stage decision-making. We reviewed a high proportion of the GOsC's early-stages closures and considered that a reasonable decision had been reached in the great majority of those cases. Overall, our audit provided assurance that the GOsC has processes and controls in place to ensure robust decision-making at the earlier stages of its fitness to practise process and that those controls are generally working effectively.

● Fitness to Practise publication policy

In this review period the GOsC held a public consultation on its revised fitness to practise publication policy. In our response to the consultation, we suggested that the GOsC should include a link to admonishments on the Register to improve the contribution of the published register to public protection. The GOsC decided to make this change as a result of our feedback and published the revised policy in June 2023.

● Patient & public engagement in osteopathic education

Patient and public involvement in osteopathic education is part of the GOsC's educational requirements outlined in its Graduate Outcomes for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education (Graduate Outcomes) and Standards for Education and Training (SET). The GOsC has been working with OEs on a thematic review since 2019 to identify good practice in the sector and to explore barriers and enablers to patient involvement in osteopathic education. This year it published the report of the thematic review, intended as a user-friendly report for osteopathic stakeholders to encourage greater engagement with the findings and to highlight some next steps.

Where we will keep a watchful eye

It will depend on the area, but broadly speaking, it means we gather evidence/information in various ways, including from:

- our regular catch-ups with the regulator
- monitoring what the regulators publish
- attending Council meetings and reviewing papers
- datasets provided to us by the regulator
- feedback from stakeholders.

In our reports we often say ‘we will continue to monitor....’ But, what does this mean in practice?

The areas we’ve said we’ll monitor are also included in the plan for the following year’s review.

● Patient/public involvement

Following a pilot on getting more lay/public involvement in its governance, the GOsC has plans to recruit a permanent Lay Council member. We’ve already mentioned how the GOsC engaged with patients/public in its review of osteopathic education (see page 2). We will be interested in the next steps and will monitor progress on both these developments.

● Up-to-date guidance on standards for its registrants

The GOsC reviewed its guidance on Professional Behaviours and Fitness to Practise for Osteopathic Students and Educational Providers, taking on board feedback in the revised draft, including input from an EDI consultant, it produced a single document combining both sets of guidance. The GOsC ran a consultation on this, closing in February 2024 – we will be monitoring the outcome.

● Ensuring registrants continue to be fit to practise

We’ve been monitoring the GOsC’s ongoing work to evidence the impact of its CPD scheme. We will be interested in the results of its CPD evaluation survey as well as work to this area of its website following an accessibility audit. We’ve also continued to monitor how the GOsC has incorporated learning from the boundaries research it conducted last year and how this will be incorporated into its CPD scheme. The GOsC is continuing to use case studies to support both in-person and online engagement with its registrants and students. There are also plans to produce a series of podcasts, one of which will be about boundaries. We will continue to monitor the GOsC’s work in this area.



Find out more about our performance reviews, including:

- the Standards of Good Regulation
- a short guide to how we carry out our reviews
- read recent reports