

General Optical Council Freedom of Information Requests 1 October – 31 December 2016

FOI Reference No.	Original Request	Response
2016 – 17 Quarter 3		
FOI 2016 - 32	Would it be possible to know how many Dispensing opticians are registered with the GOC as working within Wales?	We can confirm that we hold this information. As at 12 October 2016 there are 235 ¹ dispensing opticians registered with the GOC as working within Wales.
FOI 2016 - 33	How many optometrists, who have qualified as independent prescribers (DipTp (IP)), are currently on the GOC register and, if possible, how many of these are based in Scotland?	As at 23 September 2016 there were 436 optometrists on our register who have qualified as independent prescribers (DipTp (IP)). Of the 436, 153 are based in Scotland.
FOI 2016 - 34	I was wondering if there are any current figures of the number of Optometrists registered in Scotland or who would be best placed to give me this information?	There are currently 1181 ² opticians registered in Scotland. I must point out that opticians registered in Scotland may not actually be currently practicing in Scotland. At the time of registration all registrants are required to provide a registered address, there is no mandatory requirement for registrants to amend this information if they change place of business or geographical location. Furthermore, in some instances registrants may use a home address for registration purposes.
FOI 2016 - 35	I was wanting to know how many optometrists there are registered in the UK, how many in Scotland, how many IP optoms there are in the UK, and how many IP optoms there are in Scotland.	There are currently 10,167 ³ optometrists registered in the UK. Of this number 1181 are registered in Scotland. There are currently 377 ⁴ IP optometrists registered in the UK. Of this number 132 are registered in Scotland.
FOI 2016 - 36	I understand, some time ago, that the GOC undertook some focus groups with students on whether they feel prepared for practice once they are fully qualified and registered. Is there a summary of this work in the public domain that I am able to view?	We do not hold the information you have requested. We did not produce a formal research report based upon the focus group sessions. The focus group activity was mentioned in the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE) performance review report 2011/2012. The Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence changed its name to the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care. You may be able to request a copy of "Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE) performance review report 2011/2012" from the PSA directly. We are unable to confirm whether they will be able to assist you.
FOI 2016 - 37	The location and numbers of optician businesses in Northern Ireland. The data I am seeking is just the Optical Business not individuals.	I can confirm that we do not hold the information that you have requested. As previously explained we register Opticians, Dispensing Opticians, Student Opticians and Student Dispensing Opticians. We also register optical businesses that meet the criteria defined by the Opticians Act. At present only a sub-set of optical businesses are required to register with us. These are bodies corporate (including 'limited liability partnerships' and in Scotland 'partnerships') that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a protected title as defined in the Opticians Act, or • Use a name that implies registration by the GOC. <p>You may find it beneficial to use a business directory service for a comprehensive list of optical businesses within a geographical area (Northern Ireland). Furthermore, we do produce a live public register of opticians, dispensing opticians, student opticians, student dispensing opticians and body corporates. The live register is accessible through our website https://www.optical.org/index.cfm . I would suggest that you use the advanced search function and search by postcode (e.g. BT13 1FR) with a radius of 100km this will enable you to access the information we hold relevant to your request.</p>
FOI 2016 - 38	Please could you tell me the total numbers of optometrists and dispensing opticians currently registered excluding students.	There are currently 14,870 registered optometrists and 6,558 registered dispensing opticians.
FOI 2016 - 39	What is your annual turnover?	What is your annual turnover? Information exempt by virtue of Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act: Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Our annual reports are publically available on our website

¹ Data provided is based upon main registered address rather than practice address

² Data provided is based upon main registered address rather than practice address

³ Data provided is based upon main registered address rather than practice address

⁴ Data provided is based upon main registered address rather than practice address

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	<p>How many employees do you currently have working for you? Have you had any major organisational changes in the last 18 months? (New directors, CEO's or change in ownership) When was the last time you had an IT hardware update? (New computers, servers etc.) What is your current accounting software? What software do you use for budgeting and forecasting? How many purchase invoice transactions do you make on average per calendar month? Do you use an operating system called VMS or VME? Have you got a document management software? If so, which one? Have you got a CRM (Customer relationship management) software? If so, which one? Do you have any remote workers? If so, how many? Is your IT outsourced, In house or Hosted and when is it up for renewal?</p>	<p>https://www.optical.org/en/news_publications/Publications/annual_reports_arc_hive.cfm Current annual turnover is exempt information by virtue of Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act: Information intended for future publication. The 2015 – 2016 Annual Report will be published in line with our Publications Scheme and schedule. This document will be available from https://www.optical.org/en/news_publications/Publications/annual_reports_arc_hive.cfm</p> <p>How many employees do you currently have working for you? 76</p> <p>Have you had any major organisational changes in the last 18 months? (New directors, CEO's or change in ownership) Information exempt by virtue of Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act: Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Details regarding appointments of Directors can be publically accessed https://www.optical.org/en/news_publications/news_listing.cfm</p> <p>When was the last time you had an IT hardware update? (New computers, servers etc.) 2015</p> <p>What is your current accounting software? Sage</p> <p>What software do you use for budgeting and forecasting? No dedicated software used for budgeting and forecasting.</p> <p>How many purchase invoice transactions do you make on average per calendar month? In September 2016 we processed 254 purchase invoice transactions.</p> <p>Do you use an operating system called VMS or VME? No</p> <p>Have you got a document management software? If so, which one? No</p> <p>Have you got a CRM (Customer relationship management) software? If so, which one? Microsoft CRM 2016</p> <p>Do you have any remote workers? If so, how many? One.</p> <p>Is your IT outsourced, In house or Hosted and when is it up for renewal? In house, as such not up for renewal.</p>												
<p>FOI 2016 - 40</p>	<p>Voluntary Code of Practice Please provide me with the above information relating to, in particular, the meetings of the Stakeholders Group eg Minutes and exchanges between the GOC and the Stakeholders, either individually or as a group.</p>	<p>Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides you, as the requester, with a right to be informed whether we hold the information that you have requested and to be provided with a copy of the information unless it has been judged to be exempt from disclosure.</p> <p>We confirm that we do hold the information you have requested.</p> <p>However, it has been concluded that the information you have requested is exempt from disclosure under Section 36(2) (b) and (c) of the FOIA. We consider that disclosure would be likely to inhibit our ability to exchange views with our stakeholder groups for the purpose of deliberation and to provide advice in a free and frank manner.</p>												
<p>FOI 2016 - 41</p>	<p>I was wondering if you could tell me how many Optometry practices there are in England and how many practicing optometrists. I am not wanting to include students or dispensing opticians.</p>	<p>We register Opticians, Dispensing Opticians, Student Opticians and Student Dispensing Opticians. We also register optical businesses that meet the criteria defined by the Opticians Act.</p> <p>At present only a sub-set of optical businesses are required to register with us. These are bodies corporate (including 'limited liability partnerships' and in Scotland 'partnerships') that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a protected title as defined in the Opticians Act, or • Use a name that implies registration by the GOC. <p>As such we would not be able to provide data in relation to the number of Optometry practices in England. You may find it beneficial to use a business directory service for a comprehensive list of Optometry practices within a geographical area (England).</p> <p>As of 30 November 2016 there are 9,716 optometrists on our register in England. Please note, however, that inclusion on the register does not necessarily mean that they are practising – we can only confirm that they are able to use the appropriate title and conduct the activities restricted to that role.</p>												
<p>FOI 2016 - 42</p>	<p>As I am 84yrs and 4 months old and still in full time practise, I just wondered how many others in my age group are still practising.</p>	<p>As at 19 December 2016 the following were registered with us:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1261 1717 2362 1856"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Male</th> <th>Female</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Optometrists over 80 years of age</td> <td>18</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dispensing Opticians over 80 years of age</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>20</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Male	Female	Optometrists over 80 years of age	18	3	Dispensing Opticians over 80 years of age	2	0	Total	20	3
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		However, being registered with the GOC does not automatically confirm that these registrants are currently practising. We do not hold data regarding whether the registrant is currently practising, full time or part time. Our data is limited to whether the registrant is able to practise legally by meeting our registration standards.
FOI 2016 - 43	Please email me your recruitment and/or selection policy and procedure. I look forward to hearing from you.	Please find attached a copy of our Recruitment Policy ⁵ as at 19 December 2016. This policy is currently under review and subject to change. I have also attached a copy of our Council and Committee Recruitment Process ⁶ .

⁵ This document will be disclosed upon request

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