

General Optical Council Freedom of Information Requests 1 January 2017 – 31 March 2017

FOI Ref.	Original Request	Response																																
2016 – 17 Quarter 4																																		
FOI 2016 - 44	Sorry to bother you but I'm just wondering if the GOC would have the figure for the number of Opticians Practices in the UK and how this number compares to January 2016?	As explained, during our telephone conversation on 19 January 2017, we do not hold a complete record of Optician Practices in the UK. We register body corporates. A body corporate is a limited company or limited liability partnership that has been incorporated with Companies House. Bodies corporate registered with the GOC are known as business registrants. Bodies corporate can register with us if they meet the requirements in Section 9 of the Opticians Act. Usually, this will mean that the majority of company directors are registered optometrists and/or dispensing opticians. As of 20 January 2017 there are 2599 business registrants on our register. As of 31 March 2016 there were 2545 business registrants on our register.																																
FOI 2016 - 45	I am writing to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to obtain the current pay ranges in operation at all levels of the General Optical Council.	As at 30 January 2017 the our pay scales were as follows; <table border="1" data-bbox="1668 615 2585 898"> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade</th> <th>Max</th> <th>Anchor</th> <th>Min</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>£134,511</td> <td>£116,959</td> <td>£99,418</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>£96,047</td> <td>£83,520</td> <td>£70,991</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>£62,171</td> <td>£54,061</td> <td>£45,952</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>£47,020</td> <td>£40,887</td> <td>£34,754</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>£37,135</td> <td>£32,291</td> <td>£27,447</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>£30,953</td> <td>£26,917</td> <td>£22,879</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>£28,250</td> <td>£24,566</td> <td>£20,881</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Grade	Max	Anchor	Min	1	£134,511	£116,959	£99,418	2	£96,047	£83,520	£70,991	3	£62,171	£54,061	£45,952	4	£47,020	£40,887	£34,754	5	£37,135	£32,291	£27,447	6	£30,953	£26,917	£22,879	7	£28,250	£24,566	£20,881
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FOI 2016 - 46	How many people are currently on your register? How do you maintain your register? Do you carry out regular data cleansing? How many staff are in your registration team? Do you remind registrants about registration renewal? If so, what is your main method of communication? Letter, Email, Text or Other? Do you send reminders regarding annual fees and/or other payments? How often do you send reminders? Do you have more than one type of registration and if so is the registration process the same for all groups of? Do you verify the identity of your applicants? If so what do you request or how do you verify the identity? Do you ask for your applications to be endorsed and/or documents to be signed? Do you require a current DBS certificate as part of your application process? If so how do applicants provide this? Do you use the update service? How many hours of training/CPD are registrants required to complete and how are these assessed and recorded? How long do registrants have to provide outstanding information? How long would you keep an incomplete application open for? E.g. 28 days. Do you have an online system and what approximately what percentage of applicants use your online system? Finally, do you receive many telephone enquiries regarding using your online system?	Information supplied outside of FOIA																																
FOI 2016 - 47	Would you be able to tell me how many optometrists on the GOC register have the Independent Prescribing qualification, please?	As at 22 February 2017 there are 13 optometrists on our register with Independent Prescribing Specialty there are also 487 optometrists on our register with Additional Supply Specialty, Independent Prescribing Specialty and Supplementary Prescribing Specialty.																																
FOI 2016 - 48	The number of optometrists registered in Wales. The number of the total population who are male and female. The practice type distribution for Wales- i.e. what is the percentage difference between multiples and independents.	1. The number of optometrists registered in Wales As at 15 March 2017 there are 1484 optometrists registered in Wales 2. The number of the total population who are male and female Information not held. The Office for National Statistics may hold the data that you have requested https://www.ons.gov.uk/ 3. The practice type distribution for Wales-i.e. what is the percentage difference between multiples and independents Information not held. We register optometrists, dispensing opticians, students and body corporates. The way we structure our data does not allow us to identify and differentiate between multiples and independents.																																

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FOI Ref.	Original Request	Response												
FOI 2016 – 49	<p>Under the FOIA, please provide the most recent information on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Total number of Independent Prescribing Optometrists renewing on the speciality register 2. The stated scope of independent prescribing 3. The average number of hours spent practising as independent prescriber per month 4. The average number of prescribing decisions made per month (including decisions not to prescribe) <p>For the above, please provide a break down for Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland (if available).</p>	<p>1. Information not held. As the current renewal period ends on 31 March 2017 it is not possible to provide the total number renewing on the specialty register. As at 7 March 2017 there were:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Home Nation</th> <th>Number of IP optometrists</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>England</td> <td>283</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Scotland</td> <td>188</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wales</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Northern Ireland</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>499</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>2. This information is exempt from release by virtue of Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act – Information accessible by other means. Our Independent Prescribing Handbook is available to download from our website https://www.optical.org/en/Education/core-competencies--core-curricula/</p> <p>3. Furthermore there is also a section on our website that contains information regarding Independent Prescribing https://www.optical.org/en/Education/Specialty_qualifications/independentprescribing.cfm</p>	Home Nation	Number of IP optometrists	England	283	Scotland	188	Wales	10	Northern Ireland	18	Total	499
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FOI 2016 – 50	<p>Would your client please forward the date window of the application and finalisation of the online CET contract awarded to Replay Learning? If your client is unable to forward the date window please give reasons.</p> <p>Would your client please confirm payment for {Name Removed} attendance at the hearing, and confirm payment for {Name Removed} reviewing and reporting of the registrant's records prior to the Hearing?</p>	<p>Would your client please forward the date window of the application and finalisation of the online CET contract awarded to Replay Learning? If your client is unable to forward the date window please give reasons. The application and finalisation of the online CET contract to Replay Learning was in 2011.</p> <p>Would your client please confirm payment for {Name Removed} attendance at the hearing, and confirm payment for {Name Removed} reviewing and reporting of the registrant's records prior to the Hearing? The Freedom of Information Act 2000 is an Act of Parliament that creates a "public right of access" to information held by public authorities. However, the Act is subject to certain exemptions. The information you have requested would be considered "personal" information. Under section 40(2) of the FOIA, we are not obliged to provide information that is the personal information of another person if releasing would contravene any of the provisions in the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998.</p> <p>As the information you requested relates to an identifiable individual we consider that to confirm or deny that the information exists or to disclose the information if it were to be held could breach the privacy rights of the individual. The terms of this exemption in the FOIA mean that we do not have to consider whether or not it would be in the public interest for us to reveal whether or not the information is held.</p>												
FOI 2016 – 51	<p>I would like to request information on the current number of all GOC registered optometrists in the UK. This is to be used in the final year project for my optometry degree.</p>	<p>As at 17 March 2017 there are 15,138 optometrists registered with us.</p>												
FOI 2016 – 52	<p>Can you please give me an indication of your current FY IT budget and which IT systems you use to support and manage inspections? Also can you please confirm the average number of inspectors and inspections per year? I am referring to the core functions of your business and investigating/inspecting/inspectors or investigators carrying out their duties to report back to your organisation</p>	<p>We do not use specific IT systems to manage investigations. We use our CRM system and the Microsoft Office suite of programmes. Our FY IT budget is publically available information available on page 13 of C08(17) Business Plan and budget which can be downloaded from https://www.optical.org/en/get-involved/Council_meetings_and_papers/february2017.cfm</p> <p>Statistical details regarding our fitness to practise investigations are published as part of our annual reports. This information can be downloaded from our website https://www.optical.org/en/news_publications/Publications/annual_reports_archive.cfm</p> <p>As such both the FY IT budget and statistical details regarding our fitness to practise investigations are exempt from release by virtue of Section 21 – Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.</p>												